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INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHNIC IDENTITY, SOCIAL  
EXCHANGE, AND CAREER SUCCESS FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE  
WORKPLACE

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DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
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This dissertation, written by Sy August Henderson, and entitled Investigating the Relationship between Ethnic Identity, Social Exchange, and Career Success for African Americans in the Workplace, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

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Florida International University, 2023

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## DEDICATION

To my Mother, I miss you every day and I hope I have made you proud.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee members for their time, grace, guidance, and support during this process. I also would like to thank Dr. Manjul Gupta for his time, coaching, and guidance as my committee chair. You kept me accountable, on task, and focused, and I could not have completed this process without your leadership. I would also like to thank my cohort for their support, comradery, laughter, and friendships throughout this process. Completing this degree during COVID-19 was more than tough, and I had a few dark days, but your support and friendships really helped me to continue moving forward. Lastly, I would like to thank my friend and classmate Robert Alrod for his support, encouragement, and inspiration. I miss you my friend, and I know you are in heaven cheering our cohort on as we complete this journey towards receiving our doctorate degrees.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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by

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This study evaluates what organizational factors influence the career satisfaction of African Americans in the workplace and whether these factors are relevant across this population. To evaluate what organizational factors influence career satisfaction, a framework was created leveraging the constructs of social exchange to evaluate the quality of relationships an individual may have across multiple levels within an organization. The constructs include an individual's view of leader-member exchange, perceived organizational support, and mentorship. The framework also examines whether these factors are relevant across the population by understanding whether an individual's level of ethnic identity influences the strength of these relationships. A large African American population was used to assess these factors empirically through quantitative analysis.

After completing the analysis, the results show that perceived organizational support and mentorship are factors that influence the career satisfaction of African Americans in the workplace. This is significant because of the limited research testing theories such as social exchange with large African American sample populations and the opportunities for

future research in this area. Ethnic identity did not significantly influence the relationships between the constructs, and the leader-member exchange was eliminated due to significant cross-loadings.

When evaluating managerial implications, this study's results provide insights across a variety of domains. Understanding what factors influence African Americans' career satisfaction in the workplace could enable more focused actions and interventions to improve career counseling, employee engagement, and diversity and inclusion. By showing evidence that perceived organizational support and mentoring could lead to higher levels of career satisfaction, human resource groups, leaders, and diversity and inclusion practitioners have an additional tool to evaluate the health of their African American employees' relationships within their organizations. This is important because to identify the right strategy, we must pinpoint the problem, and leveraging the theory and principles of social exchange could lead to more robust conversations and hopefully more impactful solutions for this population.

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## INTRODUCTION

Motivated by the social and political pressures of the 1960s and 1970s, a new wave of college-educated African Americans gained access to higher levels of corporate management and professional opportunities not previously available to them (Collins, 1997). In response to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Federal Government's empowerment of the Equal Opportunity Commission, U.S. corporations were compelled to evaluate and change discriminatory hiring practices and provide minority hiring data or face economic sanctions (Collins, 1983). This spurred the creation of diversity training in Corporate America based on the need to educate employees on key laws and regulations to reduce the company's exposure to expensive discrimination lawsuits (Anand & Winters, 2008). Although corporate diversity training typically focused on compliance, strong corporate and government enforcement (through policies such as Affirmative Action) increased access for African Americans; however, this progress was stalled with President Ronald Reagan's corporate de-regulation policies in the 1980s (Anand & Winters, 2008). The lack of government enforcement and cost pressures influenced some companies to eliminate diversity training or caused others to shift their focus to assimilating women and ethnic minorities into corporate cultures (Anand & Winters, 2008).

It wasn't until the late 1980's that the diversity industry was born through the publishing of the Hudson Institute's *Workforce 2000* (Anand & Winters, 2008). The report, which focused on the changing demographic landscape in the workforce of the future, created a paradigm shift in projections of the composition of the workforce in the

United States and provided a business case for diversity (Anand & Winters, 2008; Johnston, 1987; Thomas Jr, 1990). Diversity became more than just an issue of compliance because businesses would be forced to identify ways to integrate this growing population into their historically homogenous cultures (Johnston, 1987). However, even with this newfound focus, there were still major challenges to African American career mobility, and policies such as Affirmative Action had only created marginal improvements in increasing African American representation in management or senior leadership positions (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990).

A few years after the publishing of *Workforce 2000*, an African American educator named R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr. influenced another paradigm shift in the thought processes behind diversity by focusing on the experiences of women and ethnic minorities after they entered the workplace (Thomas Jr, 1990). He is known as one of the pioneers of diversity management because of his assertion that companies must learn to maximize the capabilities of their diverse workforce to remain competitive and survive. He believed that for a country (like the United States) to compete in a global economy, they must maximize their entire diverse workforce's productivity. To do this, they would need identify the root causes of prejudice and inequality in their workplace and modify their cultural norms, behaviors, and systems to create a more inclusive environment where everyone can succeed, including white males (Thomas Jr, 1990).

