Bicultural & vocational identities: Promoting school engagement in a sample of Cape Verdean immigrants

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BOSTON COLLEGE
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BICULTURAL & VOCATIONAL IDENTITIES: PROMOTING SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT IN A SAMPLE OF CAPE VERDEAN IMMIGRANTS

Dissertation by

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Recent immigration into the United States is characterized by an increase in the influx of people from Latin America, Asia and Africa (Larsen, 2004). The increased diversity of the immigrant population calls for greater attention to the needs of this population, particularly as immigrants and their children are entering the education system. A growing body of literature documents the experience of immigrant youth in schools and the implications of school engagement, and academic achievement for their future success (e.g., Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova 2008). Vocational and ethnic identity represent different aspects of the implementation of the individual’s self concept which are relevant to students’ academic engagement and success (Kenny, Blustein, Haase, Jackson & Perry, 2006; Suárez-Orozco, et. al., 2008). Previous research has examined separately the contribution of perceptions of discrimination and vocational
variables to the school engagement experiences of immigrant students and students of color respectively; however, the collective contribution of these variables has not been studied. The present study brings together these two bodies of literature to understand the relationship between school engagement, perceptions of discrimination, vocational and ethnic identity variables in a sample of 125 Cape Verdean immigrant students. The participants were first through second generation high school students with at least three years of residence in the US.

Specific ethnic/acculturation profiles (ethnic, national, bicultural, and diffuse) developed by previous researchers were confirmed in this sample. Differences were found in perceptions of discrimination between those students in the bicultural and diffuse profiles. The results of a regression analysis indicate that perceived discrimination moderates the relationship between vocational variables (career planfulness and vocational identity) and school engagement. The third set of hypotheses, examining vocational variables as mediators of the relationship between perceptions of discrimination and school engagement were not supported. The findings highlight the importance of including considerations of ethnicity, acculturation and perceptions of discrimination as one considers the academic and vocational functioning of immigrant students.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Teresa Andrade Coutinho. It would not have been possible if it were not for her encouragement, unwavering support and optimism. You will always live in my heart!
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Chapter One - Introduction

Recent immigration into the United States is characterized by an increase in the influx of people from Latin America, Asia and Africa (Denmark, Eisenberg, Heitner, & Holder, 2003; Larsen, 2004). Foreign-born individuals constitute roughly 33.5 million people representing 11.7 percent of the U.S. population (Larsen, 2004). Immigration to the United States is not a novel phenomenon; however, until recently little attention has been paid in the psychology literature to the experiences of immigrants in this country. The increase in the diversity of the population immigrating to the U.S. calls for greater attention to the needs of this population, particularly as immigrants as well as their children are entering the education system. A growing body of literature documents the experience of immigrant youth in schools and the implications of their school engagement, and academic achievement for their future success (e.g., Meador, 2005; Norrid-Lacey & Spencer, 1999; Qin, 2006; Souto-Manning, 2007; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova 2008; Szalacha, Marks, Lamarre & García Coll, 2005; Yeh, Kim, Pituc & Atkins, 2008).

The present study attempted to extend this literature by examining the connection between vocational and ethnic identity variables to immigrant students’ school engagement and perceptions of discrimination. Vocational and ethnic identity represent different aspects of the implementation of the individual’s self concept which have been found to be relevant to students’ academic engagement and success (Kenny, Blustein, Haase, Jackson & Perry, 2006; Suárez-Orozco, et. al., 2008). The present study relied on an integration of Super’s Life-Span Life-Space theory of career development and its extension by Savickas ( Super, Savickas & Super, 1996; Savickas, 2005), as well as
García Coll and her colleagues’ (García Coll, Lamberty, Jenkins, McAdoo, Crnic, Wasik, et. al., 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004) integrative model for the development of minority children to provide the theoretical framework from which to understand the contribution of aspects of the vocational self, ethnic identity, and perceptions of discrimination to Cape Verdean immigrant students’ school engagement.

*Cape Verdeans in the US*

Cape Verdeans have a long history of immigration to the United States; however, they remain largely invisible within the psychology research, practice, and public policy literature. Despite a history of documented immigration as far back as the nineteenth century, Cape Verdean immigration to the US has continued at a strong rate (Nunes, 1982). From the 26,605 Cape Verdean born immigrants reported in the 2000 Census, 71.4 % immigrated after 1980 (US Census, 2000). It is important to note that these numbers may not reflect those immigrants who are undocumented. Cape Verdeans’ rich and complex experience in terms of racial identification within the U.S. as well the fact that they reflect the more recent immigration trends from non-European countries, make this particular group an important one in which to focus the present research study. The Cape Verdean immigrant experience seems particularly appropriate to explore the relationship between ethnic and vocational identities and their connections to ethnic discrimination and school engagement.

*Theoretical Overview*

In the present study, vocational constructs and ethnic identity are examined as different aspects of an individual’s self concept. The contributions of Super and his colleagues (1996) highlighting an individual’s multiple life roles and recognition of work
as an aspect of the individual’s identity seem well suited for the present investigation. The assumptions of this theoretical formulation fit well with the integrative model of the development of children of color, and its recognition that the normal processes of development of children of color include the recognition of, and adaptation to racism (García Coll et al, 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004). In tandem, these theoretical frameworks provide a crucial understanding of the vocational self and ethnic identity as integral to the individual’s self-concept, and position both of these aspects of identity as possible sources of protection against unfavorable circumstances, such as those that immigrant students of color may encounter in schools.

Super’s theory (Super et al., 1996) and its expansion by Savickas (2005) using social constructionism provide an important backdrop from which to understand adolescents’ vocational development. Implementation of the self-concept is seen as central to individuals’ occupational choices and development. The theory defines development as a process of adaptation to changing reality, as opposed to a maturation process (Savickas, 2005). Careers are seen as representations of reality, and emerge through a meaning-making process involving both past experience and future dreams that come together in the individual’s life theme. The theory assumes that individuals make decisions about work within the context of other aspects of their life “circumstances imposed by constellation of social positions that give meaning and focus to their lives” (Super et al, 1996, p. 128). Vocational identity encompasses an understanding of one’s interests, goals and talents within the context of other aspects of the individual’s experience. This sense of vocational identity coupled with the individual’s ability to articulate plans and understand the steps needed to achieve future career goals provide a
richer and fuller picture of an individual’s vocational self (Super et al., 1981). This understanding of the individual in context is particularly relevant when examining the experiences of immigrant students of color, who have to contend with the possibility of racial and ethnic discrimination as they attempt to make meaning and construct a vocational identity.

The integrative model of development for minority children seems particularly relevant given its incorporation of contextual, racial and cultural factors in understanding the psychosocial development of children of color (García Coll, et al., 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004). The model uses an interactionist and ecological approach, while recognizing that adaptive development for children of color involves processes that are not adequately captured in other models of development. In particular, this model includes the consideration of social stratification, promoting and inhibiting environments and adaptive culture and their implications for child characteristics and family factors in development. Social stratification encompasses three derivatives: social position, racism, and segregation, which provide experiences that, are not shared by mainstream populations. Social stratification is due in part to racism and other conditions (socioeconomic status, gender, etc.) that are “linked to processes of social, political, and economic domination and marginalization” (García Coll & Szalacha, 2004, p. 83).

Promoting and inhibiting environments refer to the qualities inherent in environments which provide opportunities for development and/or conditions that undermine the development of children’s competencies. For example, a racially segregated school might not provide its students with adequate resources but may provide an environment in which their ethnic identity and familial values are upheld and respected. Environments
can have promoting or inhibiting qualities or sometimes both. Lastly, adaptive culture refers to the ways in which cultures, families and individuals adapt in order to promote growth and development; these strategies might not be readily recognized by the mainstream culture as strengths, as they arise from the group’s experience of segregation and racism. Ethnic identity and adherence to ethnic values can then be conceptualized as resilience factors that promote development. A coherent ethnic identity has been found to promote positive development in adolescents across domains including school achievement, socioemotional adjustment, and social relationships (Wong, Eccles & Sameroff, 2003), and buffer against perceived discrimination (Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006). This conceptualization has been supported in studies with immigrants and African Americans (Eccles et al. 2006; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008).

Together these two perspectives provide a strength-based lens from which to examine the experiences of immigrant students in schools. Both theories embrace the contextual and cultural factors that impact the development of these two aspects of the individual’s self concept, vocational self and ethnic identity, and are well suited for use with the Cape Verdean population, given Cape Verdeans’ history of facing discrimination and segregation in this country (Nunes, 1982). Research examining the experiences of the Cape Verdean student population in the US is limited. Despite the fact that education is still seen as one of the viable options for social promotion within American society little is known about how Cape Verdeans fare educationally.

*School engagement and immigrant youth*
School engagement is a critical concept that encompasses student’s behavioral, cognitive and emotional connection to school (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel & Paris, 2005; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Jimerson, Campos, & Greif, 2003). School engagement is believed to increase levels of school achievement, and buffer against student boredom and school dropout (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement denotes students’ participation in school-related activities, and is linked to academic success and dropout prevention; emotional engagement refers to affective reactions to school, teachers and peers and is linked to the willingness to work; cognitive engagement refers to student’s perceptions and beliefs about school, and involves students’ willingness to engage in the cognitive tasks that accompany school (Fredricks et al., 2004). The understanding of school engagement as a malleable construct conceptualized within a continuum renders it attractive as a target for interventions to increase students’ academic success (Fredricks et al., 2004;Jimerson, 2003). There is limited research examining school engagement in immigrant populations; however, this literature has found a positive relationship between academic engagement and achievement (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Concurrently, qualitative investigations of the experience of immigrant children in schools have identified school disengagement to be a major issue for immigrant students resulting in drop out and school failure (Meador, 2005; Norrid-Lacey & Spencer, 1999; Yeh, Kim, Pituc, Atkins, 2008). The paucity of research on immigrant students’ engagement in school is alarming, particularly because it is an important contributor to academic achievement and can play a role in ensuring a successful transition to the work world or higher education for immigrant students.
The literature on immigrant students in American schools highlights the difficulty of adaptation into a new culture and is relevant in examining immigrant students’ school engagement given the implications of engagement for academic success (Fredricks, et al., 2005). This literature emphasizes the social and academic difficulties that immigrant students face, and the complex interaction between the different worlds they navigate inclusive of home, school, peers, and, for some, work contexts. Recent scholarship also documents the impact of ethnic discrimination and lack of support immigrant students and their families often encounter in the school environment (Meador, 2005; Norrid-Lacey & Spencer, 1999; Souto-Manning, 2007). Despite growing concerns about the achievement gap between people of color and Whites (Planty, Hussar, Snyder, Provasnik, Kena, Dinkes, et al., 2008; Rumberger & Palady, 2005), findings with immigrant populations suggest an intriguing phenomenon that is referred to as the “immigrant paradox” (Fuligni, 1997; Kao & Tienda, 1995; Portes & Rumbault, 2001; Szalacha et al., 2005). Adolescent immigrants fare better than their native-born counterparts across an array of domains, including health and education (Szalacha et al., 2005). This literature underscores the importance of ethnic identity, personal and familial values, positive attitudes and social supports in immigrant students’ school engagement and academic success (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008; Szalacha et al., 2005).

A growing body of literature has examined the adaptation of immigrant children (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder 2006; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2008). This literature has identified significant trends in the adaptation of immigrant children and their academic performance. Findings in an international study
of adaptation encompassing adolescents in 13 different countries found that those adolescents who endorsed bicultural identities were more likely to have better psychological and sociocultural adaptations (Berry et al., 2006). Suárez-Orozco and colleagues (2008) in a longitudinal study of immigrant children in the US found similar results. This literature suggests that adolescents who can integrate their ethnic identity and the national identity of their new country are better able to handle the psychological and emotional aspects of their transition (Akiba, 2007). However, little is known about how immigrant students’ integration of their ethnic and national identities impacts their perceptions of their future work, occupational expectations and planfulness.

*Vocational psychology and immigrant youth*

Although there is a growing literature that examines the vocational interests, and aspirations of inner-city and ethnic minority youth (Chaves, Diemer, Blustein, Gallagher, DeVoy, Casares et al., 2004; Constantine, Erickson, Banks & Timberlake, 1998; Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Kenny, Blustein, Chaves, Grossman & Gallagher, 2003; Kenny, Gauldron, Scanlon, Sparks, Blustein, & Jernigan, 2007), this literature does not distinguish between the experiences of adolescents who were born in the United States and those who immigrated to this country. Career development and career interventions have been found to be of particular relevance in the educational setting in promoting academic achievement and engagement (Kenny, et al., 2006; Solberg, Howard, Blustein & Close, 2002; Turner & Lapan, 2005). The vocational literature highlights the importance of students’ career development process, and the accompanying awareness of occupational interests, goals and pathways to students’ understanding of the relevance of school to their future career goals. The school-to-work literature highlights the
importance of career interventions at the school level in enhancing student’s motivation for academic success (Solberg et al., 2002). Of particular relevance to this study are Kenny et al.’s (2006) findings in an urban sample of diverse high school students. Kenny and her colleagues (2006) found that higher levels of career planfulness and expectations were associated with greater school engagement; however school engagement was not predictive of career goals and planfulness. These findings confirm the importance of adolescents’ vocational self to their success in school. However, it is unclear how the process of acculturation, particularly, for immigrant students of color, and their perceptions of the school environment impact their vocational goals, and engagement in school.

The current vocational literature calls for recognition and greater investment in studying and understanding the work lives of those who have been historically marginalized and absent from the vocational discourse, including people of color, and those of low socioeconomic status (Blustein, 2006; Fouad, 2007; Richardson, 1993). The current research sought to answer that call by focusing on the vocational and school experiences of immigrants of color, a group that has largely been ignored in the vocational literature. In doing so, important aspects of these students’ experiences, namely their ethnic identities and aspects of their vocational selves (career planfulness and vocational identity), are conceptualized as aspects of their resilience in the face of discrimination experienced within the school. As a result, the current study conceptualizes bicultural identity as a protective factor from discrimination, and a contributing factor to a more crystallized vocational identity and greater school engagement in a sample of Cape Verdean high school students.
Study Overview

To examine the question of the roles of ethnic identity, perceived discrimination and vocational indices’ in promoting school engagement in immigrant students of color, a sample of Cape Verdean immigrant high school students was recruited from urban centers in the Northeast area of the United States. Limiting the investigation to one ethnic group allowed for a richer understanding of the contextual variables that contribute to the immigration experience. In addition, Cape Verdeans have a strong presence in this geographical area, and a long history of immigration, albeit they remain largely invisible to the greater American population (Halter, 1993).

The complexity of Cape Verdean’s racial identification is an important aspect of the Cape Verdean experience in the United States that directly affects the acculturation process (Nunes, 1982). The Portuguese settled the previously uninhabited islands by bringing slaves from the African coast to work on cotton and sugar cane plantations (Halter, 1993). The frequent contacts between the slaves, the Portuguese slave owners, as well as other White Europeans, led to miscegenation, and resulted in a racially mixed population (Machado, 1981). As Cape Verdeans began to settle in the U.S. both they and the American receiving society had to deal with the issue of racial identification. Some Cape Verdeans were able to pass for White, avoiding the stereotypes and discrimination suffered by people of color, while others were identified as Black by the American authorities (Nunes, 1982). This sense of fluidity and resistance to conforming to the dichotomous racial system within the US is one that continues to impact the experience of Cape Verdeans in current American society (Bonilla-Silva, 2004). In addition, the Cape Verdean community is characterized by tightly knit enclaves, which have been
described as a strategy to insulate itself from the discrimination and prejudice experienced in mainstream American society (Halter, 1993). These issues affect this group’s acculturation experience in terms of their engagement with mainstream American culture. Lastly, this population reflects the current trend in immigration from countries outside of Europe. This complex history highlights the importance of ethnic identity in understanding acculturation patterns, and strategies of resistance when faced with discrimination, making this particular group ideal for the present study.

The procedure used in the present study replicated segments of the statistical analysis used by Berry and his colleagues (2006) in a multinational study of immigrant youth adaptation. A preliminary cluster analysis allowed for students to be grouped according to acculturation, ethnic and national identity variables. Berry and colleagues (2006) identified four groups: ethnic, national, integrated and diffuse which capture characteristically different acculturation processes. These groups reflect modes of acculturation, and the extent to which students endorse bicultural, national ethnic or diffuse identities. Multiple regression was used to explore the relationship between school engagement, vocational identity, career planfulness, and perceived discrimination variables. Unfortunately, differences between these acculturation/ethnic identity profile groups could not be explored given sample size limitations. The analysis included two sets of related hypothesis that examined separately the relationship of vocational identity and career planfulness to the other constructs of interest. The first set of hypothesis tested the role of perceived discrimination as a moderating variable in the relationships between vocational variables (vocational identity and career planfulness) and school engagement. The second set tested the mediating effects of vocational identity and career
planfulness in the relationship of perceived discrimination and school engagement for the overall sample.

Additional research is needed to understand how ethnic identity, perceptions of discrimination, and aspects of the individual’s vocational self impact immigrant student’s of color engagement in school. An understanding of the impact of immigrant adolescents’ ethnic identity and perceptions of discrimination on their vocational identity, future career aspirations and school engagement will provide researchers, policy makers and school practitioners with valuable data that can inform educational practices. The following chapters will provide an overview of the relevant literature examining the school experiences of immigrant students in the US, with particular attention to school engagement. Chapter two will highlight the theoretical frameworks that guide the present research study, specifically career constructionism theory and the integrated model of development, and provide a coherent framework for their use in this population. In addition, a selective review of the literature pertaining to each of the constructs of interest (acculturation, ethnic identity, perceived discrimination, vocational identity and career planfulness) will be provided addressing conceptualization issues. Chapter three will focus more specifically on the procedures, providing a rich background for the Cape Verdean experience in the US followed by relevant information regarding the proposed measures and statistical procedures. Next, the results are presented and finally a discussion of the findings and their implications concludes the study.
Chapter Two- Review of the Literature

Overview of the study

The educational achievement gap between whites and other racial groups in the U.S. is a persistent problem that has important implications as we move to an increasingly multicultural, interdependent global community (Rumberger & Palady, 2005). Despite some modest closing of the gap in high school completion and transition to college between Whites and Blacks, there still remains a significant difference between these groups (Planty, Hussar, Snyder, Provasnik, Kena, Dinkes, et al., 2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported a high school completion rate of 93% for Whites, 88% for Blacks and 65% for Hispanics in 2007 (Planty, et al. 2008). In addition, despite an overall consistent increase in college enrollment, both in two- and four-year institutions, since 1972, there are still considerable differences in the immediate college enrollment for Whites, Blacks and Hispanics (KewalRamani, Gilbertson, Fox, Provasnik, 2007). The enrollment rates for Whites in 2006 stood at 69% of all high school graduates (including those who earned General Educational Development (GED) certificates while Hispanics and Blacks lagged behind with rates of 58% and 55% respectively. In examining high school dropout rates, Blacks (11%) and Hispanics (22%) continue to have higher dropout rates than Whites (6%) (Planty et al., 2008). In addition, Hispanic immigrants make up 7% of the total high school dropout population among youth aged sixteen through twenty-four, while non Hispanic immigrants comprise 5% of that population (Planty et al., 2008). These data, while providing a picture of the current educational landscape for different racial groups, does not tell us much about the experience of immigrant groups.
According to the NCES, 20.3% of school aged children (5-17 years old) in 2006 spoke a language other than English at home; the majority of this population is Hispanic (68.7%) while 5.5% of this population identify as Black (Planty, et al. 2008). These figures include foreign born as well and native born students. The available educational statistics on foreign born students focuses on English Language Learners (ELL) and does not capture the experience of those students who have left those programs and are now mainstreamed. These students become invisible as they are included within these overarching racial categories of White, Black, and Hispanic. As students of color, immigrants, such as Cape Verdeans, are faced with adjusting to the American educational system while contending with understanding and navigating racial climates that for many are unfamiliar. There is still much to be learned about these students’ experiences. Available statistics about particular racial groups and ELL tell us little about the experiences of immigrant students who are not accurately captured under those labels, particularly those who have moved on from ELL programs. These students make up a significant portion of the school aged population. As we grapple with an increasingly diverse world, it becomes imperative to understand the unique experiences of immigrant students of color. In order to develop appropriate educational and psychosocial interventions that support and enhance immigrants’ school success, an accurate assessment of the assets that they bring as well as the challenges they face is needed.

The present study aims to fill this void by focusing on the educational experiences of Cape Verdean immigrants in the US. This study examines the relationship between ethnic and vocational variables in promoting school engagement for immigrant students of color. The current chapter will provide a selective review of the literature on school
engagement, acculturation and ethnic identity as well as perceived discrimination, career planfulness and vocational identity. This review will be guided by an integrative theoretical framework that merges the adolescent development and career development literatures, which will provide a backdrop from which to understand the experiences of this immigrant population.

Theoretical Framework

In the present study, vocational identity, career planfulness, and ethnic identity are examined as distinct aspects of an individual’s self concept that can serve to promote resilience, particularly as students adapt to a new cultural environment. The constructionism theory of career development, attending to both temporal and social dimensions, is relevant when attempting to understand individuals within their cultural and social contexts (Super et al., 1996; Savickas, 2002, 2005). The assumptions of this theoretical formulation fit well with the integrative model of the development of children of color, and its acknowledgement that the normal processes of development of ethnic minorities include the recognition of, and adaptation to racism (García Coll et al, 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004). In tandem, these theoretical frameworks provide a crucial understanding of vocational aspects of the self and ethnic identity as integral to the individual’s self-concept, and position both of these aspects of identity as possible sources of protection against unfavorable circumstances, such as those that immigrant students of color may encounter in schools.

The theory of career construction

The theory of career construction explains the interpersonal and interpretive processes through which individuals impose meaning and direction on their vocational
behavior (Savickas, 2002). This perspective utilizes personal constructivism, social 
constructionism, developmental and contextual perspectives in conceptualizing 
individuals’ work experiences (Savickas, 2002, 2005). Career construction theory 
augments the person-environment fit career theory tradition by focusing on the subjective 
experience of work, the person’s self-concept and perception of his/her work (Savickas, 
2005). The individual’s subjective experience, personal thoughts, and feelings about 
work and his/her place in the world become central to the process of career construction 
in identifying life themes, and purpose (Savickas, 2005).

Savickas’ career constructionism theory incorporates Super’s seminal theory 
(1957, Super et al., 1996) and updates it for use in a global and multicultural society. As 
such, some concepts that are inherent to Super’s life-span life-space theory are integral to 
career construction, while others are modified to better reflect the recursive nature of the 
individual and environment interaction (Savickas, 2002, 2005). Three concepts provide 
the foundation for career construction; these are vocational personality, career 
adaptability and life themes (Savickas, 2002).

Vocational personality, similar to Super’s (Super et al., 1996) concept of 
vocational identity, involves abilities, interests, needs, and values related to work 
experiences. Vocational personality is developed through interactions with others and the 
environment throughout the lifespan. As such, interests and abilities are seen as 
relational in nature and are constructed within a web of interactions between individuals 
and their context; as such these phenomena involve a fluid and dynamic character 
(Savickas, 2002).
Career adaptability, a contemporary follow-up to career maturity (Super et al., 1996), reflects the attitudes, competencies, and behaviors that individuals use in fitting themselves to work that suits them (Savickas, 2002, 2005). The matching process between an individual and work is an ongoing process, responsive to changes in the self and changes in the environment. Career adaptability includes four dimensions: career concern, an individual’s concern about his/her career future; career control, a sense of control or ownership over one’s future; career curiosity, a desire to learn more about work and work related opportunities and career confidence, a sense of agency and belief in one’s abilities to overcome obstacles. Career planfulness taps on these four dimensions of career adaptability while remaining relevant to the experience of adolescents, who might not yet have experienced the world of work (Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Savickas, 1997).

Thirdly, narratives about career stories and life history can be unified by identifying themes and patterns, referred to as life themes (Savickas, 2002, 2005). This component of Savickas’ theory is based on the classic notion that we seek to fulfill our life themes in the world of work. Career construction theory can be used to identify meaning in one’s work life as well as to identify avenues through which the self is expressed in one’s work. A person expresses the self through choosing an occupation and strives to improve the match between the self and the environment. Life themes focus on the “why” in career choice. While making meaning and shaping the direction of an individual’s work life is central to this perspective, predicting the future is not seen as critical.
Career constructionism’s focus on a developmental perspective, as well as its emphasis on the mutually reciprocal relationship, between the individual, his/her multiple roles, and the context in which individuals navigate and make meaning of their work experiences, seems particularly fitting for the present study. The contextual framework that undergirds this theoretical perspective provides a powerful means of understanding the experiences of students who are grappling with developing a vocational identity and developing career planfulness abilities while navigating multiple cultural realities.

Summary. Career constructionism’s attention to multiple roles, aspects of the self and the impact of these complex roles on the development of a vocational self provides for fertile ground in which to examine the joint impact of vocational and ethnic aspects of identity in Cape Verdean students’ feelings of school belongingness. In addition, the social constructionism lens that guides this theory underscores the active role of individuals in shaping their environment and constructing their reality. Consequently, the theory’s emphasis on the interactional nature of the relationship between the individual and the environment is significant to the present study’s focus on students’ perceptions of their school environment.

Despite these strengths, this perspective does not adequately address the realities of oppression and discrimination that are part of the work experiences of ethnic minorities in the US. Therefore, it falls short in providing theoretical underpinnings that allow us to understand the impact of discrimination on the vocational aspects of identity, or how people of color’s sense of vocational identity impacts their experiences of the unfavorable environments they often negotiate. We now turn to the integrative model of
minority child development, which addresses this gap (García Coll et al., 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004).

*The integrative model of minority child development*

García Coll and colleagues’ (García Coll et al., 1996, García Coll & Szalacha, 2004) conceptual model of child development seeks to address the lack of consideration of the contextual factors of race and culture in understanding developmental pathways. The model focuses on the development of minority children and therefore provides a framework that honors the differences and unique experiences of minority children in the United States (García Coll et al., 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004). This model is born out of a lack of systematic consideration and investigation of normative development for children of color, as well as need for consideration of social class, race, culture and ethnicity in theoretical formulations of development.

This framework expands on existing models of development, having as its foundation the developmental contextualism perspective (García Coll et al. 1996; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Lerner, Walsh, & Howard, 1998; Park-Taylor, Walsh, & Ventura, 2007). Consequently, this model considers the individual as well as contextual factors (family, school, neighborhood, etc.), and their interaction over time as determinants of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral development. Fundamental to this model is the impact of social position variables (race, ethnicity, social class, and gender) and inhibiting and promoting environments on children’s developmental outcomes. The model encompasses eight constructs that interact with one another to influence developmental outcomes (see figure 1). These include societal constructs: social
position, racism, segregation, promoting and inhibiting environments, adaptive culture; family constructs: family and developmental competencies, and finally, child constructs.

Figure 1. from García Coll & Szalacha (2004). The multiple contexts of middle childhood. *Future of Children* 14(2), 91-97.

The societal constructs pertain to factors in the ecological environment that influence children’s development. Social stratification, which refers to the interplay between social position, racism and segregation, creates unique conditions that set the experiences of children of color and immigrant children apart from those of white children. Social position refers to “attributes of individuals that societies use to stratify or place individuals in the social hierarchy and that pertain to children of color” (García Coll et al., 1996, p. 1895). Although the authors include race, ethnicity, gender and social class as examples of social position factors, they assert that other factors can be included in this discussion. These factors are not considered additive, but within the developmental contextualism perspective interact with each other and can potentially
intensify or diminish the impact of the other societal factors (García Coll et al., 1996; Lerner at al., 1998).

Racism, experiences of discrimination, and prejudice individually and collectively mediate the effect of social position and contribute to the development of segregated contexts (García Coll et al., 1996). Racism and segregation impact environments such that they can inhibit or promote the development of children of color. Schools and neighborhoods as an example are characterized by availability of resources (financial, physical, psychological, cultural, and social, among others) and have a direct effect on child characteristics, adaptive culture and the family (García Coll et al., 1996; García Coll, & Szalacha, 2004). As an example, segregated schools with limited resources but with a school environment that affirms and honors the cultural and familial values of children of color would have a positive impact in the development of a child of color, whereas an integrated school with greater financial resources, but whose culture clashes with that of a child’s family and home culture may have a more pernicious impact on the individual’s development.

Historically, culture has been conceptualized as a risk factor and a source of vulnerability for those who do not belong to the dominant culture (García Coll, Akerman, & Cicchetti, 2000; García Coll et al., 1996). This has resulted in assumptions about normative development that exclude the experiences of children of color. However, “families and children of color develop goals, attitudes, and behaviors that set them apart from the dominant culture because of social stratification deriving from prejudice, discrimination, racism, or segregation, and the differential access to critical resources” (García Coll & Szalacha, 2004, p. 88). This concept of adaptive culture is salient in this
model, such that minority groups develop strategies to cope with inhibiting and promoting environments (García Coll et al., 1996). These responses are rooted in the cultural traditions, political and economic history of the group as well as migration and acculturation patterns (García Coll et al., 1996).

Summary. Cultural diversity, within this model, is conceptualized as a resilience factor in the development of children of color. A community that is accepting of its members, that promotes ethnic pride, and where family ties and education are valued has positive influences in individuals’ development, as documented in immigrant and minority populations (García Coll & Magnuson, 2000; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Park-Taylor, et al., 2007; Szalacha et al., 2005).

Consequently, this perspective allows for an investigation of Cape Verdean immigrant students’ sense of ethnic identity as a source of strength when faced with potentially inhibiting environments. From this perspective, a sense of pride and connection to one’s ethnic identity can serve to foster positive developmental outcomes, including academic engagement, an adaptive vocational identity with a positive career future orientation, despite the perception of unsupportive environments

Theoretical Integration

This collective framework, including vocational and cultural components of development, provides a strength-based perspective in understanding how aspects of individuals’ identity interact with contextual factors to promote adaptive development. The integrative model of identity development and the career constructionism perspective have similar foundational assumptions that make their integration a logical exercise when addressing issues of ethnic and vocational identity. Both theories embrace a
developmental and interactionist perspective, emphasizing the importance of the individual and the environment in development. Career constructionism’s attention to the diverse roles that individuals enact throughout the lifespan, their interaction and recognition of their impact on individuals’ work lives are important contributions. The integrative model of development’s focus on culture as resilience and the ways in which social stratification and environments influence development provide a new perspective in understanding students of color that recognizes experiences of discrimination and the protective role of ethnic identity. Together these perspectives provide a complex lens from which to understand the interaction of ethnic identity and vocational self aspects within the context of school environments. In doing so, these theories provide a dynamic understanding of evolving aspects of identity at a period when adolescents begin to grapple with issues of identity and future goals. In sum, this process can have significant implications for their academic success and school engagement.

School engagement

*Conceptual Definition.* School engagement is an important concept in that it reflects differences in students’ level of commitment and investment in school and school-related tasks (Finn, 1989; Fredricks et al., 2004). It is a multidimensional concept that encompasses behavior, emotion, and cognition (Finn, 1989; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel & Paris, 2005; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Glanville & Wildhagen, 2007; Jimerson et al., 2003). Behavioral engagement refers to participation in school-related tasks and activities (Fredericks, et al., 2004). In addition, school engagement involves an emotional component, student's feelings about school and school-related tasks as well as towards peers and school staff (Fredericks, et al., 2004). Lastly,
cognitive engagement refers to an investment in learning and student’s willingness to engage with complex ideas and be academically challenged (Fredericks et al., 2004). School engagement is associated with academic achievement and is considered essential for students’ academic success (Fredricks et al., 2005; Jimerson et al., 2003).

Finn’s (1989) participation-identification model of school engagement is particularly useful in understanding this concept and its importance for student’s school success. School engagement, and its counterpart, disengagement, are defined as processes that begin early in students’ academic lives. Trajectories of engagement begin to take shape in elementary school and are influenced along the way by a variety of factors. These influences have been defined in Finn’s model (1989), which encompasses the following five constructs: quality of instruction, student abilities, performance outcomes, participation and identification with school. Quality of instruction refers to teaching methods that impact levels of student participation and performance outcomes (Finn, 1989). Students’ abilities refer to the student’s cognitive capacity to engage with the academic material influencing student performance. Students’ grades, GPA, and results in achievement tests are some examples of performance outcomes. Performance outcomes influence identification with school which has an effect on student participation. Of particular importance in this discussion is the understanding of student participation and identification with school.

According to Finn (1989), participation refers to students’ level of involvement in school tasks and activities, encompassing cognitive and behavioral engagement. Participation encompasses four levels of involvement. The first level involves students’ attention, preparation and response to questions and activities initiated by teachers. The
second level denotes students taking initiative to ask questions, generate dialogue, and expend extra effort on schoolwork. A third level concerns students’ involvement in activities and organizations outside of class, such as clubs, and extracurricular activities that are related to the individuals’ interests. The last level reflects students’ participation in the school governance and decision making process.

Identification pertains to the emotional dimension of school engagement; it involves a sense of belongingness as well as valuing school (Finn, 1989). Belonging refers to individuals’ sense of connection to the school, their peers, teachers and their sense of being part of the school environment (Finn, 1989; Voekl, 1996). Value refers to the degree to which success in school matters to the individual. Valuing school coupled with a sense of being a part of the school allows individuals to “continue to participate [in school related endeavors] even if the outcomes are not always evaluated positively” (Finn, 1989, p. 133). This model provides the flexibility with which to explain differing levels of school engagement, because it accounts for students’ behaviors and emotional engagement with school.

This understanding of school engagement as a malleable construct conceptualized within a continuum renders it attractive as a target for interventions to increase students’ academic success (Fredricks et al., 2004; Jimerson, 2003). School engagement is viewed as a process that can be influenced by systematic educational and psychosocial interventions aimed at the individual and larger environment, such that students report a higher level of connection to peers and adults in school and increased commitment to activities that sustain educational success (Finn, 1989; Fredricks et al., 2004). Despite this view, research examining interventions that target school engagement specifically is
scarce (Fredricks et al., 2004). Undoubtedly, students’ engagement is an important psychological aspect of students’ academic success; as such, its role in immigrant students’ school experience deserves greater attention.

*School engagement and immigrant youth.* There is limited research examining school engagement in immigrant populations; however, this literature has found a positive relationship between academic engagement and achievement (e.g., Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Concurrently, qualitative investigations of the experience of immigrant children in schools have identified school disengagement to be a major challenge for immigrant students resulting in drop out and school failure (e.g., Meador, 2005; Norrid-Lacey & Spencer, 1999; Yeh, Kim, Pituc, Atkins, 2008). The paucity of research on immigrant students’ engagement in school is alarming, particularly because it is an important contributor to academic achievement (Marks, 2000; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2005, Voekl, 1997) and can potentially play an important role in ensuring a successful transition to the work world or higher education for immigrant students. Qualitative studies describing the experience of immigrant students in American schools reflect the difficult experiences immigrant students face from the school systems that they enter, their teachers and peers, including those from similar ethnic backgrounds.

Yeh, Kim, Pituc, and Atkins’ (2008) qualitative inquiry of the school experience of Chinese immigrant youth suggests a complex interaction of six prominent themes: socioeconomic changes, English proficiency barriers to adjustment, changes in family structure and dynamics, racism and invisibility, challenges to the support system, and interdependent strategies for navigating in the U.S.. Yeh et al. (2008) use an ecological perspective to frame their study; as such, their data are generated from focus groups with
immigrant students, parents, teachers and student support personnel. Yeh and her
colleagues (2008) found that students experience invisibility in schools, when their skills,
strengths and unique qualities are ignored and are subject to ubiquitous practices that
devalue them, and do not adequately respond to their needs. In school, a lack of
culturally appropriate understanding limits the opportunity for teachers and school
support personnel to offer adequate support. For some students and their families the
availability of supportive networks of friends, extended family, churches, community
organizations, and teachers was found to be crucial in shaping more positive school
experiences.

Another ethnographic study that examines the social context of immigrant
students within an urban high school documents their process of disengagement from
school (Norrid-Lacey, & Spencer, 1999). The authors report that from the seventy
Mexican, Salvadoran and Guatemalan students who enrolled in the ESL program as
freshman only seventeen graduated in four years. The findings reflect the students’ sense
of alienation and lack of belonging in the school, as well as the inadequacy of the
available educational programs in addressing their needs. A phenomenon that seemed to
emerge from this study is the relationship between immigrants (Mexicanos) and first-
generation Mexicans (Chicanos). The authors describe the tension between the two
groups, and the choice of some of the immigrant students to remain in ESL classes or
return to them after being mainstreamed as a result of feeling alienated and discriminated
by the Chicanos and the larger school community, with tremendous negative
consequences for their academic future.
Meador’s (2005) study focuses specifically on the experiences of middle school Mexican girls within the context of the school’s image of the good student. In this system, the idea of successful adaptation involves students accepting American ideals and denying their ethnic identity. Mexican girls used various strategies of resistance, including adopting the American “good student” ideal, emphasizing their Mexican identity as a means of rebellion or displaying a more healthy ethnic identity while adopting some of the American values. Despite their efforts they are in the end still marginalized and invisible within the school (Meador, 2005). These qualitative accounts shed light on important themes of lack of support, ineffective educational programs and general sense of alienation immigrant students often encounter in school. They provide the background that helps to situate the limited quantitative research on the school engagement of immigrant students.

The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (LISA) conducted by Suárez-Orozco and colleagues (2008) is a major investigation that examined school engagement in a large sample of immigrant students. The study combined qualitative and quantitative methods and followed recently-arrived immigrant children for a seven year period. The participants hailed from Central America, China, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico. Most of the students in this urban sample attended a school where more than 75% of their peers were of color and many from poor families.

The results showed that relational engagement, a sense of emotional belonging and connectedness to school, increased over time for these recent arrivals (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Relational engagement was linked to behavioral engagement and bolstered students’ cognitive engagement in school. Behavioral engagement was predicted by
perceptions of school problems, relational and cognitive engagement and gender. Specifically, the authors found a negative relationship between perceptions of school problems and behavioral engagement, and girls reported overall greater engagement than boys. The study identified five distinct pathways of school performance and engagement: 1) high achievers; 2) low achievers; 3) slow decliners, 4) precipitous decliners and 5) improvers. Family situation, perceptions of school environment and gender emerged as significant factors in distinguishing the academic pathways of the students. The high achievers comprised 25% of the sample, were more likely to be girls, were characterized by strong English proficiency skills, and intact families with shorter separations in their immigration process. In addition, these students reported less violence in their schools and a nurturing school context. In contrast, decliners were characterized by less stable families, and disruptive separations; they also exhibited the highest level of psychological symptoms, which did not decrease over time. English proficiency was a significant barrier for these students; in addition, girls were as likely to disengage from school over time.

Similarly, another longitudinal study focusing on school belonging in a sample of Latino elementary students found differences in school belonging over time (Morrison, Cosden, O’Farrell & Campos, 2003). The study followed students in an afterschool program from fourth to sixth grade. During fourth grade, English language proficiency emerged as an important factor in these students’ emotional engagement with school. English language learners showed a decrease in school belonging over that academic year while English proficient students did not reflect that trend. There were other grade level differences in predictors of school belonging. Positive feelings about peer relationships
(peer self-concept) and teacher ratings of student’s school functioning were significant predictors of school belonging in fourth grade. While in sixth grade, only peer self-concept emerged as a significant predictor of school belonging. These findings suggest developmental differences in sources of connection to school for immigrant students and seem consistent with the extant literature on school engagement (Fredricks et al., 2004).

**Summary.** The existing empirical research points to the challenging experiences of immigrant students in American schools. Students are faced with experiences of discrimination, with inadequate support and consequently struggle to remain engaged in school. The literature underscores the importance of supportive networks both within and outside school in enhancing immigrant students’ school experience, particularly at the high school level. Positive school environments are significant contributors to school engagement. Emotional engagement emerges as significant predictor of behavioral and cognitive engagement for this population; which supports the present study’s focus on this aspect of engagement in relation to specific aspects of the individual’s identity. This literature underscores the importance of acculturation and English language proficiency in students’ school engagement. The qualitative findings highlight the importance of ethnic identification and the struggles that students experience in negotiating multiple identities. However, this research does not specifically address how ethnic and vocational aspects of identity interact to influence student’s sense of school belonging, particularly when considering experiences of discrimination.

**Predictors: Acculturation**

*Conceptual definition.* Acculturation is the product of cultural changes that occur as a result of contact between two or more culturally distinct groups (Berry, 1990, 2003;
Berry (1990, 2003) describes acculturation as a multidimensional process that impacts the groups as well as the individuals coming into contact. Acculturation involves a process in which the individual chooses how much of the culture of origin is retained and how deeply one engages in relationships with other groups (Berry, 2003; Phinney & Flores, 2002). The literature describes four strategies of acculturation: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization (Berry, 1990, 2003; Cuellar, Arnold & Maldonado, 1995; Mendoza, 1989). Assimilation refers to taking on aspects of the new culture while losing the original culture; integration involves merging aspects of both cultures; separation involves choosing to maintain the original culture while rejecting the new one; and marginalization involves rejecting both the original and new cultures (Cuellar et al., 1995). Each of these strategies reflects the individual’s degree of willingness to engage with the new culture and to retain or relinquish aspects of the original culture (Berry, 1990, 2003). These dimensions of acculturation give the process of acculturation a multidimensional and fluid character, and highlight the uniqueness of this process for each individual even within the same ethnocultural group.