In the 30 years since the initial business case for diversity and heightened awareness created by Thomas, Jr., a multi-billion dollar industry focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion has been created; however, reaching the upper echelons of leadership across industries and achieving workplace equity for African Americans

remains a significant challenge (Hancock et al., 2021). For example, a recent McKinsey (Hancock et al., 2021) study showed that “black workers have higher unemployment, lower wages, and worse prospects than other workers” (p. 3). They are underrepresented in high-paying industries, less likely to be employed compared to age groups with similar levels of education, and have less representation and higher attrition rates at senior levels of organizations (Hancock et al., 2021). In addition, they are nearly twice as likely as other minority groups to perceive that their race will make it more difficult for them to achieve their goals, will cause them to perceive that their relationships with others at work are transactional, and will make them believe that they cannot share their experiences at work without fear of negative repercussions (Hancock et al., 2021). This is important because these statistics not only reflect what they have achieved, but how they feel within their current work environment which could create higher levels of disengagement, turnover, and less career satisfaction (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Hancock et al., 2021; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Thompson & Sakaquaptewa, 2002). However, the data is not all negative, and impactful opportunities have been identified. For instance, when black employees receive support through career sponsorship in organizations, they are 65% more likely to be promoted and 60% less likely to quit within a year than their peers (Hewlett & Ihezie, 2022). This improvement in how they are treated significantly impacts them as individuals and their employers, but only 5% of black employees have career sponsors, compared to 20% of their white colleagues (Hewlett & Ihezie, 2022).

The purpose of this study is to further explore the workplace experiences articulated above by taking a deeper dive into the impact of workplace relationships and

levels of organizational support on African American career success; however, it will take a novel approach by focusing specifically on this population, their perceptions, and treating them as a diverse versus a nominal or homogenous cultural group. This is important because career development theorists have emphasized the significance of identity development and salience in the development of effective career management strategies for individuals, which is the overarching goal of this research (Blustein et al., 1989; Kerka, 1998; Parham & Austin, 1994)

This will be done by leveraging two highly researched and applied theories in academic literature. The first is the theory of social exchange, which is one of the most researched and widely applied theories for explaining workplace behavior and relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). It is based on a social exchange, which was summarized by (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005)) as “actions contingent on the rewarding reactions of others, which over time provide for mutually and rewarding transactions and relationships” (p. 18). The second theory is the theory of social-identity (Tajfel, 1981) which is defined as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from (his/her) knowledge of (his/her) membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 255). Previous research has shown that personal identification in a group (including an ethnic group) increases the influence of fellow group members but reduces openness to social influence from non-group members (Turner et al., 1987). This is important because not all African Americans have the same levels of ethnic or racial identity and may employ different relationship strategies based on their sense of identity, connection, and sense of belonging to their ethnic group (Chrobot-Mason & Thomas, 2002).

Therefore, the study will answer the following research questions: **What is the relationship between social exchange and career success for African Americans in the workplace? What is the moderating effect of ethnic identity on the relationship of social exchange and career success for African Americans in the workplace?**

Based on the robustness of the literature and theories focused on career success and self-identity, we will first conduct a thorough literature review and highlight the most important concepts on each topic. We will then narrow our scope by conceptualizing the most important theories and identifying highly reliable and validated measures. This will enable the development of a survey instrument that collects participants' perceptions of different types of social exchanges in the workplace and their level of ethnic identity. The survey will be delivered online and targeted individuals in the United States who identify as African American. After the data is analyzed, the study aims to provide insights into what factors influence the career success of African Americans and identify tangible actions which could be implemented. It also aims to identify further research areas which could be explored to drive more positive career outcomes for this group.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Career Success**

Career success is a complex social construct commonly discussed, researched, and analyzed based on many objective and subjective factors (Ng et al., 2005). For example, if looking solely at labor statistics, African Americans are in low-paying jobs, have high employment, and are in less high-paying industries (Hancock et al., 2021). However, these statistics do not capture the level of intrinsic satisfaction this group feels

about their career achievements, which may be influenced by cultural, environmental, and historical factors (J. H. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Kristen M. Shockley et al., 2016).

The two most common definitions of career success are objective career success, which focuses on more external, observable, and comparative levels of success, and subjective career success, which is more internal, affect-based, and focuses on an individual's level of satisfaction with what they have accomplished in their career (Ng et al., 2005). The study of career success has been popular since the early 1900s. A recent meta-analytic found almost 600 publications or articles on career success, with 244 quantitative publications since 1973 (Spurk et al., 2019) focusing on antecedents or outcomes of career success. Since our research focuses on “subjective career success” as measured by career satisfaction, our literature review will focus on this concept and the theoretical frameworks used to evaluate it.