Characteristics of the dominant and acculturating groups impact the process of acculturation. The dominant group’s tolerance for cultural diversity and level of acceptance of a particular group will impact the patterns of acculturation of the individual (Berry, 1990, 2003; Suárez-Orozco, 2004). For example, if the dominant culture is not tolerant of diversity, there might be more pressure for members of the acculturating group to assimilate. However, in a pluralistic society, integration might be much more accepted as a mode of acculturation. Characteristics of the acculturating group such as, varying
degrees of voluntariness, movement and permanence of contact, also impact the acculturation of individuals (Berry, 1990). The acculturating experience depends on the circumstances of immigration, those who have voluntarily moved, will have a different experience from those who may have migrated unwillingly.

Acculturation is a broad construct encompassing a wide range of behaviors, attitudes and values that change when there is contact between two cultures, whereas ethnic identity is an aspect of acculturation that refers to a subjective sense of belonging to a particular group (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001). We now turn to a review of this particular aspect of acculturation.

Ethnic and national identity. According to Phinney (2003), ethnicity refers to membership into a group with a common ancestry including shared culture, place of origin, language, kinship or values. Ethnic identity is a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one’s identity or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group (Cokley, 2007; Phinney, 2003). It is conceptualized as a fluid process that involves aspects of self-categorization, evaluation and in-group attitudes, values, salience, ethnic behaviors, commitment, exploration and relationship to national identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Self-categorization is considered a basic aspect of ethnic identity and refers to how groups or individuals choose to label themselves. Evaluation and in-group attitudes refer to feelings about one’s own group. For example, pride and feeling good about one’s group is seen as an important component of an achieved ethnic identity. The endorsement of certain values is also considered an important piece of ethnic identity; however, there is a lack of agreement within groups about what are the most prominent values for a particular group (Phinney, & Ong, 2007). Salience refers to the degree of
importance of ethnic identity for the individual. Research shows that members of ethnic minority groups attribute greater importance to ethnic identity than do members of majority groups (French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006; Phinney, & Ong, 2007). Ethnic behaviors refer to activities and outward expressions of ethnic identity (for example, language use, and participation in certain cultural groups). Commitment refers to a sense of belonging and is considered the most important aspect of ethnic identity (Phinney, et al., 2001; Phinney, & Ong, 2007). Exploration refers to seeking out information about one’s ethnic group, which encompasses learning cultural practices, reading and talking to others about the ethnic group in an effort to increase understanding of the group.

Lastly, the relationship between ethnic identity and national identity is also important. National identity refers to feelings of belonging to and attitudes towards the national society (Phinney et al., 2001). Unlike earlier thinking about acculturation and ethnicity, ethnic and national identity do not eclipse one another, meaning that these aspects of group identity are independent and have been found to be at times positively and, in other instances, negatively correlated (Phinney et al., 2001; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The relationship between ethnic identity and national identity is impacted by both characteristics of the ethnic group and the mainstream (national) culture (Phinney, et al., 2001).

Ethnic identity development is conceptualized as an important task for people of color during their adolescent years (French et al. 2006; Phinney, 1989; Quintana, 2007). Phinney (1989) proposed a model in which individuals move from an unexamined ethnic identity, to a stage of identity exploration, in which they attempt to understand what it means to be a member of a particular group, and lastly achieved identity when
individuals have a sense of what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic group. Consistent evidence supports the concept of a normative increase in ethnic identity exploration during adolescence (Quintana, 2007). The literature also supports the contention that perceptions of discrimination trigger ethnic identity exploration (Pahl & Way, 2006, Sellers & Shelton, 2003).

**Ethnic identity and immigrant adaptation.** Recent research highlights ethnic identity as a critical factor in predicting how well adolescents will manage their immigration experiences. Individuals with integrated or transcultural identities, characterized by strong links to both ethnic and national cultures demonstrate more positive psychological and sociocultural adaptations as well as greater levels of academic achievement (Berry et al., 2006; Suárez-Orozco, & Suárez-Orozco, 2007).

In a multinational study involving thirteen countries, Berry et al. examined the sociocultural and psychological adaptation of immigrant adolescents. This study, the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY), involved researchers from Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Portugal. The sample included adolescents aged thirteen to eighteen years old (N=5,366 immigrants) who had immigrated to the settler countries from such diverse countries as Vietnam, Turkey, China, Russia, Angola, Cape Verde, Chile and Ethiopia among others.

The ICSEY results indicate differences in the way adolescents acculturate. Through cluster analyses using the intercultural variables (acculturation attitudes, cultural identities, language, peer social relations, and family relationship values), four acculturation profiles which describe different ways individuals deal with the
acculturation process were identified: integration, ethnic, national, and diffuse (Berry et al., 2006). Integration refers to adolescents who ascribe to strong ethnic and national identities. In regards to their acculturation attitudes, these individuals score high on integration and low in separation and assimilation. These individuals were more proficient in the national language, but also spoke the ethnic language and have social circles that span both the ethnic and national society. The ethnic profile refers to adolescents who prefer the separation attitude, endorse a strong ethnic identity, high ethnic language proficiency, and have friends within their ethnic group. These individuals also score low on assimilation, national identity and contacts with the national group. The national profile reflects high national identity, an assimilation acculturation attitude, and very low ethnic identity. These individuals are proficient in the national language; peer contacts are largely within the national group and also show little retention of their ethnic culture. Lastly, the diffuse profile refers to adolescents who endorsed contradictory acculturation attitudes (assimilation, marginalization, and separation), are low in both identities, and endorse low proficiency in the national language. “Their profile reflects uncertainty and ambiguity about their place in society (Berry, et al., 2006, p. 213).” The authors found that integration was the most common profile among immigrant youth, characterizing a third of the immigrant sample.

The results found significant differences in the adaptation patterns of adolescents relative to their acculturation profile. Berry and his colleagues (2006) distinguish psychological and sociocultural aspects of adaptation. Psychological adaptation refers to emotional well being and sociocultural adaptation is concerned with behavioral aspects of acculturation, encompassing the necessary skills to navigate effectively a particular
cultural context (Berry et al., 2006). As such, individuals who endorsed an integrated
profile had the most positive psychological and sociocultural adaptation, with those in the
diffuse group having the least positive outcomes. Those in the ethnic profile showed
positive psychological adaptation; however, their sociocultural outcomes were not quite
as strong. Those in the national profile also exhibited poor psychological and
sociocultural adaptation although not as poor as the diffuse group.

Summary. Acculturation is an important process for those who immigrate. Within
this process the individual’s connectedness to the culture of origin (ethnic identity) and
the new culture (national identity) become important aspects of effective adaptation. The
ICSEY represents an important piece of research in the immigrant adaptation literature.
The scope of the study encompassing thousands of immigrants across host societies from
diverse ethnocultural backgrounds has important implications for our understanding of
the diverse ways in which immigrant youth negotiate the challenges of navigating
different cultures. In addition, it strengthens findings from the available literature
(Altschul, Oyserman, & Bybee, 2008; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008) that support the
retention of ethnic culture in conjunction with immersion into the new culture as the most
beneficial strategy to negotiate these challenges.

Perceived Discrimination

Conceptual Definition. The literature on adolescents’ experiences of perceived
ethnic discrimination is limited (Eccles, Wong & Peck, 2006; Sellers, Copeland–Linder,
Martin & Lewis, 2006); however, unfair treatment due to ethnicity is a common reality
for most youth of color (Fisher, Wallace & Fenton, 2000; García Coll et al. 1996; Greene,
Way, & Pahl, 2006). Despite this understanding, the empirical literature on perceived
ethnic discrimination is inconsistent in providing a clear definition of this construct, and seems to rely on an implied general understanding of this phenomenon (Brown, 2001). It is important to point out that although the focus of the present investigation is on ethnic identity, the research reviewed will include literature on racial discrimination as well. This reflects the lack of available literature on ethnic discrimination with minority youth. Despite the distinct nature of the concepts of race and ethnicity, there are commonalities between these experiences when examining unfair treatment.

Perceived racial or ethnic discrimination refers to an individual’s sense of unfair treatment because of their race or ethnicity (Brondolo et al., 2005; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006; Greene, et al., 2006; Stone & Han, 2005). Perceived racial/ethnic discrimination is understood within the US as a reflection of an unfair system in which individuals are afforded privileges or penalties based solely on ascribed membership in an ethnic or racial group, and can be manifested through experiences with individuals and larger institutions (Brondolo et al., 2005; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006; Eccles et al., 2006; García Coll et al. 1996). It is important to underscore the difference between “actual” discrimination and “perceived” discrimination, where the latter refers to the individual’s subjective sense of unfair treatment, through overt or more subtle actions, behaviors or statements of others (Phinney, Madden & Santos, 1998; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Stone & Han, 2005). The present study’s focus on students’ perceptions of discrimination is important because of its aim to understand immigrant youth’s subjective experience of their school environment. Current literature on discrimination and oppression highlight the subtle nature of modern racism that often leaves the person who is the target of discrimination unsure of its “reality” (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2005). However, this does
not minimize the impact of those experiences as they continue to affect individuals’ lives, or in any way negate the reality of racism and discrimination in our society. The following selective review will focus on adolescents’ experience of perceived discrimination and its relationship to psychological adjustment, racial and ethnic identities, and school engagement and achievement.

Perceived discrimination and psychological adjustment. Overwhelmingly the available research on perceived discrimination points to its negative effects on psychological adjustment and its role as a stressor for ethnic minority youth (Fisher et al., 2006; Sellers et al., 2006). Experiences of ethnic and racial discrimination communicate “messages that one is not valued or expected to succeed” and can have a pernicious effect on several aspects of an individual’s life (Eccles et al., 2006, p. 409). Perceived discrimination has been found to negatively impact adolescents self esteem (Fisher et al., 2000; Greene et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2003) and to be associated with increases in depressive symptoms over time (Brody et al., 2006; Greene et al., 2006).

In addition, perceived discrimination has been associated with negative behavioral outcomes for adolescents. Brody and his colleagues (2006) in a five-year longitudinal study of African American adolescents found that increases in perceived discrimination over time where associated with increases in conduct problems and depression. These findings are consistent with other research, also with the African American adolescent population, that found perceived discrimination to be related to engagement in problem behaviors and a greater likelihood of involvement with antisocial peers (Wong et al., 2003). Increases in perceived discrimination from early to later adolescence are supported in the literature, and seem to reflect adolescents’ exploration of identity,
increasing independence, and interaction with diverse social contexts, such as school, and work, among others (Fisher et al. 2000; Greene et al., 2006; Quintana, 2007; Wong et al. 2003).

Overall, this research demonstrates the nefarious effects of perceptions of discrimination for the psychological health of youth of color. These negative consequences will most likely impact various aspects of individuals’ experiences and their ability to function adaptively in society, particularly in school. A number of factors have been identified as buffering the impact of perceived discrimination on mental health and school outcomes for youth of color, including parental, and peer support, as well as positive academic self-concept (Brody et al., 2006; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006) and ethnic and racial identity (Eccles et al., 2006; García Coll et al., 1994; García Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Wong et al., 2003). We now turn to examine the role of ethnic and racial identity in adolescents’ experiences of perceived discrimination.

*Racial and ethnic identities and perceived discrimination.* Ethnic and racial identities have been increasingly conceptualized as promotive factors for minority adolescent development (García Coll et al. 1994; García Coll, & Szalacha, 2004; Wong et al., 2003) and more particularly as a protective factor in the face of discriminatory experiences (Eccles et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2003). The literature on the relationship between these concepts reflects the multiple dimensions of the concepts or racial and ethnic identity as well as the contextual and psychological factors that influence perceptions of discrimination. While some findings discredit the role of ethnic and racial identity in adolescents’ experiences of ethnic discrimination, this limited literature overwhelmingly supports the role of ethnic and racial identity as protective factors.
Some of the literature refutes the importance of racial and ethnic identity when considering adolescents' experience of discrimination. Particularly, Chavous and colleagues (Chavous, Rivas-Drake, Small, Griffin & Cogburn, 2008) in a study that examined the relationship between racial centrality (the salience of individuals' racial identity) and perceived discrimination in school, found a weak significant relationship among the boys in this African American sample, while none was found in the girls (Chavous et al., 2008). These results are in conflict with others that report a positive relationship between racial centrality and perceptions of discrimination in a college student sample (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Chavous and colleagues (2008) suggest that these findings may reflect the operationalization of racial discrimination in their study, which focused on overt acts of discrimination that might be viewed similarly across levels of racial salience. In addition, they attribute the gender differences to prevalent racial stereotypes about Black boys, which seem more dominant in the mainstream culture (Chavous et al, 2008). Their findings echo other research that has called into question the impact of gender in the experience of discrimination and a need to examine this interaction in further depth (Brody et al. 2006; Sellers & Shelton, 2003).

In addition, the Phinney, Madden, and Santos (1998) investigation of racial discrimination in a sample of first (born outside the US) and second generation immigrant high school children (born in the US of foreign born parents) is relevant to this discussion. Their findings revealed that ethnic identity was not related to perceived discrimination. The authors suggested that the short ethnic identity measure might not have captured adequately the complexity of ethnic identity experience and affected the results (Phinney et al., 1998). These results seem counter to a growing literature that
documents the positive effects of ethnic and racial identity on experiences of discrimination, and suggest the need for careful operationalization of constructs, particularly as it relates to complex, multidimensional concepts such as ethnic and racial identity (Eccles et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2003).

The research literature has examined specific elements of ethnic identity and its impact on perceived discrimination. This literature suggests that different aspects of ethnic identity relate in unique ways to experiences of perceived discrimination. Ethnic identity affirmation, a sense of emotional attachment to one’s ethnic group, has been found to buffer the effects of peer discrimination on self esteem in a diverse sample of adolescents (Greene et al., 2006). However, the same study found that ethnic identity achievement, which denotes a process of exploration and commitment, increases the negative effects of peer discrimination on self esteem (Greene et al., 2006).

Eccles and her colleagues (2003) examined the experiences of perceived discrimination in an African American sample of adolescents who were followed from seventh through eighth grade and found a strong and positive connection to one’s ethnic group served as a buffer for perceived discrimination in academic settings. These findings were congruent with earlier research by Wong and her colleagues (2003), who found that positive connection to one’s ethnic group was positively related to psychological resilience, school achievement, and pro-social peer group perceptions. The authors found that the encouraging effect of positive group connection was equal to the negative effect of perceived discrimination, supporting the buffering hypothesis (Wong et al., 2003).
Taken together, these findings point to the complexity of the relationship of group identity, either ethnic or racial, in understanding adolescent’s experiences of discrimination. This literature highlights the importance of understanding the specific aspects of identity that are being examined and the unique ways in which emotional and cognitive aspects of identity impact individuals’ perceptions of their treatment. This seems particularly relevant in examining the experiences of adolescents in schools, specifically when using a framework such as the integrative model of development, which emphasizes both individual factors but also highlights the role of the environment in shaping individual’s experiences and development. We now turn to research that examines the experience of perceived discrimination in schools.

Perceived discrimination in schools. The quantitative literature on immigrant students’ perception of discrimination is limited; consequently this review will focus on the available research on students of color. The scarce empirical data on the experience of ethnic and racial discrimination in schools most vividly addresses the experience of African American students. Experiences of perceived discrimination in school involve peer, adult, and institutional discrimination (Fisher et al., 2000). Daily experiences of discrimination undercut academic motivation and achievement (Eccles et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2003).

Gender differences in the impact of perceived discrimination on students’ sense of school importance have also been identified (Chavous et al., 2008). Specifically, African American boys’ experiences of discrimination by teachers in eighth grade were predictive of school disengagement in eleventh grade, while peer discrimination in the earlier grade was not predictive of later school outcomes (Chavous et al., 2008). However, peer
discrimination in eleventh grade was associated with school importance attitudes in that same year. For African American girls, discrimination by teachers in both 8th and 11th grade was predictive of academic efforts, attitudes and self perceptions. In addition, girls from wealthier families seemed more susceptible to the negative influence of peer discrimination on academic importance attitudes (Chavous et al.). Another study focusing on African Americans, found support for perceived discrimination as a risk factor for school engagement (Smalls et al., 2007). More importantly, this study found that those African American students who endorsed a minority racial ideology, which recognizes commonalities between blacks and other oppressed minorities, were less fearful of being viewed as academically oriented and more likely to persist academically (Smalls et al., 2007).

Similar trends are found in research that examines the experience of Latinos and Latino immigrant students (DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006; Stone & Han, 2005). A study of Latino sixth through twelfth graders found that perceived discrimination contributed significantly to academic problems (DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006). Similarly, Stone and Han (2005) in a secondary analysis study using a sample of Mexican and Mexican American immigrants found that students’ perceptions of poor school quality were positively related to perceptions of discrimination. In addition, students who perceived poor school quality had lower grades and were more likely to drop out or be placed in alternative learning programs (Stone & Han).

Summary. When considered collectively, the literature is clear in identifying the negative effects of perceptions of discrimination on individuals’ mental health, and school outcomes. Perceptions of discrimination impact peer relationships, emotional and
behavioral engagement in school, and reflect the larger issues of racism that people of color experience in American society. This literature emphasizes individual and contextual characteristics that serve to protect adolescents from the negative effects of these perceptions. Different aspects of ethnic identity become evident as sources of resilience when faced with unfavorable environments. This literature is still largely silent about the experience of immigrant students. The existing literature does not fully account for the experiences of immigration and acculturation and their possible impact on individual’s perception of discrimination. Additionally, the impact of vocational identity variables also is not accounted for. Could crystallized vocational identities, characterized by a clear sense of interest and future goals, as well as realistic plans for attainment of those goals, have an impact on how adolescents experience discrimination particularly in schools? These questions are left unanswered and deserve further investigation as we work towards preparing our increasingly diverse youth to be active and productive citizens in the current global economy.

Vocational Identity

*Conceptual definition.* Career development is a lifelong process, as Savickas’ (2002, 2005) articulates in career constructionism theory; it is a process that involves reciprocity between the individual and the contexts within which the individual is embedded. Adolescence is a critical period in individuals’ career development as it is a time in which people become more focused in exploring career interests and crystallizing a vocational identity (Savickas, 2002; Super et al., 1996). During this time, individuals are expected to develop a greater understanding of the self, the world of work and how to best fit into that world (Turner & Lapan, 2005). Constructing a positive vocational
identity involves developing a sense of vocational interests, of work readiness skills and behaviors, and positive career related self-efficacy (Turner & Lapan, 2005).

A crystallized vocational identity has been associated with various positive outcomes for adolescents. Ladany and his colleagues (Ladany, Melincoff, Constantine & Love, 1997) in an investigation of urban high school students found that a more crystallized vocational identity was associated with greater career commitment. Vocational identity has been associated with more congruent college majors in a sample of gifted students (Leung, 1998), and increased self-esteem and psychological adjustment (De Goede, Spruijt, Iedema & Meeus, 1999). According to Turner and Lapan (2005), factors that negatively impact vocational identity and particularly the process of its development into a somewhat defined and permanent structure include inconsistent educational opportunities, lack of social support, and experiences of discrimination. Discrimination and career barriers become critical issues when discussing the vocational experiences of immigrant youth of color.

Career planfulness

Conceptual Definition. Career planfulness refers to a students’ ability to articulate not only their career interests and goals but in addition a specific plan for achieving these goals (Super & Thompson, 1979). It involves a future orientation perspective, as well as, a sense that it is “important to prepare for tomorrow (Savickas, 2002, p.52).” Career planfulness is a widely used concept within vocational psychology. It is presented under a variety of names across theoretical frameworks including Savickas’ career concern, an aspect of career adaptability (Savickas, 2002). The importance of career planfulness is in its role in career choice readiness and career maturity, which are key concepts within
Super’s theory of career development (Savickas, 1997). An individual’s future orientation as well as a planning attitude are considered essential in the individuals’ ability to adapt to the demands of work roles and are also relevant to other life roles (Savickas, 1997).

Recent findings point to the importance of career planfulness in the school engagement of children of color (Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Kenny et al., 2006; Perry, 2008). While these findings do not speak directly to the implications specific to the experiences of immigrants in these samples, their inclusion in these studies underscores the importance of understand how those experiences might differ from those non-immigrant students. Given the limited research on vocational variables such as vocational identity and career planfulness with this population, the literature review presented refers more broadly to the vocational literature related to the experiences of immigrants and people of color, respectively.

**Vocational behavior and the immigrant population.** Although economic reasons are often behind immigrants’ decisions to come to the United States the vocational psychology literature on the work experiences of immigrants is scarce (Bhagat & London, 1999). The limited literature focuses on the experiences of highly skilled workers transitioning to the labor market in the United States (Bhagat, & London, 1999; Yost, & Lucas, 2002). Other fields such as sociology have examined more systematically the lives of immigrants with a variety of skill levels and their work experiences in the United States, including adjustment to the workforce (Dalla, Ellis and Cramer, 2005), work - family strains and gains (Grzywacz et. al, 2005), and perceptions of work (Messias, 2001; Dale, et al., 2005). Recent theoretical work on the career concerns of
recent immigrants and refugees calls for consideration of acculturation, relocation circumstances, and contextual factors including culture of origin and receiving culture in understanding this population (Yakushko, Backhaus, Watson, Ngaruiya & Gonzalez, 2008). These considerations seem applicable to the immigrant student population given the dearth of available research on their vocational adjustment.

Vocational psychology has been largely silent in examining the experiences of this segment of the population. The reasons behind such a lack of interest are unclear; indeed, the field of vocational psychology has been criticized for its exclusive focus on the work lives of the White, educated, middle class in the United States (Blustein, 2006; Richardson, 1993). Similarly the research on vocational variables in the immigrant student population is limited. The available literature focusing on the vocational experiences of immigrant students will be reviewed in conjunction with literature that explores the links between vocational identity, ethnic identity and school engagement for youth of color (not necessarily immigrant).

*Vocational development and people of color.* The literature on multicultural career development theory and research is still emerging; however, it has identified some important issues in the literature (Fouad, 2007; Worthington, Flores & Navarro, 2005). An important criticism is vocational psychology’s lack of consideration for the sociopolitical realities of people of color, ignoring cultural influences in career development (beyond that of the western mainstream culture), and the experiences of career barriers and discrimination often felt by individuals of color (Blustein, 2006; Diemer & Blustein, 2007; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; Helms & Cook, 1999).
Research on the role of racial and ethnic identity in career development task has produced mixed results (Worthington et al., 2005). Helms and Piper (1994) argued for more complex examinations of racial and ethnic identity, beyond self-labels and categorization. They suggest that investigations of work and work related constructs in multiracial populations must include an understanding of the salience of race, and ethnicity, for the individuals’ perceptions of career development tasks and outcomes (Helms & Piper, 1994). In addition to shaping career development tasks, race and ethnic identities are thought to influence work satisfaction (Helms & Piper, 1994).

The empirical data on racial and ethnic identity and work-related constructs is inconclusive about the role of those aspects of identity in people’s career outcomes (Fouad, 2007; Worthington et al., 2005). For example, Carter and Constantine (2000) found differences by ethnic group in the relationship between racial identity life role salience and career maturity. Specifically, they found that for Black college students racial identity attitudes related to role salience while for Asians racial identity attitudes were related to career maturity (Carter & Constantine, 2000). Jackson and Neville (1998) found gender differences in vocational identity’s role in predicting goal setting confidence in a sample of African American college students. A relationship was found for the women in the sample that was not present for the men (Jackson & Neville, 1998). These findings highlight the need to consider differences between and within groups when examining racial and ethnic identity variables in connection to vocational behavior. In addition, it is important to underscore differences in measurement and conceptualizations of ethnic and racial identities which pose challenges in clearly
outlining their impact on career related variables. We now turn to the ways in which career development variables and ethnicity come together within the school environment.

*Youth of color, vocational development, and school: An integrative summary.*

The school to work movement within vocational psychology has made important contributions in understanding the role of vocational development in the school success of all students, and students of color in particular (Blustein, Juntunen, & Worthington, 2000; Blustein, Phillips, Jobin-Davis, Finkelberg & Roarke, 1997; Solberg, Howard, Blustein, & Close, 2002; Turner & Lapan, 2005). The literature suggests that students of color are more likely to perceive racial status as a barrier to career development than Whites (Blustein, 2006; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). In addition, the perceptions of unsafe environment, discrimination, negative peer pressure, low self-efficacy for school and perception of barriers in education have been documented as barriers to the educational and vocational achievement of students of color (Jackson & Nutinni, 2002; Luzzo, 1993; McWhirter, 1997).

Additional research points to the educational and career supports that serve as protective factors for students of color and those from urban environments (Jackson & Nutinni, 2002; Kenny et al., 2003; Kenny, Gauldron, Scanlon, Sparks, Blustein & Jernigan, 2007). In a qualitative investigation, perceived family and teacher support were found to be related to school and career attainment aspirations (Kenny et al., 2007). These findings echoed previous quantitative findings that examined perceived barriers and social supports and their relationship to school engagement and career aspirations (Kenny et al., 2003). Greater perceptions of barriers were associated with lower levels of school engagement and vocational aspirations, while the reverse relationship was found
between social support, school engagement and vocational attitudes (Kenny et al., 2003). These findings add to a small body of research that recently has begun to examine the role of career variables in the school engagement of students of color.

This emerging literature points to the importance of adolescents’ conceptions of their future work lives to their academic performance and involvement in school related tasks (Kenny et al., 2003; Kenny et al., 2006; Perry, 2008). Of particular relevance to this study are Kenny et al.’s (2006) findings in an urban sample of diverse high school students. Kenny and her colleagues (2006) found that higher levels of career planfulness and expectations were associated with greater school engagement; however school engagement was not predictive of career goals and planfulness.

Similarly, Perry (2008), in a study that examined the connection between racial identity, school engagement and vocational exploration in a sample of urban youth of color, found that career planning and racial identity were predictive of school engagement. Perry (2008) identified differences in the effect of these variables on emotional and behavioral engagement such that they were more predictive of emotional engagement. In addition, Perry found that an internalized racial identity that promotes a positive group membership is beneficial to school engagement. Although Perry’s study examines racial identity, its results seem to highlight the importance of looking at the related construct of ethnic identity and its contribution to school engagement, career planfulness and vocational identity. Collectively, these results support the importance of examining vocational constructs and their contribution to students’ school engagement.

Despite the lack of research on the career development of immigrant youth of color, the available literature on students of color and the school to work literature
provide a backdrop from which one can begin to understand the experiences of immigrants. Undoubtedly, adolescence is an important period in development when individuals are expected to cultivate a sense of themselves and their fit within the world of work. The literature on career development and people of color highlights the need for investigations that include complex understandings of racial and ethnic identity, another important aspect of identity development. In addition, the limited literature on immigrants’ career concerns underscores the need to account for cultural adjustment, discrimination and available supports as important facets of their career adjustment. Similar issues need to be addressed in the experiences of youth of color in school as they transition to higher education or work. A small body of literature points to the important role of career constructs, such as vocational identity and career planfulness in the academic engagement of students of color. Perry’s work (2008) introduces racial identity as another important predictor of school engagement. An understanding of the ways in which career and ethnic identity variables come together to promote academic engagement for immigrant students is an important step as we face the need for increasingly educated and competitive workers for a sustainable global economy.

Proposed Model

Using the García Coll child development model and Savickas’ career constructionism as theoretical frameworks, this study conceptualizes the relationships between ethnic identity, vocational identity, career planfulness and perceived discrimination and their impact on the school engagement of Cape Verdean immigrant students. Ethnic identity is conceptualized as a function of individuals’ sense of connection to their Cape Verdean identity, American identity and acculturation
experience. Vocational identity is defined as encompassing individuals’ interests, values and goals. Additionally, career planfulness is understood as the extent to which students are aware and engage in a process of planning for their future careers. It was expected that the relationship between individuals’ vocational self concepts (identity and planfulness) and school engagement would be moderated by students’ perceptions of discrimination. In addition, it was expected that individual’s sense of their interests and abilities (vocational identity) and degree of future career planning (career planfulness) would mediate the relationship between school engagement and perceptions of discrimination. Differing ethnic identity/acculturation profiles, bicultural, ethnic, national or diffuse were expected to impact the relationships between perceived discrimination, school engagement, vocational identity and career planfulness.

Taking in consideration theory and the available empirical findings on immigrant students’ ethnic identity, vocational identity, perceptions of discrimination and school engagement, it was expected that:

1) Using first and second generation immigrants’ experiences of ethnic and national identities as well as acculturation, the specific ethnic profiles (ethnic, national, bicultural, and diffuse) developed by previous researchers can be replicated.

2) For students who perceive higher levels of discrimination, vocational identity and career planfulness will explain a smaller portion of the variance in school engagement.

3) For immigrant students of color, lower levels of perceived discrimination in the school environment lead to higher levels of vocational identity and career planfulness and consequently increased school engagement.
This study constitutes a step in beginning to understand how contextual factors including perceptions of discrimination, come together with intrapsychic factors (ethnic identity and vocational self-concepts) to impact the school engagement of immigrant students of color. Positioning vocational constructs and ethnic identity as sources of resilience is congruent with more recent understandings of the development of children of color and provides a meaningful perspective that acknowledges the complex developmental tasks of adolescence and their impact on academic experiences (García Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Nicolas, Helms, Jernigan, Sass, Skrzypek, De Silva, 2008).
Chapter Three- Methodology

Study Design

The present investigation is a post-hoc correlational study aimed at understanding the relationship between school engagement, perceived discrimination, ethnic identity, career planfulness and vocational identity (Heppner, Kivlighan & Wampold, 1999). This study hoped to provide a snapshot of the relationship between these variables at a point in time, and therefore it is cross-sectional by nature. Participants in the study were Cape Verdean high school students at different points in their educational carriers and with differing degrees of contact with the American culture, from those who are born in the US from immigrant parents to those who have lived here for at least three years. The following will provide the reader with detailed information about the participants, the methods and procedures used to investigate the relationship between the constructs of interest: school engagement, perceived discrimination, ethnic identity, career planfulness and vocational identity.

Participants

The participants in the study were limited to Cape Verdean immigrant students, who left Cape Verde to come to the United States and first generation Cape Verdean American students, U.S.-born adolescents with at least one parent who was born in Cape Verde. The complexity of Cape Verdean’s racial identification is an important aspect of the Cape Verdean experience in the United States that directly affects the acculturation process and is relevant to the present investigation (Nunes, 1982). The racial context and experience within Cape Verde is an important backdrop that needs to be considered when examining the Cape Verdean experience of ethnicity in the U.S. From its discovery in 1455, to its independence in 1975, Cape Verde was a Portuguese colony. The Portuguese
settled the previously uninhabited islands by bringing slaves from the African coast to work on cotton and sugar cane plantations (Halter, 1993). The frequent contacts between the slaves, the Portuguese slave owners, as well as other White Europeans, led to miscegenation, and resulted in a racially mixed population (Machado, 1981). This history has important implications for the acculturation and settling patterns of Kriolos (which is the term that Cape Verdeans use to describe themselves) in the New England area.

Cape Verdeans have a long history of immigration to the U.S. which needs to be examined in depth when focusing on ethnic identification issues. Originally, men immigrated to the U.S. temporarily and worked in the whaling industry; however, the decline of that industry led to their permanent settlement in the New England area, at which point women and children began to join them (Halter, 1993; Nunes, 1982). As Cape Verdeans settled in the U.S., both they and the Americans had to deal with the issue of racial identification. Early Cape Verdeans identified themselves as Portuguese; however, the White Portuguese rejected them. Cape Verdeans also refused to identify themselves as African American, although American authorities attempted to impose that identification (Nunes, 1982). Some Cape Verdeans were able to pass for White, avoiding the stereotypes and discrimination suffered by people of color (Nunes, 1982). Currently, Cape Verdeans continue to struggle to identify themselves within the rigid, racial stratification system found within the US (Bonilla-Silva, 2004).

In addition, the Cape Verdean community is characterized by tightly knit enclaves, which have been described as a strategy to insulate itself from the discrimination and prejudice experienced in the mainstream society (Halter, 1993).
These issues affect this group’s acculturation experience, in terms of opportunities to engage with the mainstream American culture and to remain connected with the culture of origin. These factors have lead Cape Verdeans largely to choose to remain closely connected to their culture of origin (Halter, 1993).

The literature on the experiences of Cape Verdean adolescents is practically non-existent. Cape Verdeans have been included in a few studies that examine the experiences of youth of color in urban schools; however, these studies do not specifically examine the experiences of this ethnic group (Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005; Kenny, Blustein, Haase, Jackson, & Perry, 2006). Cape Verdeans, as with many other Black immigrant groups, become lost within the overarching labels of Black and African American (Nunes, 1982; Read, Emerson & Tarlov, 2005; Waters, 1994). Focusing on this particular group has the advantages of enhancing the reliability of the results by eliminating issues related to the use of several ethnic groups and lessening variability in home country contexts and immigration experiences, which can become possible confounds (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2002). In addition, it provides an opportunity to increase our understanding of the experiences of this particular African immigrant group within the American public school system.

**Procedures**

Participants were recruited from high schools and community organizations in the New England area that serve the Cape Verdean immigrant population between June 2009 and April 2010. Sample size is an important consideration in any research endeavor and an adequate sample size was estimated a priori. The current investigation involved a two-step statistical procedure. First, participants were grouped using the ethnic identity,
national identity and acculturation variables. Secondly, a series of multiple regressions examined the impact of the proposed relationships between perceived discrimination, career planfulness, and vocational identity on school engagement. Using the G-Power 3.1 software package a power analysis was conducted determine an adequate sample size (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). The effect size was specified at a medium level (.15) and the significance criteria was established at \(\alpha = .05\) (Cohen, 1992). Power \((1-\beta \text{ err prob})\), the probability of rejecting a false null hypothesis was set at 0.95. In addition, the change in incremental variance \((R^2)\) explained after the first order effects have been controlled for was identified as the statistic of importance for the present study. It was determined that given the number of independent variables (vocational identity, career planfulness and perceived discrimination) an appropriate sample size would comprise of at least 119 participants. While a sample size of 119 seems adequate for the moderation model, a more robust sample is needed for the mediation model (Frazier, Tix & Barron, 2004). The literature suggests that a sample size of 200 has sufficient power (greater than .80) to detect a small mediation effect size (Baron, & Kenny, 1986; Frazier et al. 2004).

Ninth through twelfth grade students who had been in the country for at least 3 years or who were born in the US from Cape Verdean born parents were invited to participate through presentations in their schools and community programs. Through this procedure, all students who were eligible for the study were given an opportunity to participate. Parental consent forms were available in Portuguese and English. Those students who returned signed consent forms completed the paper and pencil measures. Students completed the questionnaires in their schools and community programs. The
questionnaires were administrated in groups and monitored by the principal investigator, the number of participants in each group ranged from five to thirty six completing the measures at one time. Once each participant completed the measures they entered a raffle to receive ten dollar store gift cards or one of two I-pod shuffles.

**Measures**

*Demographic questionnaire*

The questionnaire included questions regarding age, gender, number of years in the United States, grade level in school, parents’ level of education, parents’ occupation, as well as the students’ engagement in part-time work.

*School engagement*

The 16-item Identification with School Questionnaire (IWS; Voelkl, 1996) was developed to assess the emotional aspects of school engagement. School identification has been identified as an important aspect of school engagement (Finn, 1989; Goodenow, 1993). It encompasses a sense of belonging in school and the degree of importance of school and related outcomes for the individual (Finn, 1989; Goodenow, 1993; Voekl, 1996). The measure was developed to address the lack of reliable means to measure students’ sense of feeling a part of their school as well as the extent to which they value school (Voekl, 1996). Three items for the measure were adapted from another instrument, The Psychological Sense of School Membership (Goodenow, 1993) while the original additional 14 items were developed exclusively for the IWS. The measure was developed and validated in a study that included about 3,500 White and Black middle school students. School identification scores have been associated with classroom
participation and academic achievement among White and African American eighth grade students (Voelkl, 1997).

The IWS assesses the degree to which students feel a sense of belongingness at school (e.g., “People at school are interested in what I have to say,” “I feel proud of being a part of my school”) and the extent to which students value school and school-related outcomes (e.g., “Most of what I learn in school will be useful when I get a job,” “School is often a waste of time”). Each item is rated using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (4). The IWS can be used as either a total score or as two separate subscales, school belongingness, and value (Voelkl, 1996, 1997). For the present study, the total score was used. The author reports a Cronbach alpha of .84 for the total scale (Voelkl, 1997.)

**Vocational Indices**

*Vocational identity.* Vocational identity was operationalized using the Vocational Identity Measure (Holland, Gottfredson & Power, 1980). The scale was developed based on the vocational psychology literature on career indecision and Erikson’s (1959) identity development model (Holland et al., 1980). The Vocational Identity scale is a subscale of the My Vocational Situation, which comprises the Vocational Identity, Occupational Information and the Barriers subscales (Holland et al., 1980). The Vocational Identity measure consists of 18 true-false items, with higher scores denoting a more crystallized sense of one’s abilities, interests and goals as related to career. The measure was developed by combining items of two other measures, Identity Scale and the Vocational Decisions Making Difficulty Scale (Holland et al., 1980). The new measure was developed and validated in two separate studies using a
high school sample (Holland et al., 1980). This measure has been widely used with high-
school aged as well as college students, and has been found to be a valid measure of an
individual’s sense of their career interests and abilities (Holland, Johnston & Asama,
1993). This scale has been used to identify career needs of college students in treatment
settings, career related difficulties and as a pre- and post-test for career interventions
(Holland et al., 1993). A review of empirical studies using the measure reported a
Cronbach alpha of .86 (Holland et al., 1993).

Career Planfulness. The Career Planning subscale of the Career Development
Inventory (CDI) (Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan, & Myers, 1981) assesses
engagement in career planning activities and career knowledge. The School Form of the
CDI is designed for use with students in grades 8 through 12. For ninth grade students
drawn from urban, suburban and rural high schools in different regions of the United
States, the reported internal consistency reliability was .89 (Super et al., 1981). For the
present study, a revised version of the CDI was used. The CDI was revised to provide
more accessible wording and format (Kenny et al., 2006). In this revised version,
responses have been reduced from a five-point to a four-point Likert scale, with possible
scores ranging from 19-76 (Kenny et al., 2006). In addition, the items were reduced
from twenty in the original measure to nineteen items in this revised version. The authors
reported Cronbach alphas of .82 and .83 for two administrations of the measure in an
urban high school student population (Kenny et al., 2006).

Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity is conceptualized as a fluid process that involves aspects of self-
categorization, evaluation and in-group attitudes, values, salience, ethnic behaviors,
commitment, exploration and relationship to national identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure – Revised (MEIM-R) is a revised version of the original MEIM (Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The MEIM was initially designed to measure ethnic identity across groups; therefore, it does not include questions about specific cultural values and practices (Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007). In that same tradition, the MEIM-R assesses exploration and commitment to ethnic identity without addressing ethnic group specific behaviors or values (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

The original MEIM was designed using Erik Erikson’s (1968) ego identity model and James Marcia’s (1980) work on identity development processes as theoretical foundations for understanding ethnic identity (Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007). From this perspective, identity is understood as “a subjective feeling of sameness and continuity that provides individuals with a stable sense of self” (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p. 274). In addition, identity is seen as emerging from a process of growth and development that includes exploration of identity and commitment to identity domains (Phinney & Ong). Ethnic identity development is modeled on these personal identity processes, and it is conceptualized as an important process that occurs during adolescence. The MEIM assessed core components of ethnic identity, including sense of belonging, engagement in ethnic practices and achieved identity. The original fourteen-item MEIM was composed of one factor, ethnic identity; however, ensuing studies revealed the possibility of a two-factor structure (Roberts et al., 1999; Spencer, Icard, Harachi, Catalano, & Oxford, 2000; Yancey, Aneshensel & Driscoll, 2003), which led to the revision of the measure (Phinney & Ong, 2007).
This revised version includes 6 items that measure the degree to which ethnic identity is achieved. The measure includes two subscales, exploration and commitment, which can be used separately to understand the process of ethnic identity development. The measure shows good reliability with the subscales yielding Cronbach alphas of .78 for commitment, and .76 for exploration, with a total alpha of .81. The revised measure was validated with a college sample, although the original measure has been used widely with adolescent samples (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Phinney, 1992; Roberts et al., 1999; Spencer et al., 2000).

**National Identity**

National identity refers to feelings of belonging to and stance towards the mainstream, or host culture (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006). National identity and ethnic identity can be considered two distinct aspects of group identity (Phinney et al., 2006). The literature on national identity is much less extensive when compared to ethnic identity; often research focuses solely on the label without consideration for the complexity of this construct (Phinney et al., 2006; Quintana, 2007). It will be assessed using a four-item measure developed by Berry et al. (2006) for the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY). The measure is based on an earlier scale developed by Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997). Three of the items assess national identification and belonging while an additional item assesses the importance of national identity. In the original study where the measure was developed, national identity did not show a significant relationship with ethnic identity, which supports the two-dimensional model of cultural identity (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). A sample item is “I am proud of being American.” with responses ranging in a
Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha reported by the authors for this measure is .84.