### **Subjective Career Success**

The concept of subjective career success is a broad one that has been studied as a multi-dimensional construct, as affect or cognition based, and through self-referent or other-referent comparisons (Ng & Feldman, 2014). When evaluating it as a multi-dimensional construct, an individual's perception of their financial, job, interpersonal, and life success has been included in its definition (Gattiker & Larwood, 1986; Ng & Feldman, 2014; Kristen M Shockley et al., 2016).

When evaluating through the lens of self-referent versus other referent comparisons, most research focuses on self-referent comparisons between an individual's perception of their current success level and their personal goals, achievements, and future aspirations (Ng & Feldman, 2014). The most popular measure for career success is

affect-based, which measures an individual's emotions and satisfaction with careers (Kristen M Shockley et al., 2016). Greenhaus's career satisfaction scale, which measures an individual's perception of their satisfaction with their career goals, income, advancement, and new skills, is one of the most widely used instruments for measuring affect-based subjective career success (J. H. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Kristen M Shockley et al., 2016). Based on the reliability of this measure and its relevance to the research topic, this is the instrument which will be used to measure career success in the online survey.

### **African Americans and Career Success**

Compared to the abundance of literature on career success, there is a paucity of quantitative research on the key indicators of career success among African Americans (Russer-Mims & Palmer, 2009). Research has shown that minority status and non-white race have been negatively associated with career success, especially objective factors such as salary and promotions (Judge et al., 1995; Ng et al., 2005). There have also been studies describing African Americans' career experiences, emphasizing the discrimination black managers face and their lower levels of career satisfaction (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990). Finally, there has been research on the unique experiences of African American women in the workplace, with a focus on the difficulties they face due to their "dual minority" status (Smith et al., 2019)

### **Theoretical Approaches to Career Success**

Career success has been studied through a wide variety of theoretical frameworks which have evaluated key predictors of objective or subjective career success, or both (Spurk et al., 2019). Two foundational theories that provide a useful framework to define

the predictors and barriers of career success are “contest and sponsored mobility.”

Contest mobility theory believes that an individual can compete for upward mobility, while sponsored mobility believes that people of power and influence choose individuals through their relationships and networks (R. Turner, 1960).

### **Contest Mobility and Human Capital**

To view career success through the lens of the contest-mobility paradigm is to view advancement as a competition in which individuals compete for and win the “prize” of organizational rewards (salary, promotions) based on their knowledge, skills, motivation, and work ethic (Becker, 1962; Cruz & Blancero, 2017; Ng et al., 2005; R. H. Turner, 1960). When Turner’s mobility framework was used to classify predictors of career success, human capital predictors were most commonly associated with contest mobility (Ng et al., 2005).

Human capital is an individual’s educational, personal, and professional work experience (Becker, 1962). It assumes that the individual’s investments in these areas will improve their work-related skills and performance. When evaluating this based on contest mobility theory, these investments should lead to increased employer rewards, including salary, promotions, prestige, etc. (Wayne et al., 1999). However, the underlying assumption is that the contest is fair, free from discrimination, and open to anyone willing to commit the time and effort to compete (Becker, 1962; J. H. Greenhaus et al., 1990).

### **Sponsored Mobility and Social Capital**

To view career success through a sponsored-mobility paradigm is to view advancement as a contest where individuals win the “prize” of organizational rewards (salary, promotions) based on their relationships, networks, and sponsorship by

individuals with status and power (Becker, 1962; Cruz & Blancero, 2017; Ng et al., 2005; R. H. Turner, 1960). When Turner's mobility framework was used to classify predictors of career success, organizational sponsorship and socio-demographic predictors were most commonly associated with sponsored mobility (Ng et al., 2005). Organizational sponsorship is important because it provides an individual with access to the information, resources, and career sponsorship (also known as social capital) necessary for career advancement (Seibert et al., 2001), while socio-demographic factors determine who is chosen to receive those resources and benefits (J. H. Greenhaus et al., 1990).

Colman (1988) defined "social capital" as the factors within a social group or structure that creates value for the individuals within it through actions. It is an intangible asset that creates value through relationships and networks to reach a specific goal (Coleman, 1988). There is specific terminology used in social capital research, where a relationship is called a "tie," a series of relationships called a "network," the core individual within the network is called an "ego," and the individuals in that person's network called "alters" (Knoke & Kuklinski, 1982).

Granovetter (1973) made one of the first attempts to conceptualize social capital and focused on how the strength of an individual's social ties could aid in their job search process. Granovetter theorized that individuals would have both strong (inside of their immediate social circle) and weak (outside of their immediate social circle) ties in their social circles, and it is the weak ties that provide the most value due to holding unique information and resources which the individual could leverage. Granovetter found that weak ties had better information on job openings than strong ties among the individuals he interviewed (Granovetter, 1973). Although the "weak-tie" theory is one of the

foundational theories of social capital, research has found mixed empirical results supporting the theory and specific career outcomes (McPherson et al., 1992).