**Acculturation**

The Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale (SMAS) is an acculturation measure for use across ethnic groups (Stephenson, 2000). The measure assesses the individual’s level of engagement with the ethnic and dominant society across the domains of language, interaction with others, media exposure and food with items reflecting “knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes” within each domain (Stephenson, 2000, p.79). The SMAS was developed in response to the lack of availability of a universal measure of acculturation (Stephenson, 2000). In the development of the measure, acculturation is understood not as the degree of culture change experienced by the individual, but as the degree to which the individual is immersed in both the mainstream and ethnic society (Stephenson, 2000). This conceptualization is consistent with the work of Berry (1980; 1992; 1996) which views acculturation as a bi-dimensional process that involves engagement with the dominant and ethnic societies, resulting in four modes of acculturation: assimilation, integration, separation, or marginalization (Stephenson, 2000).

The development of the SMAS involved three separate studies aimed at developing a pool of items that captured the construct of acculturation, and examining the factor structure, construct validity and internal consistency of the SMAS while using ethnically diverse samples. An example of an item is “I think in my native language”. A slightly modified version of the SMAS was administered in the present study. An item that addressed language use with “spouses or partners” was modified to read “with
friends” as this seems to be more appropriate for use with an adolescent population. Another item which reads “When I pray, I use my native language.” was removed due to concerns in schools about the reference to religion. The Likert Scale responses include false, partly false, partly true and true. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the entire scale is reported at .86, with each subscale yielding a Cronbach alpha of .97 for the Ethnic Society Immersion subscale and .90 for the Dominant Society Immersion subscale, respectively.

**Perceived Ethnic Discrimination**

Experiences of discrimination and prejudice can have a strong impact in immigrants’ acculturation experience; however, little is known about its role in the adaptation of immigrant youth (Phinney et al, 2006). The literature suggests that immigrants who experience discrimination in their host culture are more likely to view that society as hostile (Heider, 1958; Kalin & Berry, 1996). Perceived discrimination has also been linked to cultural identity (Romero & Roberts, 1998; Schmidtt & Branscombe 2002; Ward & Leong 2004). Perception of discrimination was lower for individuals with a positive sense of belonging to their ethnic group (Berry & Kalin, 1998; Romero & Roberts, 1998). In addition, studies also suggest that perceptions of discrimination increase one’s identification with one’s ethnic group while weakening ties to the mainstream culture (Schmidtt & Branscombe 2002; Ward & Leong 2004). Ultimately, contextual factors may influence immigrants’ experiences of discrimination and unfair treatment which will shape their perceptions of that treatment (Phinney et al., 2001).

Perceived ethnic discrimination was measured using an instrument developed by Berry et al. (2006) for the ICSEY. This instrument, which is based on an earlier measure
developed by Hocoy (1993, as cited in Berry et al., 2006), assesses perceived discrimination by peers, teachers and other adults. Four items assess the frequency of unfair treatment because of ethnicity and five items assess the experience of being discriminated. Examples of items are “How often do teachers treat you unfairly or negatively because of your ethnic background?” with responses ranging in a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (Never) to 5 (Very often); “I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background” with answers ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha reported for this measure is .83 (Berry et al., 2006).

Statistical Procedures

The procedure used in the present study replicated segments of the statistical analysis used by Berry et al. (2006) in a multinational study of immigrant youth adaptation. A preliminary analysis of the data addressed issues such as missing data, outliers, non linearity, lack of normality and multicollinearity in the data as these issues will affect the regression procedure (Wampold & Freund, 1987). In addition, the preliminary analysis examined differences between the American-born and Cape Verdean-born students in the sample, particularly in relation to the demographic variables. The statistical analysis encompassed a two-step method using a preliminary cluster analysis, followed by multiple regression procedures. The analysis included two models that were tested for vocational identity and career planfulness separately. The first model tested the role of perceived discrimination as a moderating variable in the relationship between each of the vocational variables, vocational identity and career planfulness, and school engagement. The second model tested each of the vocational variables as mediating the relationship between perceived discrimination and school engagement.
engagement. Consequently, hierarchical multiple regression was an appropriate statistical procedure (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Frazier et al, 2004; Wampold & Freund, 1987). The statistical procedures for the moderation model required the creation of an interaction term between each of the vocational variables separately and perceived discrimination, while the mediation model included a test of invariance to assess if the coefficients were statistically different.

A cluster analysis grouped students according to acculturation, ethnic and national identity variables. Cluster analysis allows for individuals to be grouped into homogeneous subgroups according to specific criteria (Borgen & Barnett, 1987; Ward, 1963). Through a method that examines the distance between observations (responses in a measure) groups are formed reflecting similar patterns across one or multiple variables (Borgen & Barnett, 1987; Ward, 1963). Berry et al. (2006) identified four groups: ethnic, national, integrated (bicentral), and diffuse which capture characteristically distinct acculturation processes. These groups reflect modes of acculturation, and the extent to which students endorse bicultural, national, ethnic or diffuse identities. Similarly, the present study attempted to replicate these groups by using acculturation, national identity and ethnic identity variables to assess differences in immigrant students’ engagement with the mainstream culture and levels of identification with their culture of origin. The initial hypothesis to be tested was:

1) Using first and second generation immigrants’ experiences of ethnic and national identities as well as acculturation, the specific ethnic profiles (ethnic, national, bicultural, and diffuse) developed by previous researchers can be replicated in a sample of Cape Verdean immigrant students.
The replication of the groups identified in the ICSEY would confirm previous findings and further validate the literature that supports a nuanced understanding of immigration experiences. It was hoped that these groups would then be used in the second step of the analysis to examine proposed differences in the relationships between perceived discrimination, career planfulness, vocational identity and school engagement. This was not possible given the modest sample size, and instead these relationships were examined for the overall sample.

The study tested separately the relationships of perceived discrimination with vocational identity and career planfulness’ and their impact on the prediction of school engagement. Specifically, moderation and mediation models were tested to begin to clarify the role of perceptions of school discrimination in student’s vocational identity, career planfulness and school belongingness. The moderation models tested the hypotheses that:

2. a) Perceptions of discrimination would impact the relationship between career planfulness and school engagement such that career planfulness’ ability to predict school engagement would vary as a function of those perceptions. It was expected that higher levels of perceived discrimination would impact this relationship such that career planfulness would explain a significant portion of the variance in school engagement.
2. b) Similarly, perceptions of discrimination would impact the relationship between vocational identity and school engagement such that vocational identity’s ability to predict school engagement would vary as a function of those perceptions. It was expected that higher levels of perceived discrimination would impact this relationship such that vocational identity would explain a significant portion of the variance in school engagement.

Figure 2. Perceived discrimination moderating relationship between career planfulness and school engagement

Figure 3. Perceived discrimination moderating relationship between vocational identity and school engagement
The second set of models tested mediating hypotheses. Specifically they examined if for students of color, the relationship between each of the vocational variables, vocational identity and career planfulness, with school engagement is best understood when considering perceptions of discrimination. The hypotheses tested were as follows:

3. a) For immigrant students of color, lower levels of perceived discrimination in the school environment lead to higher levels of career planfulness and consequently increased school engagement.

Figure 4. Career planfulness mediating the relationship between perceptions of discrimination and school engagement

3.b) Similarly, lower levels of perceived discrimination in the school environment lead to higher levels of vocational identity and consequently increased school engagement in this immigrant population.

The analysis examined whether vocational identity explains in part the relationship between perceived discrimination and school engagement for immigrant students of
color. Students express higher levels of school engagement *because* lower levels of perceived discrimination allow them to develop more crystallized vocational identities.

![Diagram showing relationship between perceived discrimination, vocational identity, and school engagement](image)

Figure 5. Vocational identity mediating the relationship between perceptions of discrimination and school engagement

This study attempted to examine the relationship between ethnic identity, perceptions of discrimination, career planfulness, and vocational identity and their impact on immigrant students’ school engagement. An understanding of the impact of immigrant adolescents’ ethnic identity and perceptions of discrimination on their future career aspirations and school engagement will provide researchers, policy makers and school practitioners with valuable data that can inform educational practices.
Chapter Four - Results

Introduction

This chapter will provide a detailed description of the statistical analysis and the results. The preliminary analysis includes a description of the sample as well as an examination of differences between the students who were born in the US and those born in Cape Verde. Information about the variables is presented including data related to correlations and normality as these have implications for the analysis. Each of the hypothesis tested are examined sequentially. First, the results for the cluster analysis are presented, including an examination of the differences between the ethnic identity/acculturation clusters identified. Secondly, the moderation hypotheses are examined, and lastly results for the mediation hypotheses are presented.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample is comprised of 125 participants. Female participants comprised 56% of the sample while 43% were male, two participants did not indicate their gender. Students were enrolled in ninth (32.3%), tenth (32%), eleventh (21.6%) and twelfth grades (14.4%). The mean age of the students was 15.88 (SD=1.292) ranging from thirteen to nineteen years of age. Thirty four percent of the sample was born in Cape Verde while the remaining sample was born in the US (66%). The mean age of immigration was 10.14 years old (SD= 4.159, range 1-16).

Students were asked to identify their ethnicity: 114 students (91.2%) identified as Cape Verdean, one identified as Portuguese, another as American and 7.2% identified as Other. These nine participants who chose other, self-identified as Cape Verdaen and another ethnicity. These participants wrote in “American with a Cape Verdaen
background,” “Cape Verdean, American,” “Cape Verdean, Portuguese” (three participants identified in this manner), “Cape Verdean and Dominican,” “Cape Verdean and Puerto Rican,” and “Cape Verdean, Indian and Puerto Rican.”

In terms of parents’ place of birth, 89.6% of participants reported that their mothers were born in Cape Verde, while 88.6% of fathers were born there. Ninety-three percent of students identified mother’s ethnic background as Cape Verdean, and the remaining 7% identified it as other. There was a greater range of responses in father’s ethnic background with 88.7% identifying as Cape Verdean, 1.6% as Portuguese, .8% as American and 8.9% as Other and one missing father’s ethnic background.

Socioeconomic status was captured through two items that inquired about mother and father’s occupation. Responses ranged from (1) unskilled labor (e.g., food service, janitor) to (4) professional work (e.g. doctor, lawyer) and (7) don’t know. Table one provides a summary of mother and father’s occupation. The majority of parents worked in unskilled and skilled work (e.g., carpenter, hairdresser). In addition, the majority of the participants (79.2 %) reported that they did not currently work.
Table 1

Father and Mother’s occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Work</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Work</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently working</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Missing data.* Data were collected from 125 participants following the procedures described in chapter three. Prior to the data analysis, missing data were identified and item mean substitution was used to replace missing values (Raaijmakers, 1999). For all the measures, the data were at least 95% complete. Consequently, all 125 study participants were included in the analysis.

*Preliminary Analysis*

A preliminary analysis was conducted to examine the normality and distribution of the dependent and independent variables. The range, mean, standard deviation, and internal consistency reliability were computed for each of the variables (summary table 2). In addition, the distributions were examined for skewness and kurtosis. An acceptable range for skewness and kurtosis falls between -1.0 and 1.0. The Identification
with School (IWS) scores were the only scores that fell outside of this range. A detailed examination of the score distribution revealed a peaked distribution, with a kurtosis of 2.506 and a negative skewness of -.201. However, an examination of the means with the top and bottom five percent of the cases removed yielded a very similar mean $M = 35.75$ compared to $M = 35.65$, with all the cases included. Therefore a decision was made to stay close to the raw data, and no transformation was completed.
Table 2
Descriptive statistics: Means (M), Standard Deviations (SD) and Cronbach Alphas (α) for variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IWS</td>
<td>35.66</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMAS</td>
<td>95.89</td>
<td>12.44</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVID</td>
<td>20.21</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NID</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>9.85</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>42.12</td>
<td>7.97</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCVD</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IWS= Identification with School; SMAS = Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale; CVID= Cape Verdean Ethnic Identity as measured by the MEIM-R; NID= National (American) Identity; VI= Vocational Identity Subscale of My Vocational Situation; CP= Career Planfulness; PCVD= Perceived Discrimination

*School engagement.* School engagement was measured using the Identification with School Questionnaire (IWS; Voelkl, 1997). This 16-item instrument measures students’ sense of school belongingness, the emotional component of school engagement. Higher scores indicate higher levels of school engagement. In this sample, the IWS total scores ranged from 16 to 58 with a mean of 35.66 and a standard deviation of 6.44. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was .65 for this sample. Voekl (1997) reported a Cronbach alpha of .84 (Voelkl, 1997). Other studies with samples of ethnically diverse
urban high school students reported Cronbach alphas of .78 (Perry, 2008) and .75 (Kenny & Bledsoe, 2005).

**Vocational Identity.** Vocational identity was operationalized using the Vocational Identity measure of My Vocational Situation (Holland, et al., 1980). The Vocational Identity measure consists of 18 true-false items, with higher scores denoting a more crystallized sense of one’s abilities, interests and goals as related to career. A review of empirical studies using the measure with high school and college students reported a Cronbach’s alpha of .86 (Holland et al., 1993). For the present sample, the mean was 9.85 ($SD = 4.36$) with scores ranging from 0 to 18. The Cronbach alpha obtained for this sample was .82. The variable was normally distributed.

**Career Planfulness.** The Career Planning subscale of the Career Development Inventory (CDI) (Super, et al., 1981) assesses engagement in career planning activities and career knowledge. For the present study, a revised version of the CDI was used. The CDI was revised to provide more accessible wording and format for urban high school students (Kenny et al., 2006). The authors reported Cronbach alphas of .82 and .83 for two administrations of the measure in an urban high school student population (Kenny et al., 2006). In this sample scores ranged from 19 through 68 with a mean of 42.12 ($SD = 7.97$). The Cronbach alpha for this sample was similar to the one reported by the authors at .81.

**Ethnic Identity.** Ethnic identity was operationalized using the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure – Revised (MEIM-R), a revised version of the original MEIM (Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007). This revised version includes 6 items that measure the degree to which ethnic identity is achieved. While the measure includes two subscales,
exploration and commitment, of interest for this study was the total scale score. The authors reported a total Cronbach alpha of .81. For this sample, the mean was 20.21 ($SD=5.96$) with a range of 6 through 30. The Cronbach alpha for the current study was .89.

**National Identity.** National identity refers to feelings of belonging to and stance towards the mainstream, or host culture (Phinney et al., 2006). It was assessed using a four-item measure developed by Berry et al. (2006) for the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY). The Cronbach alpha reported by the authors for this measure is .84. In this sample, the mean is 17.16 ($SD=5.34$) with scores ranging from 5 through 25. The Cronbach alpha for this study was .87.

**Acculturation.** The Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale (SMAS) is an acculturation measure for use across ethnic groups (Stephenson, 2000). The measure assesses the individual’s level of engagement with the ethnic and dominant society across several domains (Stephenson, 2000, p.79). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the entire scale is reported at .86 (Stephenson, 2000). In the present study, the measure was slightly modified with one item removed and another reworded. An item that addresses language of prayer was removed and another that inquired about use of language with one’s partner was reworded to read “friends.” For this sample, the mean was 95.89 ($SD=12.44$) with a range of 58 through 123. The Cronbach alpha for the present sample was .83.

**Perceived Ethnic Discrimination.** Perceived ethnic discrimination was measured using an instrument developed by Berry et al. (2006) for the ICSEY. This nine-item instrument assesses experiences of perceived discrimination by peers, teachers and other adults and their frequency. The Cronbach alpha reported by the authors for this measure
is .83 (Berry et al., 2006). In this sample, the mean score was 18.50 ($SD= 7.12$) with a range of 9 through 41. The Cronbach alpha for this sample was .85.

**Correlations**

As part of the preliminary analysis, correlations were computed between the independent and dependent variables. This procedure is of particular importance given the use of cluster analysis and regression in the statistical design and the implications of variable correlation for these methods (Borgen & Barrett, 1987; Pedhazur, 1997). Table 3 provides a summary of all correlations. However, for the purpose of conciseness, only significant correlations will be discussed.

First, the relationships between the acculturation, ethnic and national identity variables were examined. All three variables are significantly correlated at the .05 level. Specifically, acculturation is significantly correlated with ethnic identity (.408, $p<.05$) and national identity (.264, $p<.05$). Similarly, ethnic identity and national identity are significantly correlated (.276, $p<.05$). The magnitude of the correlation between ethnic and national identity is within the range found in the Berry et al. (2006) study. These positive correlations suggest the likelihood of biculturalism (Berry et al., 2006).

As expected, career planfulness was significantly positively correlated with school engagement (.438, $p<.05$). However, vocational identity and school engagement did not have a significant correlation. In addition, vocational identity was significantly correlated with national identity (.177, $p <.01$).

The correlation analysis revealed that perceived discrimination was significantly related to acculturation (-.243, $p<.05$), and national identity (-.207, $p<.01$) in a direction that seems consistent with the literature (Eccles et al., 2003; Greene et al., 2006).
Specifically, those correlations are negative, meaning that the higher the level of acculturation and American identity the lower the levels of perceived discrimination. An unexpected correlation was revealed between perceived discrimination and vocational identity (-.189, \( p < .05 \)).
Table 3

Correlations among variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IWS</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SMAS</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CVID</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>.408**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NID</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.264**</td>
<td>.276**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. VI</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.177*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CP</td>
<td>.438**</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>-.110</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. PCVD</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.243**</td>
<td>-.155</td>
<td>-.207*</td>
<td>-.189*</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

** p significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

IWS= Identification with School; SMAS = Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale; CVID= Cape Verdean Ethnic Identity as measured by the MEIM-R; NID= National (American) Identity; VI= Vocational Identity; CP= Career Planfulness; PCVD= Perceived Discrimination

Differences between US and Cape Verdean born participants

Differences between the US born and Cape Verdean born youth were examined through a series of t-tests. Demographic variables including self identified ethnicity, mother’s ethnic background, father’s ethnic background, father and mother’s birthplace, as well as mother and father’s occupation were examined for differences. In addition, differences in the variables of interest were examined, including acculturation, ethnic
identity, national identity, identification with school, career planning, vocational identity and perceived discrimination. A Bonferroni adjustment to the alpha level was used to examine the results of the t-test given the unequal group sizes and the multiple comparisons. The alpha level was adjusted to .0035. Only significant differences are discussed here. There were significant differences in the self identified ethnicity for those born in Cape Verde ($M=1.02, SD=.147$) and those born in the US [$M=1.38, SD=.987$; $t(123)=-3.097, p=.003$]. The magnitude of the differences in means was moderate (eta squared= .073). There were significant differences in reported mother’s ethnic background for those born in Cape Verde ($M=1.00, SD=.000$) and those born in the US [$M=1.35, SD=.970$; $t(123)=-3.172, p=.002$]. The magnitude of the differences in means was moderate (eta squared= .076). Additionally, differences were found in two of the variables of interest. There were significant differences in national identity for those born in Cape Verde ($M=13.65, SD=5.56$) and those born in the US [$M=19.23, SD=3.99$; $t(123)=-6.451, p=.000$]. The magnitude of the differences in means was large (eta squared= .255). There were significant differences in identification with school for those born in Cape Verde ($M=33.17, SD=6.63$) and those born in the US [$M=37.21, SD=5.94$; $t(123)=-3.486, p=.001$]. The magnitude of the differences in means was moderate (eta squared= .091).

**Cluster Analysis**

We now turn to the main analysis beginning with the cluster analysis procedure. A k-means cluster method was used as the first hypothesis attempted to replicate the acculturation/ethnic identity clusters found in the previous literature. As such, a four-cluster solution was specified (Berry et al., 2006). The variables of interest, ethnic
identity, national identity and acculturation, were standardized in order to remove effects
due to arbitrary differences in each variable’s means and standardized deviations (Borgen
& Barnett, 1987; Gore, 2000). Cluster groups ranged in size from 26 to 36 participants.
Figure four illustrates the differences between the clusters relative to the clustering
variables (acculturation, ethnic identity and national identity) using z-scores for ease of
understanding. The clusters appear to fall in line with the clusters identified in previous
research as described below (Berry et al., 2006). It is important to note that the
differences between the clusters while statistically significant are relative differences.
The distinctions between low, moderate and high scores are based on the results of an
analysis of variance (described below) and the existence of statistically significant
differences between the groups in these categories.
Figure 6: Cluster group characteristics. Cluster 1 = Bicultural; Cluster 2 = Ethnic; Cluster 3 = Diffuse and Cluster 4 = National

The first cluster with 33 participants is characterized by a relatively high acculturation score, as well as high scores in the ethnic identity and national identity measures. This group of students is described as bicultural given that this pattern of high scores across these three variables is congruent with previous research’s characterization of bicultural youth. These characteristics are relevant for 26.4% of the sample. This group in Berry et al.’s study (2006) indicated high involvement in both the national and ethnic cultures, in addition to strongly endorsing integration as an acculturation style.

Cluster two (N=26) is characterized by a moderate acculturation score, a high ethnic identity score and low national identity score. This group is described as ethnic
given their strong endorsement of ethnic identity and relatively low national identity scores. They comprise 20.8 percent of the sample. This pattern of scores is congruent with the findings in the ICSEY (Berry et al., 2006).

The third cluster is characterized by low scores across the three variables acculturation, ethnic identity and national identity. These students do not seem to gravitate to either of these aspects of their identity and have been described as “uncertain about their place in society” (Berry et al. 2006, p. 104). This profile is characteristic of 24% of the sample (N=30). This profile is described as diffuse (Berry et al., 2006).

Lastly, cluster four with 36 participants (28.8%) is characterized by a moderate acculturation score, a low ethnic identity score, and a high national identity score. These students show a strong orientation towards the host society. They seem to be reflective of an assimilation pattern of adaptation, in which the new culture is prioritized. This group is described as National (Berry et al., 2006).

To better understand these acculturation/ethnic identity profiles, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine differences between the identified clusters on the variables of interest. Table four provides a summary of means and standard deviations across acculturation/ethnic identity profiles. Given the unequal group sizes and the results of the Levene’s test for homogeneity of variance analysis, the Brown-Forsythe robust test of equality of means was used to determine the presence of significant differences between groups in some of the variables (acculturation, national identity and vocational identity). The Tukey-HSD test allowed for examining the specific mean differences. In addition to the expected differences in the clustering variables (acculturation,ethnic and national identity), the only significant difference
identified was with perceived discrimination. Specifically, Bicultural (Cluster one) students perceived significantly lower levels of discrimination than the Diffuse (Cluster three) group ($M_{\text{Bicultural}} = 16.72$; $M_{\text{Diffuse}} = 21.66$), $F(3, 121) = 2.92$, $p < .05$.

Table 4
Variable Means and Standard Deviations by Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Cluster 2</th>
<th>Cluster 3</th>
<th>Cluster 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bicultural</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td>National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=33</td>
<td>N=26</td>
<td>N=30</td>
<td>N=36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMAS</td>
<td>106.22</td>
<td>99.29</td>
<td>83.66</td>
<td>94.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>13.25</td>
<td>7.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVID</td>
<td>25.45</td>
<td>24.77</td>
<td>13.77</td>
<td>17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NID</td>
<td>21.57</td>
<td>12.57</td>
<td>12.30</td>
<td>20.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWS</td>
<td>36.57</td>
<td>33.58</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>36.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>41.92</td>
<td>40.58</td>
<td>43.50</td>
<td>42.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>8.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>10.12</td>
<td>9.81</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCVD</td>
<td>16.72</td>
<td>17.92</td>
<td>21.66</td>
<td>17.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>5.99</td>
<td>7.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SMAS = Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale; CVID = Cape Verdean Ethnic Identity as measured by the MEIM-R; NID = National (American) Identity; IWS = Identification with School; CP = Career Planfulness; VI = Vocational Identity; PCVD = Perceived Discrimination

*Testing perceived discrimination as a moderator*
The second hypothesis posed the question about the moderating effect of perceived discrimination in the vocational identity and career planfulness’ prediction of school engagement. The analysis for each of the vocational variables, career planfulness and vocational identity, was run separately. The results for the regression for career planfulness are presented first followed by the moderation model with vocational identity.

*Moderation model for career planfulness. The role of perceptions of discrimination as a moderator of the predictive relationship of career planfulness and school engagement was assessed using hierarchical multiple regression.* The predictor variables, career planfulness and perceived discrimination, were centered and entered in the first step of the hierarchical regression. An interaction term was created, the product of career planfulness and perceived discrimination, and entered in the second step (Frazier et al., 2004).

A preliminary diagnostic analysis examined whether the assumptions of the linear regression were met. The correlations between the centered predictors, the interaction term and the dependent variable were examined (see table 5). A few significant correlations were noted. As expected, career planfulness and school engagement were significantly correlated ($r = .407, p < .001$). The interaction term (CPct x PCVDct) was significantly correlated to career planfulness ($r = .287, p < .01$) and to school engagement ($r = .305, p < .01$).
Table 5

Correlations between variables in perceived discrimination’s moderation of the relationship between career planfulness and school engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IWS</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CPct</td>
<td>.407**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PCVDct</td>
<td>-.115</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CPct x PCVDct</td>
<td>.305**</td>
<td>.287**</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

** p significant at the .001 level (2-tailed)

IWS= Identification with School; CP= Career Planfulness centered; PCVDct = Perceived Discrimination centered

To further examine issues of multicollinearity, the variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance indicators were examined. Both were within the levels expected, with the VIF values smaller than 10 and tolerance values greater than .10, indicating acceptable multicollinearity (Stevens, 2002). The assumption of normality was examined through the use of the histogram of standardized residuals (see figure 7) as well as the scatterplot of standardized residuals against the predicted values (see figure 8). The scatterplot and the histogram reveal a fairly normal distribution, but highlight a data point (case number 22; Std. Res. =-3.209) that is beyond the recommended 3 standard deviations (Stevens, 2002). Cook’s distances greater than 1 are considered large and indicate influential points (Stevens, 2002). An examination of the Cook’s distance reveals a range of values
from .000 to .199, indicating that there are no influential data points, which could skew the results. This analysis confirms that the regression assumptions were met.

Figure 7 – Histogram of standardized residuals for career planfulness’ prediction of school engagement with perceived discrimination moderating the relationship.
Now turning to the regression results themselves, the moderation hypothesis is supported. There is a significant change in the $R^2$ value when the interaction term is added in step two [$\Delta R^2 = .040, F= 6.239 (1, 121) p<.05$] (see table 6). The interaction term between the variables adds 4% in the variance explained in school engagement scores. This change in the variance explained by the interaction term is statistically significant. The ANOVA, or overall model, is significant $F=11.340 (3, 121) p<.01$. 

Figure 8 – Scatterplot of standardized residuals vs. predicted values for career planfulness
Table 6- Hierarchical regression for interaction between perceived discrimination and career planfulness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Adj. $R^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta R^2$</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>SE $B$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.656</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered CP</td>
<td></td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.407**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered PCVD</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.107</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>-.118</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.040*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35.647</td>
<td>.516</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered CP</td>
<td></td>
<td>.281</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.347**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered PCVD</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.113</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>-.124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP x PCVD</td>
<td></td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.210*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=125; At final step, $R^2 = .200$, $F (3, 121) = 11.340$, $p < .001$
** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

We now turn to examining the unstandardized coefficients in order to understand the interaction effect. Using the unstandardized coefficients the regression equation was created:

$$
\hat{Y} = 35.647 + .281 \text{ (CP)} - .113 \text{ (PCVD)} + .022 \text{ (CP x PCVD)}
$$

Predicted values of school engagement ($\hat{Y}$) were calculated, using values at one standard deviation above and below the mean, and the interaction was plotted (see figure 9). The use of centered variables, which as a result of centering have a mean of zero, allows for
ease of interpretation given that when any of the variables are replaced by zero, we are looking at the mean for the sample (Frazier et al., 2004).

Figure 9: Slopes depicting interaction between career planfulness and perceived discrimination at one standard deviation above and below the mean.

As figure nine illustrates, those who perceive lower levels of discrimination consistently experience higher levels of school engagement regardless of high or low career planfulness. Conversely, those who perceive high levels of discrimination endorse lower levels of school engagement regardless of low or high career planfulness. Overall, those who endorse high levels of career planfulness endorse higher levels of school engagement. We now turn to examine the role of perceived discrimination in vocational identity’s prediction of school engagement.

*Moderation model for vocational identity.* The role of perceived discrimination as a moderator of the relationship between vocational identity and school engagement was assessed using hierarchical regression procedures. The predictor variables vocational
identity and perceived discrimination were centered and entered in the first step of the hierarchical regression. An interaction term was created, the product of vocational identity and perceived discrimination, and entered in the second step (Frazier et al., 2004).

A preliminary diagnostic analysis examined whether the assumptions of the linear regression were met. The correlations between the centered predictors, the interaction term and the dependent variable were examined (see table 7). A few significant correlations were noted. As expected, vocational identity and school engagement were significantly correlated \( (r = .165, p < .05) \). In addition, vocational identity and perceived discrimination were significantly correlated \( (r = -.189, p < .05) \). The interaction term \( (\text{MVSct x PCVDct}) \) was significantly correlated to vocational identity \( (r = -.163, p < .05) \) and to school engagement \( (r = .213, p < .01) \).

Table 7

Correlations between variables in perceived discrimination’s moderation of the relationship between vocational identity and school engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IWS</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. VIct</td>
<td>.165*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PCVDct.</td>
<td>-.115</td>
<td>-.189*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. VIct x PCVDct</td>
<td>.213**</td>
<td>-.163*</td>
<td>-.070</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p \) significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

** \( p \) significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)
IWS= Identification with School; VIct= Vocational Identity centered; PCVDct = Perceived Discrimination centered

To further examine issues of multicollinearity, the variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance indicators were examined. Both were within the levels expected, with the VIF values smaller than 10 and tolerance values greater than .10, indicating acceptable multicollinearity (Stevens, 2002). The assumption of normality was examined through the use of the histogram of standardized residuals (see figure 10) as well as the scatterplot of standardized residuals against the predicted values (see figure 11). The scatterplot and the histogram reveal a fairly normal distribution, but highlight a data point (case number 124; Std. Res. = -3.387) that is beyond the recommended 3 standard deviations (Stevens, 2002). Cook’s distances greater than 1 are considered large and indicate influential points (Stevens, 2002). An examination of the Cook’s distance reveals a range of values from .000 to .243, indicating that there are no influential data points, which could skew the results. This analysis confirms that the regression assumptions were met.
Figure 10. Histogram of standardized residuals for vocational identity’s prediction of school engagement with perceived discrimination moderating the relationship.
Figure 11. Scatterplot of standardized residuals vs. predicted values for vocational identity

Now turning to the regression results themselves, the moderation hypothesis is supported. There is a significant change in the $R^2$ value when the interaction term is added in step two [$\Delta R^2=.056, F= 7.397 (1, 121) p<.01$] (see table 8). The interaction term between the variables adds 5.6% in the variance explained in school engagement scores. This change in the variance explained by the interaction term is a statistically significant change. The ANOVA, or overall model, is significant $F=3.99 (3, 121) p<.01$. 
Table 8
Hierarchical regression for interaction between perceived discrimination and vocational identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Adj. $R^2$</th>
<th>$ΔR^2$</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>35.656</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered VI</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered PCVD</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.056**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>35.974</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered VI</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.192*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centered PCVD</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI x PCVD</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.240**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=125; At final step, Adj. $R^2$=.056, $F$ (3, 121) =3.993, $p < .01$
** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

We now turn to examining the unstandardized coefficients in order to understand the interaction effect. Using the unstandardized coefficients, the regression equation was created:

$$\hat{Y} = 35.974 + .284 (\text{VI}) -.056 (\text{PCVD}) + .055 (\text{CP x PCVD})$$

Predicted values of school engagement ($\hat{Y}$) were calculated using values at one standard deviation above and below the mean, and the interaction was plotted (see figure 12). The
use of centered variables, which as a result of centering have a mean of zero, allows for ease of interpretation given that when any of the variables are replaced by zero, we are looking at the mean for the sample (Frazier et al., 2004).

![Graph](image)

Figure 12: Slopes depicting interaction between vocational identity and perceived discrimination at one standard deviation above and below the mean

As figure twelve illustrates, there is an interaction between perceptions of discrimination and vocational identity. For those with lower levels of vocational identity, there is a difference between levels of school engagement. Specifically those who perceive lower levels of discrimination endorse higher school engagement. However, for those with more crystallized vocational identities, the differences in perceptions of discrimination seem less significant with school engagement reaching similar levels. These differences and the implications will be further explored in chapter five.

*Testing vocational constructs as mediators*
The third set of hypotheses posed the question about the mediating effect of career planfulness and vocational identity in perceived discrimination’s prediction of school engagement. It is important to ascertain that there is a correlation between the predictor variables and outcome variable (Frazier et al., 2004). However, in this case, there was no significant correlation between perceived discrimination and school engagement. In this model, the order of entry is important as it establishes whether perceived discrimination predicts school engagement. Perceived discrimination is entered in the first step and the mediating variables are entered in the next step (Frazier et al., 2004).

The hypothesis is not supported, given that the first step of the model reveals non-significant results [Adjusted $R^2 = .005, F(1, 123), p > .05$; see table 9]. Perceived discrimination does not explain any of the variance in school engagement. There is no relationship to mediate in this particular sample.

Table 9
Hierarchical Regression testing first step of mediation model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>SE $B$</th>
<th>$B$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>37.581</td>
<td>1.606</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Discrimination</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>-.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=125; At final step, Adj. $R^2 = .005, F(1, 123) = 1.652, p > .05$

Summary of Results
The results of the analysis were mixed. The first hypothesis was confirmed with the ethnic identity/acculturation clusters replicated. However, despite the distinct experiences of group identity, there were only significant differences in perceived discrimination for the bicultural and diffuse group. Sample size limitations did not allow for exploration of differences for each cluster in the relationships between perceived discrimination, career planfulness, vocational identity and school engagement.

The moderating hypotheses were supported, in that the interaction effects were significant. Perceived discrimination moderates the relationships between career planfulness, and vocational identity with school engagement. Consequently, higher levels of perceived discrimination yield lower levels of career planfulness and school engagement. This is the case as well for those who endorse lower levels of vocational identity; however, as levels of vocational identity increase, perceived discrimination seems less significant in determining students’ school engagement. The mediating hypothesis was rejected, given that perceived discrimination did not predict school engagement in this sample. There are some important issues, including sample size and measurement reliability that could potentially contribute to the findings. These limitations and other relevant issues will be explored in the discussion chapter.
Chapter Five - Discussion

Introduction

This post-hoc correlational study sought to explore the relationship between school engagement, perceptions of discrimination, vocational identity, career planfulness and ethnic identity variables in a sample of Cape Verdean immigrant students. The participants were first through second generation Cape Verdean high school students with at least three years of residence in the US at the time of the study. Previous research has examined separately the contribution of perceptions of discrimination and vocational variables to the school engagement experiences of immigrant students and students of color, respectively (Chavous et al., 2008; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006; Eccles et al., 2006; Kenny et al., 2006; Perry, 2008); however, to date, the collective contributions of these variables have not been studied. While this study also sought to include considerations of students’ ethnic identity and acculturation profiles in exploring these relationships, sample limitations did not allow for a full exploration of that added dimension. However, the results of the study provide important insights for future research. This chapter will briefly outline the findings, elaborate on their implications, highlight their limitations and outline recommendations for future research. The next section reviews the findings for each hypothesis, including a discussion of the results in relation to relevant theory and research.

Hypothesis One –Replication of ethnic identity/ acculturation profiles

The first hypothesis sought to replicate the specific ethnic/ acculturation profiles (ethnic, national, bicultural, and diffuse) developed by previous researchers (Berry et al., 2006) using first and second generation Cape Verdean immigrants’ experiences of ethnic
and national identities as well as acculturation. The cluster analysis yielded four groups whose patterns of ethnic identity, national identity and acculturation were similar to those found in the ICSEY (Berry et al., 2006). The first cluster, described as bicultural, was characterized by high levels of acculturation and high involvement in both the Cape Verdean and American identities. Cluster two, the ethnic group, is characterized by moderate acculturation levels, high affinity with Cape Verdean identity, and low American identity. The third cluster is characterized by low acculturation levels as well as ethnic and national identity. This cluster seems less defined in terms of group identity, similar to Berry et al.’s (2006) diffuse group. The last ethnic identity/acculturation profile group, known as the national group, was defined by a greater affinity to the American identity, lower Cape Verdean identity and a moderate acculturation score.

The confirmation of this hypothesis supports the acculturation and ethnic identity literature, which explores differences in acculturation styles, and supports common experiences within the acculturation process (Berry, 1990, 2003; Berry et al., 2006; Cuellar et al., 1995; Mendoza, 1989). Specifically, these findings uphold the established view of acculturation as a process that is best described when considering both the receiving and sending context and the individual’s engagement with both cultures (Berry, 2003; Berry et al., 2006; Phinney & Flores, 2002). Furthermore, it supports the conceptualization of acculturation as a process of integrating multiple cultures. Despite differences in strategies of acculturation, the process itself involves negotiating the degree of contact and engagement between individuals and groups from diverse cultural backgrounds (Berry 1990, 2003). While this process of integration takes different forms depending on the characteristics of the individuals and cultures, including their
similarities and the degree of openness to difference and diversity in both cultures, there seem to be some commonalities for individuals across contexts. The findings provide further validity for the distinctions between ethnic, national, bicultural and diffuse modes of acculturation.

While the characterization of the groups seems consistent with previous literature (Berry et al., 2006; Cuellar et al., 1995), there were very few differences among participants across the other constructs of interest, including school engagement and vocational attributes. The only significant difference found was in students’ perception of discrimination with the bicultural group endorsing significantly lower levels of discrimination than the diffuse group. For Cape Verdean students who are less acculturated and less comfortable in both their American and Cape Verdean identities, there seems to be a greater sensitivity to and awareness of possible ethnicity-related slights. This difference in perceptions of discrimination across these ethnic identity/acculturation profiles seems consistent with previous findings (Berry et al. 2006; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008).

More generally, across this sample, perceived discrimination was negatively associated with national identity and acculturation. Bicultural students’ lower perception of ethnic discrimination and diffuse students’ higher perception seems reflective of this relationship. Perceptions of discrimination were not related to ethnic identity, a finding that while not unique, is nonetheless worth noting. Phinney et al. (1998) found a similar lack of relationship between perceived discrimination and ethnic identity. The authors attributed this to the use of a short ethnic identity measure that might not accurately capture the complexity of this construct (Phinney et al., 1998). This issue seems like a
plausible consideration within this study as well, particularly given perceived discrimination’s significant relationship to the other two aspects of group identity, national identity and acculturation.

The MEIM-R (Phinney & Ong, 2007), which reflects a revision of the widely used MEIM, is relatively short and addresses two aspects of one’s ethnic identity process: exploration and commitment. Including additional aspects of ethnic identity beyond commitment and exploration, such as ethnic identity affirmation and sense of group belongingness might provide not only a more complex picture of students’ ethnic identification but a clearer link between their ethnic identity and their perceptions of discrimination (Greene et al., 2006). While brevity of measurement is an important issue in any quantitative research design, it is important to consider the use of measures that in conjunction will provide us with a more nuanced and complex understanding of the mechanisms that support these relationships. Commitment and exploration are important aspects of ethnic identity development and therefore are relevant in the study of adolescents’ experiences of their ethnic group identity. Future research should consider a more global understanding of ethnic identity in order to better comprehend its contribution to other aspects of adolescents’ lives.

The lack of differences between the ethnic identity/acculturation groups does not support previous research that highlights differences in school engagement among these ethnic/acculturation profiles (Berry et al., 2006; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). Despite the adjustments to the statistical procedures for greater sensitivity to differences given the unequal group sizes, the sample size may not have been sufficient to detect differences. It is also important to consider the population itself and its immigration context and ways
in which this might contribute to lessened differences. Cape Verdean immigrants have been characterized by a strong connection to their culture as well as a desire to be seen as unique, avoiding the dichotomous Black/White racial classification system found in the US (Bonilla-Silva, 2004; Halter, 1993). Aspects of this sense of ethnic loyalty, including its complexity and richness, certainly reverberate to other areas of the students’ experiences and impact how these students understand their biculturalism, or more accurately, multiculturalism. In addition, the sample comes from schools within similar urban contexts. These similar experiences can contribute to this homogeneity, as they influence the ways these students are experiencing school and understanding their vocational selves.