Burt's (1992) theory on structural holes focuses less on the strength of an individual's ties and more on the relationships within their social network. A structural hole occurs when two individuals in a social network are not connected, and it is advantageous for an individual to have a large network of unconnected individuals. These advantages are generated by increasing network members' access to information, bargaining power, control over resources, and visibility of career opportunities. Burt argues that structural holes, not weak ties, provide the connection or bridge to additional information that can be utilized to provide value to the individual.

The final social capital theory I will discuss is the theory of social resources, Lin et al. Lin et al. (1981) tested and found that an individual has an advantage in "occupational attainment if he has access and uses social resources". This theory leverages and builds off the weak tie theory by finding that it is not only the weak tie but the status of the weak tie which provides value to the individual. It also shifts the focus from the gaps in the social network to the characteristics of an individual's social network as it relates to the acquisition of high-status jobs and advancement (Lin et al., 1981).

Social capital is often viewed as fundamental human capital in achieving career success (Coleman, 1988; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1994). Social capital can be created through relationships or exchanges within an organization, such as with a manager or mentors, or outside an organization through informal networks and professional organizations (Grimland et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2001).

## **Theoretical Frameworks: Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory**

Having reviewed the relevant literature about career success in general and career success for African Americans specifically, I will now discuss the theoretical concepts which are the foundation of this research study. These concepts provide the theoretical framework for hypothesis development and the additional measures which will be used for data collection and analysis.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

While social capital focuses on the “structure” of an individual’s network, social exchange focuses on the “quality” of the relationships within the network through reciprocal exchange. Blau (1964) defines social exchanges as unspecified obligations when one person does another a favor. Employees tend to take a long-term approach to social exchange relationships, with the level of reciprocity between an employee and their workplace over time determining the quality and balance of the exchange (Wayne et al., 1997). The two types of exchanges most frequently studied are those between an employee and their manager (leader-member exchange) and between an employee and their organization (perceived organizational support) (Wayne et al., 1997). Both types have been linked to positive individual, career, and organizational outcomes, including improvements in individual well-being, turnover reduction, and improved career satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Ng et al., 2005; Riggle et al., 2009; Wayne et al., 1999).

Another form of organizational sponsorship and social exchange correlated with career success (especially subjective forms such as career satisfaction) is mentorship (Ng et al., 2005). Mentorship has increased organizational commitment and career satisfaction

across various populations, including professional and managerial employees (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Whitely et al., 1992).

### **Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)**

Based on social exchange theory, LMX has been an important area of organizational sciences research for the past four decades. Research on LMX was significant for two reasons: (1) it focused on the relationship between a leader and each of their subordinates; and (2) it highlighted the variation in the relationship between a leader and each subordinate (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Wayne et al., 1997). The nature of a leader and subordinate relationship differs greatly depending on LMX, with low-LMX described as more transactional relationships and high-LMX as more interdependent and collaborative ones (Blau, 1964; Wayne et al., 1997).

The antecedents to LMX are bountiful, but this review will focus on three highly researched areas: follower characteristics, leader characteristics, and interpersonal variables (Dulebohn et al., 2012). When evaluating follower characteristics, areas such as follower competence (Graen & Scandura, 1987), follower personality (Dulebohn et al., 2012), and follower attitudes and behaviors (Graen & Scandura, 1987; Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994) were significantly correlated with LMX. For leader characteristics, areas such as leader perceptions, behaviors, and personality were significantly correlated with LMX (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Finally, when evaluating interpersonal variables, follower similarity and likeability significantly influence LMX (Liden et al., 1993).

LMX has also been correlated with significant outcomes in management research. Those outcomes can be summarized as behavioral, attitudinal, perceptual, and role status (Dulebohn et al., 2012). The most important behavioral outcomes include a negative

relationship between turnover intentions and organizational citizenship behavior. The key attitude outcomes are supervisor satisfaction and overall job satisfaction, while the key perceptual outcomes are empowerment and procedural justice. Finally, important role status outcomes included a negative association with role ambiguity and role conflict (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

When looking at race results and how it impacts LMX formation, overall results have been mixed, with very few studies showing its effects on LMX (Randolph-Seng et al., 2016). One reason that has been hypothesized is the importance of organizational contextual variables when analyzing LMX with demographic variables (Scandura & Lankau, 1996). Regarding African Americans, no study has been identified that focuses solely on this population and LMX. However, a few studies have included this demographic within a large sample population but not with enough numbers to be impactful (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

### **Perceived Organizational Support (POS)**

Based on social exchange and organizational support theory, POS examines the relationship between an employee and the organization they work for and the employee's belief that the organization supports them and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Based on the concepts of organizational commitment and social exchange, understanding the process in which employee beliefs are shaped and influenced by organizational practices, norms, and behaviors has created a better understanding of what improves or erodes the employee-employer relationship (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kurtessis et al., 2017).