While the majority of the sample was US born children of Cape Verdean parents, the demographic data suggest that the immigrant youth had very different immigration experiences. Students came at different stages in their lives. Age of immigration ranged from those who came before the age of five, deemed the 1.25 generation, between ages of five and twelve years old, the 1.5 generation, and at thirteen and older, the 1.75 generation, according to Rumbaut’s (2004) stages of immigration. While this suggests a variety of experiences, immigration and acculturation processes, which were confirmed in the acculturation profiles, the paucity of divergence in the vocational and school engagement variables seems noteworthy, particularly given research that suggests otherwise (Morrison, et al. 2003; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). The available research suggests differences in school engagement across immigrant students depending on acculturation styles as well as time in the US. These findings suggest that differences would be present within this sample as well. In addition to sample size limitations, it is
also important to consider the possibility that the measures used did not adequately represent the experiences of these students, particularly their engagement in school. The vocational and school engagement measures were not normed with immigrant samples and it is possible that the language used in these instruments did not resonate with this population. These issues will be further explored as we discuss limitations of the study.

The difference in perceptions of discrimination in school for those who are bicultural and diffuse in their ethnic identity/ acculturation profile has important implications for the school experience of these students. However, the modest sample size constricted a fuller exploration of the role of perceived discrimination for each of the groups in relation to school engagement and vocational variables. Given the findings regarding the moderating effect of perceived discrimination in the relationship between career planfulness, vocational identity and school engagement, this is an important area of further study. Specifically, it is important to understand the mechanisms underlying these different acculturation profiles and the ways in which they impact students’ views of the school environment. In addition, it is important to examine ways in which schools can work to create an atmosphere of respect and acceptance of diverse students and their varied cultural backgrounds.

In summary, the findings add to the growing literature that articulates differences in immigrants’ engagement with their culture of origin and new culture (Berry et al., 2006; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008). They support the view of acculturation as a complex process that involves intrapsychic as well as contextual factors. Factors such as the individual’s sense of commitment to and exploration of his/her culture of origin and new culture have a critical impact in one’s process of acculturation. Similarly, tolerance for
diversity within the receiving society, and the degree of similarity between the new and old culture can influence a group or individual’s adjustment to a new society. These factors operate in tandem to impact the immigrants’ development of a stance towards the diverse psycho-social spaces in which they dwell.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived discrimination moderating the relationship between career planfulness, vocational identity and school engagement

The second set of hypotheses sought to examine the contribution of perceived discrimination to the vocational constructs’ prediction of school engagement. The results, suggest the need for further study to clearly understand the role of perceived discrimination and its impact in the relationship between vocational and school engagement variables. The findings add to the literature that highlights the importance of career planfulness and vocational identity to students’ school engagement (Kenny et al., 2006; Perry, 2008).

The moderation effect was within the predicted direction, such that higher perceived discrimination was related to lowered vocational identity, career planfulness and school engagement. In contrast, lower levels of perceived discrimination were associated with higher levels of vocational identity, planfulness and school engagement. Despite these statistically significant findings, the effect size was small.

Notwithstanding, the findings indicate a contribution of perceived discrimination to the vocational and school experiences of immigrant students. It is important to continue to explore this relationship as it can have significant implications for immigrant students’ success. Creating school environments in which all students feel supported and
respected is an important step in enhancing students’ feelings of belongingness and hopes for productive future work lives.

It is important to note that in general this sample reported lower levels of school engagement than that found in other samples using the Identification with School measure (Voekl, 1997). While this measure had been used with adequate reliability in urban and ethnic minority samples, its reliability with this sample was lower than expected. The literature reports a wide range of levels of school engagement for immigrant students (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). This raises questions about the applicability of the measure for this sample, a point that will be discussed in detail in the limitations section.

Career planfulness encompasses an individual’s sense of particular steps and clear plans to achieve an identified vocational goal. The relationship between career planfulness and school engagement was found to be moderated by perceptions of discrimination. Those who perceive higher levels of discrimination are more likely to exhibit lower levels of career planfulness and school engagement, and vice-versa. It seems that those students who perceive higher levels of discrimination, might not see possible future opportunities. Career planfulness involves a certain level of optimism about the future (Savickas, 1997; 2002). In the face of discriminatory experiences, students might not discern a positive future for themselves. In a society, such as ours, where education is still considered a vehicle for upward mobility, this lack of support within the educational environment contributes to a dim sense of future opportunities and lack of engagement.
Vocational identity emerged as a significant construct in relationship to perceptions of school discrimination. Vocational identity, as measured by the Vocational Identity subscale of the MVS, taps students’ understanding of their interests, abilities and goals. Students’ sense of their vocational self was negatively related to perceptions of discrimination. Students’ vocational identity becomes more significant to student’s school engagement when considering perceptions of discrimination. Vocational identity can be understood as a more stable and core aspect of one’s vocational self in that it seems more clearly linked to one’s understanding of the self and therefore might be more susceptible to perceptions of discrimination. This sense of one’s core identity captured by the individual’s sense of their ethnic and vocational selves seems more vulnerable to others’ perceptions of the individual given their more stable nature. It is important for future research to further understand the role of specific aspects of the vocational self in students’ school engagement and the impact of perceived discrimination. The results, while tenuous, suggest a difference in the effects of perception of discrimination on different aspects of the vocational self.

Hypothesis 3- Vocational constructs as mediators of the relationship between perceived discrimination and school engagement

This third set of hypotheses, examining vocational identity and career planfulness as mediators of the relationship between perceptions of discrimination and school engagement, was not supported. No relationship between perceived discrimination and school engagement was found. In order for a mediation hypothesis to be supported, these two constructs need to be related (Frazier et al., 2004). Other research has indicated a connection between perceived discrimination in school and school outcomes, including
school engagement, academic motivation and achievement (Chavous et al., 2008; Eccles et al., 2006; Wong et al. 2003). The lack of relationship for this sample might reflect measurement issues. The perceptions of discrimination measure was short and might not tap into more nuanced and less overt instances of discrimination. Despite assurances that their responses were confidential, it is unclear how comfortable students might have felt responding to these questions within their schools. Additionally, the school engagement measure had low reliability compared with other samples, which might contribute to the lack of relationship. The use of qualitative methods would allow for a rich understanding of the relationship between perceptions of discrimination, vocational variables, ethnic identity and acculturation in students’ school experience. This would contribute to a solid theoretical foundation from which to develop future quantitative research with a more robust immigrant sample.

Understanding the contributions and connections between vocational and cultural aspects of the self and their relationship to individuals’ experiences of the world around them can provide important insights. For immigrant students in particular, understanding the varied contextual and intrapsychic factors that contribute to their success and the experience of school as a supportive and nurturing environment will ensure that they are well integrated and become substantive contributors to the social and economic fabric of American society. Separation from family members during the immigration process, English proficiency at the time of immigration, peer support and acceptance, sense of connection with adults at school and in their community are factors that impact students school and vocational experiences (Qin, 2006; Yeh et al., 2008). Including these issues
would provide a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of immigrant students in school (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2008).

Limitations

A number of limitations impact the generalizibility of this study. Firstly, the findings are specific to this population of Cape Verdean immigrants within the Northeast of the US. In addition, the students were recruited from high schools in major urban centers in this area, and the findings might not be applicable to Cape Verdean immigrants in rural or suburban settings. Additionally, while the results provide a picture of a particular Black immigrant group in the US, they might not accurately reflect the experiences of Black immigrants from other areas of the world. Furthermore, a number of issues that impact the statistical procedures and the interpretation of the results may have played a role in the study and are discussed next in greater depth.

These methodological issues, while relevant for all of the measures used, are more central with the school engagement measure. As noted earlier, there were a number of concerns about the school engagement measure and its reliability with this particular sample. The mean for this group was much lower than the one reported in previous studies and in the validation sample (Voekl, 1997). While the measure has been used with adequate reliability with ethnic minority and urban samples, it is unclear if it has been used with an exclusively immigrant population in the past.

Important questions arise about the content validity of the Identification with School (IWS, Voekl; 1996) measure with this immigrant group and other immigrant populations. Given that the sample is composed mostly of students for whom English is a second language, even within those born in the US, language is an important
consideration. The accessibility of the vocabulary used and the meaning ascribed to the words is important. The requirement that students had lived in the US for three years attempted to address this issue by inviting students who had enough time within the country to develop proficiency in academic language. However, it is important to consider for this measure and the others used, whether particular words or phrases were difficult to understand or understood in a way that was different from what was meant. Despite efforts to choose measures that seemed appropriate and felt at an adequate reading level for high school students, it is possible that for some participants that was not the case.

Alternatively, how do Cape Verdean students think about school? How do they understand their emotional connection to school? It is possible that there are particular aspects of this connection that are not fully captured by the IWS. Additionally, other aspects of school engagement, namely behavioral and cognitive engagement, may be more salient for this population, and therefore the results do not reflect this. Further research to understand all aspects of immigrant students’ engagement is recommended. The use of qualitative, in addition to, quantitative research methods would provide a broader and more complex understanding of the individual and collective ethnocultural, vocational and educational experiences of immigrant students.

Sample size is a major limitation for the present study. The relatively modest sample did not allow for some of the hypotheses to be fully explored, including differences between the identified cluster groups as well as testing the role of vocational identity in mediating the relationship between perceived discrimination and school engagement. Issues of recruitment are important to highlight as well. Sample
recruitment was difficult despite the incentives offered; at times, students seemed suspicious of the research process. In addition, through informal conversations with school officials, there seemed to be some reluctance by schools to support the research. Worries about an aspect of the study, perceived ethnic discrimination in schools, emerged as a concern of some school staff. The schools approached were in urban communities with high concentrations of Cape Verdeans and other immigrant groups. These schools were often burdened with high numbers of students and few resources to accommodate the needs of their diverse student populations. Given the current climate of educational reform, characterized by calls for increased teacher accountability and teacher’s responsibility for the decline or success of their schools (Valli, Groninger & Walters, 2007), a climate of concern seemed appropriate.

These issues bring up important concerns about developing culturally sensitive and informed research. Issues of measurement and the development of culturally relevant research questions are particularly important. Throughout the research process, I had the opportunity to speak with and consult educational and community leaders in developing and implementing the research questions. In addition, the research development process involved spending a significant amount of time within some of these schools developing relationships and a sense of the school environment. This process provided me with a deep appreciation for the community and the challenges that the students, parents and educational staff face as they work together to provide a rich, demanding and exciting educational experience to these immigrant students. Understanding the experiences of immigrant students is valuable to assist schools and parents in creating effective educational environments. Educational systems must be curious about the specific
immigrant populations within their schools in order to create collaborative ties with those communities.

Cape Verdean immigration is best understood within the context of a diaspora and the current environment of globalization and transnationalism (Carling, 2002; Marques, Santos & Araujo, 2001; Portes, Guarnizo & Haller, 2006). These aspects of the new immigrant experience may contribute to a very different experience of acculturation as adolescents are integrating not only their identities relevant to the contexts from which they came from and those in which they arrive, but also a global citizen identity (Arnett, 2002; Hermans & Kempen, 1998). Globalization refers to the rapidly increasing connections between people throughout the world, which have been brought about by technological and transportation advances (Friedman, 2006). It is characterized by high levels of contact between people, organizations and cultures. These advancements have meant facile contact between those who emigrate and those who stay behind. Individuals will travel often between countries, send money and goods back and forth between the receiving and the sending communities (Friedman, 2006; Marques et al., 2001). The cultural dimension of globalization is particularly important to the present study as adolescents become more connected to their country of origin (Arnett, 2002). Access to the news and cultural happenings in the country of origin are easily accessible to internet savvy adolescents. Cape Verdeans often joke that there are more of them living outside of the country than in the ten islands themselves. Concepts like “sodade,” a longing for the mother country that was left behind, are important to this population and transmitted within the immigrant communities. Additionally, Cape Verdeans come from a native colonial historical context where racialized experiences are understood in a complex web
of relationships with class, education and phenotype (Halter, 1993). The influences of the Portuguese colonial history, as well as the Cape Verdean emigration tradition and the intense connections with emigrant communities outside of the country contribute to a complex Cape Verdean national identity. It is important to explore if for this immigrant group and others, the relationship to the culture of origin and the new culture is being articulated in a manner that is not captured in these measures. These instruments might not be sensitive to the peculiar conditions of specific immigrant groups. In addition, they might not accurately reflect the complex multiple identities with which individuals are grappling in our global, interconnected society (Arnett, 2002).

**Theoretical Implications**

The study findings provide empirical support for Savickas’ theory of career constructionism (2002, 2005) and García Coll and colleagues (1996, 2004) model of integrative development for children of color. Both theories stress a strengths based perspective in understanding individual experience. In addition, they both share a developmental perspective and an interactionist view of the individual and his/her context.

The individual’s subjective experience, personal thoughts, and feelings about work and his/her place in the world become central to the process of career construction in identifying life themes, and purpose (Savickas, 2005). This view is supported by the findings that aspects of one’s subjective experience of discrimination impact vocational identity, career planfulness, and school engagement. Given these findings, the theory would be greatly enhanced by a more clear consideration of issues of privilege and oppression across various groups and its impact on individual’s vocational selves.
Additional qualitative study would provide greater meaning and a more experience near understanding of the manner in which different aspects of the self and one’s subjective experience of the world come together in an individual’s life theme.

It is important to highlight as well the cultural context in which the theory is created and whether concepts such as vocational identity and career planfulness, which reflect a clear Western worldview, apply to the experience of people from other cultures. Further qualitative research could explore how African immigrants understand their work lives and roles. While career constructionism focuses on the individual in context, the central unit of interest is the individual. With Cape Verdeans’ emphasis on family and familial roles, does this individualistic perspective fit with their own experiences, even within a western culture? These are important questions that should be further explored, not only for this particular ethnic group, but for others, who might not fit neatly within Western perspectives.

The findings support the integrative model of development’s assertion of the importance of individual’s ethnic and racial identity and considerations of social positioning in children’s development (García Coll et al, 1996, García Coll & Szalacha, 2004). The model posits that positive identification with one’s ethnic group can be a protective factor in the face of discrimination. The difference in perceptions of discriminations between bicultural and diffuse acculturation profiles provides tenuous support for this position. In addition, the findings support the importance of inhibiting and promoting environments in immigrant children’s development. Immigrant students’ perceptions of their school environments as supportive or discriminatory influence their engagement in school, vocational identities and career planfulness with important
implications for their future success. Additional research that can further examine the implications of social positioning, and school environments for children of color’s development and school success will be valuable in further validating this model.

Implications for counseling and educational policy and practice

Educational and vocational policies should strive to support the development of welcoming school environments for immigrant students. An important first step is providing schools with the resources needed to meet the basic educational needs of, not only immigrant students, but all students in general. Supporting efforts to create working alliances between teachers, parents and students is a critical step towards developing an engaged and supportive school community. For immigrant students in particular, educating parents about the American school system and ways to access resources within it would serve to enhance the dialogue between schools and families. Increased contact between schools and the communities from which their immigrant students come from would allow for more accurate perceptions of each other and would contribute to students’ greater sense of comfort within the new school environment.

Another important issue relates to schools, which need to take greater responsibility to meet the needs of their diverse students. Creating advisory panels with students, parents, staff and community leaders from the immigrant populations represented in their census would provide a forum in which the voices of those populations can be heard. It would be important as well for school administrations to confer to these panels, and their staff of color real power to enact change within the school culture. School administrators need to hold schools accountable to engage in candid dialogues about power and privilege within their communities, beginning with the
school staff. Moving from rhetoric to action in order to create truly diverse school communities will create vibrant schools where students are well positioned to become productive, conscientious citizens.

Similarly, extending funding for the development of vocational interventions will serve to enhance students’ school experiences. Creating programs that provide immigrant students’ exposure to professionals within their areas of interest, creating mentoring relationships, and assisting students in developing educational plans and goals are valuable contributions to immigrant students’ success. In some of the participating high schools, career plans were in place for all the students. However, both guidance counselors and students complained that they did not have adequate time to carefully develop these plans, or monitor students’ progress in those areas. Increased funding to support these programs would clearly benefit not only immigrant students, but the student population in general. Given concerns about the need for workers who can compete in a global economy, investment in adequate training and education for our students is a crucial first step in addressing these issues (Blustein, 2006; Friedman, 2006).

Lastly, further training for teachers and students to be able to navigate the increased diversity of our schools, nation and the world is another important dimension to be included in these interventions. Increasing individuals’ understanding of their own assumptions and values is a first step in creating a sense of community and promoting respect (Prilleltensky, 1997). Students and teachers alike carry with them experiences of privilege and oppression related to diverse aspects of their identities (e.g., religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, immigration status, etc.). Allowing space for discussions of commonalities and differences in their experiences would enhance the ongoing
conversations about issues of diversity that are already taking place across our schools. Understanding the changing nature of the demographics of our country, the complexity of these issues and the implications for the social positioning of individuals within the nation is important within the context of a global economy (Bonilla-Silva, 2004).

Conclusion

This study has provided a snapshot of a particular immigrant group within a point in time. Despite this important limitation, it adds to our understanding of the experiences of immigrant students of color and highlights the importance of including considerations of ethnicity, acculturation and perceptions of discrimination as one considers academic and vocational functioning. As supported by the model of development for children of color (García Coll et al., 1996) and Savickas career constructionism (2005) future research needs to include an integrative view of the individual for a fuller understanding of the lived experience. For students of color and immigrant students in particular, a more complete understanding of their lives must include consideration of their ethnic and racialized experiences (García Coll et al., 1996). The impact of perceived discrimination on their experiences of school and their vocational selves supports the call for vocational psychology research to not only include these considerations in their body of research, but to more clearly focus on understanding the mechanisms behind these relationships (Blustein, 2006). Immigrant children make up twenty percent of the school population in this country (Planty et al., 2008). Given the importance of vocational variables to the academic experiences of individuals, understanding these relationships will allow for the development of interventions that will enhance the success of immigrant students in our schools and work environments.
References


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Assessing dimensionality and measurement invariance across race and ethnicity. 


Appendix A: Parental consent form in English

Boston College Lynch School of Education

Parent Consent for Taking Part as a Subject in a Research Study
"Bicultural & vocational identities: Promoting school engagement in a sample of Cape Verdean immigrants"

Why has my child been asked to take part in the study?
• Because you were born in Cape Verde and your child was born in the US OR he or she was born in Cape Verde and has lived in the US for three years or longer.
• Because your child is currently in high school
• Because your child might have an interest in sharing his/her thoughts and feelings about the experiences of Cape Verlean students in high school in the U.S.
• Because your child might have an interest in sharing his / her thoughts and feelings about how these students think and feel about their future work lives.

What do I do first?
• Before agreeing, please read this form.
• Please ask any questions that you may have.

What is the Study about?
• This study is about what students think and feel is important about their culture, and about how it affects their school experiences and feelings about their future work lives.
• People who take part in this study will include about 300 students who like your child have immigrated to the US, and have lived here for at least three years or are American born children of Cape Verlean immigrants and are currently in high school.

If I agree to give permission for my child to take part, what will he/she be asked to do?
1. Answer the questionnaires, which should take about 45-60 minutes.
2. If he or she does not wish to answer a question, he/she can choose to skip it.

What are the risks to being in the study?:
• There are no expected risks.

What are the benefits to being in the study:
• Your child will be entered in a raffle and will be eligible to win one of two I-Pod shuffles or one of 100 gift cards in the value of $10.00.

How will the things my child says be kept private?
• The records of this study will be kept private.
• In any type of report we may write or present at meetings, we will not include your child’s name or anyone elses.
• Research records will be kept in a locked file.
• Research records will be destroyed within 3 years.
• Access to the research records will be limited to the researchers.
• However, sometimes, sponsors, funders, regulators, and the University IRB may have to review the research records.

What if I or my child chooses to not take part or leave the study?
• Taking part in the study is voluntary.
• If you and/or your child choose not to take part, it will not affect your present or future relations with the University.
• Your child is free to leave the study at any time, for whatever reason.
• You and your child will not be penalized or lose benefits for not taking part.
• You and your child will not be penalized or lose benefits if your child stops taking part in the study.

Will my child be dismissed from the Study?
• We ask that your child follows the directions to the best of her/his ability.
• If he/she is unable to do so, or the sponsor cancels the study, he/she may be dismissed.

Who do I contact if I have any questions?
• You can contact Maria T. Coutinho, MA and David L. Blustein, PhD who are the researchers in charge of this study. Their numbers are 617–552-4078, for Maria T. Coutinho, and 617-552-0795, for Dr. David L. Blustein.
• If you believe you may have suffered injury or harm from this research, contact Maria Coutinho at 617-552-4078. She will give you instructions on what to do next.
• If you have any questions about your rights as a person taking part in the study, you may contact: Director, Office for Human Research Participant Protection, Boston College at (617) 552-4778 or irb@bc.edu.

Will I get a copy of this consent form?
• Yes, you can keep it for your records and future reference.