When looking at the most common actions that create or erode POS, treatment by organization members, employee-organization relationship quality, and human resources and job conditions have been found to significantly impact the development of POS (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Treatment by organization members most commonly includes research on fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), with fairness being shown analytically to have the largest impact out of the three (Kurtessis et al., 2017). In addition, research has shown that employee-organization relationship quality in areas such as employee-employer work value congruence (Erdogan et al., 2004) and psychological contract fulfillment (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rousseau, 1995) have also been linked to the creation of POS. Lastly, regarding human resources and job conditions, training opportunities were the most strongly related to POS (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Additional factors impacting POS development are the individual's perception of reciprocity and the discretionary nature of the actions. The perception of reciprocation is based on an individual's exchange ideology which is how much they are willing to exchange work effort for tangible and intangible benefits. Their exchange ideology is influenced by many factors, including their self-identity (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In evaluating discretionary actions, the individual must perceive that the actions from the organization are discretionary and fulfill socioemotional needs in order to drive stronger commitments and beliefs in the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Regarding the most prevalent outcomes of POS, there are three broad categories: orientation towards the organization and work, subjective well-being, and behavioral

outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Regarding orientation toward the organization and work, areas such as trust felt, obligation, and organizational identification have all been associated with POS outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017). When looking at subjective well-being, areas such as job satisfaction and organizationally driven self-esteem have all been positive POS outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Lastly, when looking at behavioral outcomes like effort, role performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors, they have all been positively associated with POS (Kurtessis et al., 2017). The summary of the results provided above is not exhaustive, but it demonstrates the significant impact that POS can have on organizations and individuals.

When looking at the impact of POS on African Americans, few studies have identified where they were the primary sample group. However, the identification of studies looking into the impacts of gender on POS (Singh et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2020) shows that analysis focused on ethnic minorities could be a future area of exploration.

### **Mentoring**

The study of key developmental relationships in a person's life has been prevalent for decades, but the career benefits associated with mentoring in the workplace have been a popular topic since the early 1980s (Allen et al., 2004; Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008; Kram, 1983). There are multiple definitions of mentoring in the literature, but it is loosely defined as a more experienced individual who helps a more inexperienced individual navigate life or work situations (Kram, 1983). A mentor typically provides a mentee with psychosocial and career support. Examples of psychosocial support include friendship counseling, role modeling, and career support, including sponsorship,

advocating, and coaching. Mentoring has also been associated with various outcomes, including salary, promotions, and career satisfaction (Allen et al., 2004).

Researchers typically divide mentoring's antecedents into individual, relational, and structural/organizational factors when examining them (Allen et al., 2004; Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008). For example, key individual characteristics of the protégé include proactive personality, emotional intelligence, and learning goal orientation (Allen et al., 2004). For relationship factors, key factors include gender composition, ethnic composition, and perceived similarity; for structural/organizational factors, supervisory mentoring and perceived support for mentoring were included (Allen et al., 2004).

Typically, when analyzing the key career outcomes of mentoring, researchers classify them according to objective and subjective factors. Mentoring has been associated with favorable objective and subjective outcomes, including salary and promotions, as well as job and career satisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008).

When analyzing the research on mentoring for African Americans, studies have shown that while they may face barriers to access, African Americans still have the same amount of mentoring relationships as white Americans (O'Neill, 2012). This could be due to various factors, including African Americans' willingness to have mentors of other races and outside their functions/departments versus white men (Thomas, 1990). When examining the functions of mentoring, results have been mixed regarding whether a mentee will receive more psychosocial versus career-related mentoring based on race; however, one interesting finding is that when an individual has a white male mentor, objective measures, such as salary, increase (O'Neill, 2012).

## **Social Identity Theory**

Tajfel (1981) defines social identity as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from (his/her) knowledge of (his/her) membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 255). Previous research has shown that personal identification in a group increases the influence of fellow group members but reduces openness to social influence from non-group members (Turner et al., 1987). Research has also shown that socially identifying strongly with one group leads to viewing non-group members as less trustworthy, less positively, and dissimilar (Jetten et al., 1996). Although an individual can be a part of multiple social groups or sub-groups, for the purpose of this study, social identity theory will be conceptualized through an individual’s membership in an ethnic group or their ethnic identity.

## **Ethnic Identity**

Essentially, ethnic identity is a sense of connection, belonging, and commitment to a particular ethnic group. It is a multifaceted concept based on theories of self-identity, ego identity, and group identity and has been extensively studied from both social-psychological and developmental perspectives. Various terms, such as racial identity, reference group orientation, and group identity, have been employed in its study (Thomas et al., 1998). When evaluating through the lens of social identity, (Tajfel, 1981) defines it as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from (his/her) knowledge of (his/her) membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (p. 255).