Statement of Consent:
• I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form.
• I have been encouraged to ask questions.
• I have received answers to my questions.
• I give my consent for my child to take part in this study.
• I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

Signatures/Dates:
Study Participant (Print Name): _______________________________
Parent/Guardian (Print Name): _______________________________
Parent/Guardian (Signature): _______________________________ Date _______
Appendix B: Parental consent form in Portuguese

**Boston College Lynch School of Education**

AutORIZAÇÃO PATERNAL PARA PARTICIPAR NUM ESTUDO DE PESQUISA

"Identidade bicultural e vocacional: A promoção do interesse académico em estudantes imigrantes Cabo Verdeanos"

**Por que foi o meu filho/ a minha filha convidado (a) para participar neste estudo?**

- Porque ele ou ela nasceu em Cabo Verde, vive nos Estados Unidos por 3 anos ou mais, OU você é Caboverdeano e o seu filho/filha nasceu nos Estados Unidos.
- Porque ele ou ela é um/ uma estudante na escola secundária.
- Porque o seu filho/ a sua filha pode se interessar em partilhar a sua opinião sobre a vida e experiências de estudantes Cabo Verdeanos em escolas de ensino secundário nos Estados Unidos da América.
- Porque o seu filho/ a sua filha pode se interessar em partilhar a sua opinião sobre o que estudantes Cabo Verdeanos nos EUA pensam sobre o seu futuro trabalho e carreiras.

**O que tenho a fazer primeiro?**

- Antes de dar o seu consentimento por favor leia este formulário.
- Se tiver alguma pergunta sobre este estudo não hesite em perguntar.

**Qual é o propósito deste estudo?**

- Este estudo tem como alvo entender o que estudantes Cabo Verdeanos pensam e sentem que é importante sobre a sua cultura, e como isso afecta as suas experiências escolares e as suas ideias sobre o seu futuro vocacional.
- Este estudo vai incluir por volta de 300 adolescentes que como o seu filho/ a sua filha, nasceram em Cabo Verde, vierão para os EUA, vivem aqui há pelos menos 3 anos ou são filhos de imigrantes Caboverdeanos e são estudantes na escola secundária.

**Se eu der a autorização para que o meu filho/ a minha filha participe neste estudo, o que é que ele / ela terá que fazer?**

1. Responder aos questionários por um período de 45 a 60 minutos. Os questionários incluem perguntas sobre as atitudes dos alunos sobre si próprios, sobre a escola e o futuro.
2. O seu filho/ sua filha se por qualquer razão não quiser responder a qualquer pergunta, pode escolher deixar a resposta em branco.

**Quais são os riscos de participar neste estudo?**

- Que se saiba não há algum risco para o seu filho / sua filha associado com estes questionários.

**Quais são os benefícios de participar neste estudo?**

- O seu filho ou filha terá a oportunidade de ganhar um de dois I–Pod shuffles ou um de 100 cartões para uma loja no valor de $10.00 cada.

**Como serão as respostas do meu filho/ minha filha mantidas confidenciais?**

- A informação sobre a sua filha/ o seu filho será tratada com confidencialidade.
• Qualquer sumário do estudo que vamos escrever ou compartilhar em reuniões e revistas não incluirá o nome do seu filho/ filha ou de qualquer outro participante.
• Toda a informação obtida neste estudo será guardada num armário trancado.
• Toda a informação obtida neste estudo será destruída em 3 anos.
• Acesso à informação adquirida será limitado a membros da equipa de pesquisa.
• As vezes, reguladores e a Universidade têm que revisionar as pastas da pesquisa.

E se eu ou o meu filho/ filha decidir não participar no estudo ou retirar-se do estudo?
• A participação neste estudo é completamente voluntária.
• Se você ou o seu filho/sua filha decidir não participar, essa decisão não afectará a sua relação com a Universidade, actualmente ou no futuro.
• O seu filho / A sua filha pode recusar-se a fazer parte do estudo e retirar-se a qualquer momento e por qualquer razão.
• Você e o seu filho/ a sua filha não serão penalizados ou perderão benefícios por não participarem.
• Você e o seu filho/ a sua filha não serão penalizados ou perderão benefícios por parar de participar no estudo.

O meu filho/ filha pode ser expulsado/a do estudo?
• Pedimos que o seu filho/ filha siga as instruções da melhor maneira possível.
• Se ele ou ela for incapaz de fazer isso, ou se o estudo for cancelado, ele ou ela poderá ser convidado a retirar-se do estudo.

A quem devo contactar se tiver perguntas?
• Pode contactar Maria T. Coutinho, MA ou David L. Blustein, PhD os pesquisadores responsáveis por esta pesquisa. Os seus números de telefone são 617 –552-4078, para Maria T. Coutinho, e 617-552-0795, para Dr. David L. Blustein.
• Se você acredita que sofreu um acidente ou algum mal por causa desse estudo por favor contacte Maria Coutinho at 617-552-4078. Ela lhe dera informações sobre como proceder.
• Se tem perguntas sobre os direitos do seu filho ou filha como participante neste estudo, pode contactar: Diretor, Boston College Office of Human Research Participant Protection pelo telefone (617) 552-4778 ou irb@bc.edu.

Receberia uma cópia deste documento de autorização?
• Sim, pode ficar com uma cópia deste documento de autorização para guardar.

Autorização:
• Eu li e compreendo este documento de autorização.
• Foi me dada a oportunidade de fazer perguntas.
• As minhas perguntas foram respondidas de maneira satisfatória.
• Dou o consentimento voluntário para que o meu filho/ minha filha participe neste estudo.
• Eu recebi (ou vou receber) uma cópia desta Autorização.

Assinaturas/ Datas:
Nome em imprensa do participante: ______________________________
Nome em imprensa do Encarregado de Educação: __________________________________
Assinatura de autorização do Encarregado de Educação: _________________________
Data ____________________
Appendix C: Student assent form

*Boston College Lynch School of Education*
*Assent for Taking Part as a Subject in a Research Study*
"Bicultural & vocational identities: Promoting school engagement in a sample of Cape Verdean immigrants"

**Why have I been asked to take part in the study?**
- Because you are a student who was born in Cape Verde, has lived in the U.S. for at least three years OR you are American born from Cape Verdean parents
- Because you are currently in high school.
- Because you might have an interest in sharing your thoughts and feelings about the experiences of Cape Verdean students in high school in the U.S.
- Because you might have an interest in sharing your thoughts and feelings about how these students think and feel about their future work lives

**What do I do first?**
- Before agreeing, please read this form.
- Please ask any questions that you may have.

**What is the Study about?**
- This study is about what people think and feel is important about their culture, and about how it affects their school experiences and feelings about their future work lives.
- People who take part in this study will include about 300 students who like you have immigrated to the US, have lived here for at least three years, OR who are children of Cape Verdean immigrants and are currently in high school.

**If I agree to take part, what will I be asked to do?**
1. Answer the questionnaires, which should take about 45-60 minutes.
2. If you do not wish to answer a question, you can choose to skip it.

**What are the risks to being in the study?:**
- There are no expected risks.

**What are the benefits to being in the study:**
- You will be entered in a raffle for a chance to win one of two I-Pod shuffles or one of 100 store gift cards in the value of $10.00 each.

**How will things I say be kept private?**
- The records of this study will be kept private.
- In any type of report we may write or present at meetings, we will not include your name or anyone elses.
• Research records will be kept in a locked file.
• Research records will be destroyed within 3 years.
• Access to the research records will be limited to the researchers.
• However, sometimes, sponsors, funders, regulators, and the University IRB may have to review the research records.

**What if I choose to not take part or leave the study?**
• Taking part in the study is voluntary.
• If you choose not to take part, it will not affect your present or future relations with the University.
• You are free to leave the study at any time, for whatever reason.
• You will not be penalized or lose benefits for not taking part.
• You will not be penalized or lose benefits if you stop taking part in the study.

**Will I be dismissed from the Study?**
• We ask that you follow the directions to the best of your ability.
• If you are unable to do so, or the sponsor cancels the study, you may be dismissed.

**Who do I contact if I have any questions?**
• You can contact Maria T. Coutinho, MA and David L. Blustein, PhD who are the researchers in charge of this study. Their numbers are 617 –552-4078, for Maria T. Coutinho, and 617-552-0795, for Dr. David L. Blustein.
• If you believe you may have suffered injury or harm from this research, contact Maria Coutinho at 617-552-4078. She will give you instructions on what to do next.
• If you have any questions about your rights as a person taking part in the study, you may contact: Director, Office for Human Research Participant Protection, Boston College at (617) 552-4778 or irb@bc.edu.

**Will I get a copy of this consent form?**
• Yes, you can keep it for your records and future reference.

**Statement of Consent:**
• I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form.
• I have been encouraged to ask questions.
• I have received answers to my questions.
• I give my consent to take part in this study.
• I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

**Signatures/Dates:**
• Study Participant (Print Name): ___________________________
  Participant Signature: ______________________ Date ______
  Witness _________________________________
Appendix D: Demographic questionnaire

Cape Verdean Student Questionnaire

Thank you for taking part in the research study. Below you will find the questions. Most can be answered by bubbling the answer that best applies to you on the answer sheet, while some you will have to write in information. Try to answer each question quickly without stopping to think too long. If you wish you may also write your own comments in the questionnaire.

First, here are some questions about yourself and your background. Fill in the blank or check the answer that best applies.
1. How old are you? ________________ years.

2. What is your gender?
   a. Female / Girl     b. Male/ Boy

3. In what grade are you at school? ________ grade

4. Where you born in Cape Verde?
   a. YES          b. NO

5. If you were NOT born in Cape Verde, in what country were you born?
   a. US
   b. Other (write in) _____________________________

6. If you were NOT born in the US, how old were you when you came to the United States? ________ years

7. Are you a United States of America citizen?
   ___YES       ___NO       ___Don’t Know

8. Are you a citizen of another country?
   ___YES       ___NO       ___Don’t Know

9. What is your ethnic background?
   ___ Cape Verdean
   ___ Portuguese
   ___ American
   ___ Other (Write in) _____________________________

10. What is your mother’s ethnic background?
    ___ Cape Verdean
        ___ Portuguese
11. What is your father’s ethnic background?
   ___ Cape Verdean
   ___ Portuguese
   ___ American
   ___ Other (Write in) __________________________
   ___ Don’t know

12. Where was your mother born?
   ___ Cape Verde
   ___ United States
   ___ Other (Write in) __________________________
   ___ Don’t know

13. Where was your father born?
   ___ Cape Verde
   ___ United States
   ___ Other (Write in) __________________________
   ___ Don’t know

14. What is the current occupation of your mother/ guardian?
   ___ Unskilled: farm labor, food service, janitor, house cleaner, factory work
   ___ Skilled work, such as technician, carpenter, hairdresser, seamstress
   ___ Office work, such as clerk, salesperson, secretary, small business
   ___ Professional: doctor, lawyer, teacher, business executive
   ___ Not currently working: unemployed, retired, homemaker, student
   ___ Other (specify:) ______________________________
   ___ Don’t know

15. What is the current occupation of your father/ guardian?
   ___ Unskilled: farm labor, food service, janitor, house cleaner, factory work
   ___ Skilled work, such as technician, carpenter, hairdresser, seamstress
   ___ Office work, such as clerk, salesperson, secretary, small business
   ___ Professional: doctor, lawyer, teacher, business executive
   ___ Not currently working: unemployed, retired, homemaker, student
   ___ Other (specify:) ______________________________
   ___ Don’t know

16. Do you currently work?
   a. YES
   b. NO (skip # 17, 18 and 19)

17. If you work, please answer the following questions:
What do you do for work: ______________________________
18. On average, how many hours a week do you work:
   a. Up to 5hrs a week
   b. Between 6-10 hrs a week
   c. Between 11-15 hrs a week
   d. Between 16-20hrs a week
   e. More than 21 hrs a week

19. How long have you been working? ____________months.
Appendix E: Career Planfulness Scale

Career Planfulness Scale

Please respond to these questions by writing in the number that best describes your experience from “1” (strongly agree) to “4” (strongly disagree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write the number:

_____1. I have or am planning to find out about educational and occupational possibilities by going to the library, surfing the web, or talking to somebody who knows.

_____2. I have or am planning to talk about career plans with an adult who knows something about me.

_____3. I am taking or plan to take classes which will help me decide what line of work to go into when I leave school or college.

_____4. I am taking or plan to take classes which will help me in college, in job training, or on the job.

_____5. I am taking or plan to take part in school or out-of-school activities which will help me in college, in training, or on the job.

_____6. I am taking or plan to take part in school or after-school activities (for example, science club, school newspaper, volunteer nurse’s aide) which will help me decide what kind of work to go into when I leave school.

_____7. I am planning to get a part-time or summer job which will help me decide what kind of work I might go into.

_____8. I am planning to get money for college or for job training.

_____9. I am working out problems that might make it hard for me to get the kind of training or the kind of work I would like.

_____10. I plan to get the kind of training, education, or experience I will need to get the kind of work I would like.

_____11. I am giving a lot of thought about the kind of job I will get once I have finished my education and training.
The next questions concern the kind of work you would like to do when you complete your education. At this stage, you probably have not definitely decided on a specific occupation, but you probably can think of a field of work or type of job you would like to work at.

Directions: Keeping in mind the type of job you think you might like to be in after you finish your schooling, choose the one best answer which tells the amount of knowledge you already have about these jobs.

A. No knowledge.
B. A little knowledge.
C. An average amount of knowledge.
D. A good deal of knowledge.

Write the letter:

______12. What people really do on the job.

______13. The abilities needed for the occupation.

______14. The working conditions on such jobs.

______15. The education or training needed to get such a job.

______16. The need for people on that kind of job in the future.

______17. Different ways of getting into that occupation.

______18. The chances of advancing in that kind of job or occupation.

______19. What sort of working day and work week I might have in the occupation.
## Identification with School

The following questions are about your thoughts and feelings about school. Please respond to these questions by filling in the response that best fits you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I feel proud of being part of my school.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

2. I am treated with as much respect as other students in my class.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

3. I can get a good job even if my grades are bad.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

4. The only time I get attention in school is when I cause trouble.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

5. I like to participate in a lot of school activities (for example, sports, clubs, plays).
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

6. School is one of the most important things in my life.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

7. Many of the things we learn in class are useless.
   - [ ] Strongly Agree
   - [ ] Agree
   - [ ] Disagree
   - [ ] Strongly Disagree

8. Most of my teachers don’t really care about me.
9. Most of the time I would like to be any place other than in school.

10. There are teachers or other adults in my school that I can talk to if I have a problem.

11. Most of what I learn in school will be useful when I get a job.

12. School is one of my favorite places to be.

13. People at school are interested in what I have to say.

14. School is often a waste of time.

15. Dropping out of school would be a huge mistake for me.

16. School is more important than most people think.
Appendix G: Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale (SMAS)

**Stephenson Multigroup Acculturation Scale (SMAS)**

Below are a number of statements that evaluate changes that occur when people interact with others of different cultures or ethnic groups. For questions that refer to "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN" or "NATIVE COUNTRY," please refer to the country from which your family originally came. For questions referring to "NATIVE LANGUAGE," please refer to the language spoken where your family originally came.

Circle the answer that best matches your response to each statement

1. I understand English, but I'm not fluent in English.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

2. I am informed about current affairs in the United States.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

3. I speak my native language with my friends and acquaintances from my country of origin.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

4. I have never learned to speak the language of my native country.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

5. I feel totally comfortable with (Anglo) American people.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

6. I eat traditional foods from my native culture.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

7. I have many (Anglo) American acquaintances.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

8. I feel comfortable speaking my native language.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

9. I am informed about current affairs in my native country.
   False   Partly false   Partly true   True

10. I know how to read and write in my native language.
    False   Partly false   Partly true   True

11. I feel at home in the United States.
    False   Partly false   Partly true   True
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>12. I attend social functions with people from my native country.</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Partly false</th>
<th>Partly true</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. I feel accepted by (Anglo) Americans.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. I speak my native language at home.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. I regularly read magazines of my ethnic group.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. I know how to speak my native language.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17. I know how to prepare (Anglo) American foods.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. I am familiar with the history of my native country.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. I regularly read an American newspaper.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. I like to listen to music of my ethnic group.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. I like to speak my native language.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22. I feel comfortable speaking English.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. I speak English at home.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24. I speak my native language with my friends.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25. I attend social functions with (Anglo) American people.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26. I think in my native language.</td>
<td>False</td>
<td>Partly false</td>
<td>Partly true</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
27. I stay in close contact with family members and relatives in my native country.
   False Partly false Partly true True

28. I am familiar with important people in American history.
   False Partly false Partly true True

29. I think in English.
   False Partly false Partly true True

30. I speak English with my friends.
   False Partly false Partly true True

31. I like to eat American foods.
   False Partly false Partly true True
Appendix H: Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure – Revised (MEIM-R)

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure – Revised (MEIM-R)

Please respond to these questions by circling a letter from “A” (strongly disagree) to “E” (strongly agree).

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions and customs.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E

2. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E

3. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E

4. I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E

5. I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E

6. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
   (Strongly Disagree) (Disagree) (Not Sure) (Agree) (Strongly Agree)
   A B C D E
Appendix I: National Identity

**National Identity**

People can think of themselves in various ways. For example, they may feel that they are members of various ethnic groups, such as Vietnamese (etc.), and that they are part of the larger society, American. These questions are about how you think of yourself in this respect. Circle your answer from the choices below.

1. How do you think of yourself?
   a. I think of myself as Cape Verdean.
      Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Fairly well   Very well
   b. I think of myself as American.
      Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Fairly well   Very well
   c. I think of myself as part of another ethnic group. What group?
      ________________________________
      Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Fairly well   Very well

2. I feel that I am part of American culture.
   Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Not Sure   Somewhat Agree   Strongly Agree
   A                     B                     C                 D           E

3. I am proud of being American.
   Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Not Sure   Somewhat Agree   Strongly Agree
   A                     B                     C                 D           E

4. I am happy to be American.
   Strongly Disagree   Somewhat Disagree   Not Sure   Somewhat Agree   Strongly Agree
   A                     B                     C                 D           E

People differ in how important they consider aspects of themselves to be. How important are the following aspects of yourself to you?

5. That I am American.
   Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Important   Very important

6. That I am a person/human being.
   Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Important   Very important

7. That I am Cape Verdean.
   Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Important   Very important

8. That I am male or female (boy or girl).
   Not at all   A little   Somewhat   Important   Very important
Appendix J: Perceived Discrimination

**Perceived Discrimination**
When people with different backgrounds are together, one may sometimes feel unfairly treated. The following questions are about these kinds of experiences. Please circle “A” (Strongly Disagree) through “E” (Strongly Agree) to indicate your answer.

A= Strongly Disagree  
B= Somewhat Disagree  
C= Not Sure/ Neutral  
D= Somewhat Agree  
E= Strongly Agree

1. I think that others have behaved in an unfair or negative way towards my ethnic group.  
   A   B   C   D   E

2. I don’t feel accepted by Americans.  
   A   B   C   D   E

3. I feel Americans have something against me.  
   A   B   C   D   E

4. I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background.  
   A   B   C   D   E

5. I have been threatened or attacked because of my ethnic background.  
   A   B   C   D   E

How often do the following people treat you unfairly or negatively because of your ethnic background? Circle the answer that best describes your experiences.

6. Teachers  
   Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Very Often

7. Other adults outside of school  
   Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Very Often

8. Other students in your school  
   Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Very Often

9. Other kids/ teens outside of school  
   Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  Very Often
Appendix L: Vocational Identity subscale of My Vocational Situation

**Vocational Identity**

Try the answer all the following statement as mostly TRUE or mostly FALSE. Circle the answer that best represents your present opinion.

In thinking about your present job or in planning for an occupation or career:

1. I Need reassurance that I have made the right choice of occupation. **T** **F**
2. I am concerned that my present interests may change over the years. **T** **F**
3. I am uncertain about the occupations I could perform well. **T** **F**
4. I don’t know what my major strengths and weaknesses are. **T** **F**
5. The jobs I can do may not pay enough to live the kind of life I want. **T** **F**
6. If I had to make an occupational choice right now, I am afraid I would make a bad choice. **T** **F**
7. I need to find out what kind of career I should follow. **T** **F**
8. Making up my mind about a career has been a long and difficult problem for me. **T** **F**
9. I am confused about the whole problem of deciding on a career. **T** **F**
10. I am not sure that my present occupational choice or job is right for me. **T** **F**
11. I don’t know enough about what workers do in various occupations. **T** **F**
12. No single occupation appeals to me strongly. **T** **F**
13. I am uncertain about which occupation I would enjoy. **T** **F**
14. I would like to increase the number of occupations I could consider. **T** **F**
15. My estimates of my abilities and talents vary a lot from year to year. **T** **F**
16. I am not sure of myself in many areas in life. **T** **F**
17. I have known what occupation I want to follow for less than a year. **T** **F**
18. I can’t understand how some people can be so set about what they want to do.