The development of ethnic identity is founded on the ego identity model of Erikson (Erikson, 1968). It is based on the subjective feeling of sameness and comfort that provide individuals with a strong sense of self that guides future actions (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Identity is not innate in each individual but nurtured and developed from childhood through adulthood (Erikson, 1968). James Marcia (Marcia, 1980) further developed the concept of identity formation by defining it as two processes, exploration and commitment. The processes may be evaluated individually or collectively, and their interactions result in four identity statuses: identity diffusion (engaged in neither process), identity foreclosure (commitment without exploration), moratorium (exploration without commitment), and achieved identity (exploration and commitment) (Marcia, 1980). Marcia's focus was on personal identity and not ethnic identity. While they are very similar constructs, the difference is that ethnic identity cannot be chosen (you are born into it). However, people have a choice on what meaning and importance their ethnic identity plays within their lives (Phinney & Ong, 2007), and it is shown to lead to positive well-being and a sense of self (Phinney, 1989; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Oakes, 1986)

In creating a framework to deconstruct this concept, ethnic identity was divided into components to facilitate further comprehension (Phinney & Ong, 2007). These include self-categorization, commitment and attachment, exploration, behavioral involvement, ingroup attitudes (private regard), ethnic values and beliefs, the significance or salience of group membership, and ethnic identity in relation to national identity.

Self-categorization and labeling are fundamental components of ethnic (or group) identity because an individual must self-identify as a specific group member. Typically, this has been done with open-ended questions to protect the individual's rights (Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007). Individuals may use many different labels for the same ethnic group depending on the situation (Phinney, 1992). For example, depending on the situation or context, an individual may use the terms Black, Black American, or African American. The meaning an individual associates with a category label is more significant than the label itself (Phinney & Ong, 2007). This strength in ethnic identification (versus ethnic labels) has been studied extensively and linked to outcomes such as academic achievement in youth with diverse ethnic backgrounds (Fuligni et al., 2005; Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Commitment and attachment is another critical element of ethnic identity and typically represent its definition in more laymen's terms (Phinney & Ong, 2007). This commitment or sense of belonging to one's ethnic group represents an affective or emotional attachment to the group and personal investment (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Exploration can be defined as the activities a person engages in to "explore" and seek information regarding his or her ethnicity. This could be demonstrated through various actions, such as communicating with family elders about family history, reading books about one's ethnicity, attending events, etc. This is a crucial step in the process because it establishes a person's connection to their ethnic group through personal investment, thereby strengthening their commitment to the group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). It is also critical to measure an individual's ethnic identity salient through participation in such activities.

Evaluation and ingroup attitudes are another important element for this study because it defines the emotional assessment an individual applies to their group (positive or negative) and can influence how they engage with other groups. Having a positive ingroup attitude is linked to an individual's feeling of comfort with their ethnicity and group membership (Turner & Oakes, 1986), which is important for minority and lower status groups who have been subjected to discrimination which could lead to negative ingroup attitudes (Phinney, 1989). For most groups, including African Americans, positive ingroup attitudes are first developed in adolescents (Vandiver et al., 2000) but continue to develop in adulthood

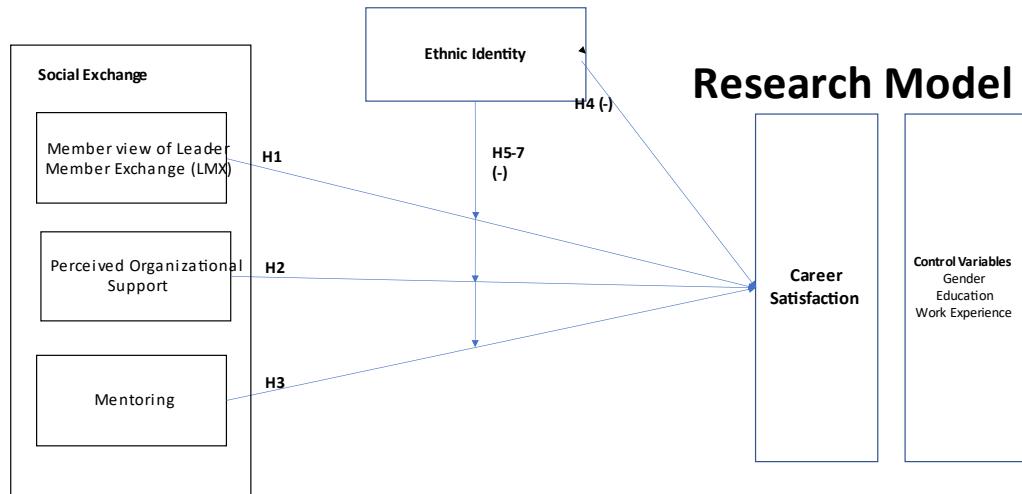
The importance and salience of ethnic identity is important because ethnic groups are not homogenous, and ethnic identity varies across individuals and groups (Phinney & Alipuria, 1990), with minority groups having higher ethnic identity than individuals in dominant groups and with studies showing that ethnic identity having significant importance for African Americans (Phinney & Alipuria, 1987, 1990). Also, to fully understand identity development for African Americans, understanding ethnic identity in relation to national (American) identity is critical. However, the relationship between ethnic identity and national identity is often debated by scholars in the field of acculturation, where research has demonstrated that they are independent constructs and African Americans display a wide range of ethnic and national identification (Phinney & Ong, 2007), creating high levels of inter-group variance within the culture.

When looking at ethnic identity in the workplace, research has focused on the individual development stages and the level of organizational development characterized by the organization's views on diversity (Chrobot-Mason & Thomas, 2002). However,

when looking at research that specifically addresses African-American ethnic identity, research has shown that the levels of African Americans identity can impact their personal views of the racial climate of an organization (Watts & Carter, 1991) and their perception of managerial support (Chrobot-Mason, 2004). In addition, theoretical research has identified the need to increase the prevalence of research on ethnic identity in a variety of work contexts, including examining the significance of both an individual's and a supervisor's ethnic identity and evaluating organizational acceptance and evaluation of specific diversity programs (Chrobot-Mason, 2004; Chrobot-Mason & Thomas, 2002).

## RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Figure 1: Preliminary Research Model



## **Member's view of LMX**

A member's view of LMX is based on an individual's view of the quality of the relationship between them and their leader and the different types of relationships their leader may have with other team members (Scandura & Graen, 1984). The quality of the relationship between the individual and their leader is important because it influences the attitudes and behaviors of the individual (Van Breukelen et al., 2006). The quality of the relationship is often defined as high- or low-quality, and each type has been associated with various antecedents and outcomes in the literature (Henderson et al., 2009).

High-quality LMX relationships are theorized to create feelings of mutuality and reciprocity between the leader and the individual and are more social in nature (Dulebohn et al., 2012). These work relationships, built on social versus solely economic exchanges, are described as relationships built on loyalty, commitment, support, and trust (Croppanzano & Mitchell, 2005). These relationships have also led to various positive outcomes for the individual, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, satisfaction with the supervisor, satisfaction with pay, and empowerment (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

When evaluating the relationship of LMX with career satisfaction, research has frequently found a significant relationship with the similar construct of supervisor support in a variety of industries, nationalities, and ethnic groups (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Jiang & Klein, 1999; Yap et al., 2010).

Previous research has also shown a significant relationship between LMX and career satisfaction (Joo & Ready, 2012; METE et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been generated:

*H1: A member's view of LMX has a positive impact on career satisfaction.*

## **POS**

As previously stated, POS focuses on the relationship between an employee and the organization they work for and the employee's belief that the organization supports them and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). When evaluating what influences or increases an employee's view of POS, factors such as fairness, supervisor support, organizational rewards, and favorable job conditions have shown correlations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). A key element of POS is that an employee feels that the benefits or rewards from the organization are discretionary or voluntary because it provides evidence that the organization respects and values the needs of the individual (Eisenberger et al., 1997; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

When delving deeper into factors such as organizational rewards and favorable job conditions, benefits such as pay, promotions, autonomy, training, and job security have all been associated with POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This is important because many factors have also been associated with subjective career success and career satisfaction (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Ng et al., 2005; Ng & Feldman, 2014).

Increases in POS have been linked to positive outcomes for the individual and organization, which include positive mood, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS has been shown to increase career satisfaction, specifically, when high (Joo & Lee, 2017; Yu, 2011) and decrease career

satisfaction when it is low (Ng & Feldman, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been generated:

*H2: POS has a positive impact on career satisfaction.*

### **Mentoring**

A basic definition of mentoring is that it is a one-on-one relationship between a less experienced individual (protégé) and a more experienced individual (mentor) to providing information, support, and resources to advance the protégé's personal and professional growth (Wanberg et al., 2003). In addition, a mentor typically provides a mentee with psychosocial and career support. Examples of psychosocial support include friendship, counseling, and role modeling, while examples of career support include sponsorship, advocacy, and coaching (Allen et al., 2004).

Management and vocational research have extensively studied the benefits of mentoring on career outcomes (Chao, 1997; Chao et al., 1992; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Whitely et al., 1992). Individuals who have successfully developed strong mentoring relationships have been shown to receive more promotions, higher incomes, and higher compensation (Dreher & Ash, 1990). Career mentoring has also been linked to increased intrinsic job satisfaction (Chao et al., 1992) and career satisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008; Ng et al., 2005). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been generated:

*H3: Mentoring has a positive impact on career satisfaction.*

## **Ethnic Identity**

Social identity theorizes that socially identifying strongly with one group (including ethnic groups) reduces an openness to social influence from non-group members (Turner et al., 1987) and prompts viewing these non-group members with less trust, less positively, and as dissimilar (Jetten et al., 1996). Social identity also theorizes that the higher the level of an individual's ethnic identity, the less comfortable they may feel being a minority in an organization where the majority are from another ethnic group (Brown & Ford, 1977; Dickens & Dickens, 1991; James & Khoo, 1991); these individuals may also have a higher sense of awareness of issues related to or affecting their ethnic group (Operario & Fiske, 2001; Tajfel, 1981). This discomfort could stem from alienation or distance from family, community, and friends with a similar ethnic background; it could also come from a higher sense and awareness of treatment discrimination, which may negatively impact their perceptions of fairness and equity in their work environment (Operario & Fiske, 2001). This discomfort could also increase as they ascend within an organization (Dickens & Dickens, 1991).

This is why an individual's perception of cultural differences could negatively impact their psychological, physical, or social well-being due to the stress and potential marginalization created by being a minority in a majority organization (James & Khoo, 1991). For example, African Americans have been shown to have lower job stress and higher job satisfaction when managed by other African Americans versus white American (Ford, 1980).

When looking at the impact of ethnic identity at an organizational level, African Americans reported higher levels of job-related discrimination versus other ethnic groups (Kasschau, 1977). They found that their job performance was uniquely based on their leaders' perception of their social behaviors (Cox & Nkomo, 1986). This experience only worsens the higher they move within organizations due to the additional stress and scrutiny based on their "solo status" or being considered "tokens" within their organizations (Niemann & Dovidio, 1998; Thompson & Sekaquaptewa, 2002). When looking at this through the lens of career satisfaction, areas such as workplace stress, lack of organizational support, and lack of fairness have been shown to significantly impact career satisfaction (Ng & Feldman, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been generated:

*H4: Ethnic identity has a negative impact on career satisfaction.*

### **Ethnic Identity and Social Exchange**

When evaluating ethnic identity's impact on social exchange, three key factors come to mind, which could impact the perception of the level of reciprocity provided through social exchanges with an individual's supervisor (LMX), organization (POS), informal networks (mentoring), and impact overall career satisfaction.

The first factor focuses on the preferences and behaviors of an individual with a high ethnic identity and how this could create a lower-quality relationship with their supervisors and choices for mentorship. For example, a key element of leader-member exchange is that a leader will have a different relationship with each of their subordinates (Scandura & Graen, 1984), and high-quality relationships are built on loyalty, commitment, support, and trust (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Also, when looking at

mentorship, cross-racial mentor relationships have been shown to lead to more positive career outcomes (O'Neill, 2012). If individuals with high ethnic identity prefer to build relationships within their ethnic group (Turner et al., 1987) and they view others outside of their group with less trust, less positively, and as dissimilar (Jetten et al., 1996), this could impact their motivation to build more intimate relationships with their supervisors or mentors or create a situation where their supervisor or potential mentors may choose not to build a more intimate relationship with them. This is important because, in an environment where African Americans are only 12% of the workforce and less than 7% in management positions, there is a high probability they will need to build influential cross-ethnic relationships (Hancock et al., 2021). If individuals high in ethnic identity choose not to invest in relationships with their leader or mentors who, based on probability, may be in another ethnic group, this could hurt their career outcomes, including career satisfaction (Ng & Feldman, 2014).

The second factor is that individuals with high ethnic identity could be more aware of the inequity and issues related to or affecting their ethnic group in the workplace (Operario & Fiske, 2001; Tajfel, 1981). This awareness could significantly impact their views of fairness, support, and trust with their employer, which are key factors in developing perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This is important because African Americans still report perceived treatment discrimination in the workplace and feel that there are barriers related to organizational support and career sponsorship which are impacting their career outcomes (Hancock et al., 2021). Therefore, having a higher sense of awareness and attachment to the inequities and challenges facing

African Americans in the workplace based on a feeling of lower organizational and job support could also impact their level of career satisfaction.

The last factor is inter-group variance in ethnic identity; all minorities do not share the same attachment or association with their ethnic group or workplace experiences. For example, research has shown that minorities lower in ethnic identity who associate more with mainstream American society and European values report less racism and more success in their organizations (Fernandez, 1972). This variance in perception and experience could directly impact their level of career satisfaction because they may not feel they have experienced the lack of support, perceived organizational barriers, and lack of career sponsorship that others with higher levels of ethnic identity may have. This is important because career satisfaction is an intrinsic measurement based on how a person feels about their career success based on their perception of their workplace experiences over time (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990), resulting in the following hypotheses:

*H5: Ethnic identity has a negative impact on the relationship between a member's view of LMX and career satisfaction such that the higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between a member's view of LMX and career satisfaction.*

*H6: Ethnic identity has a negative impact on the relationship between POS and career satisfaction such that the higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between POS and career satisfaction.*

*H7: Ethnic identity has a negative impact on the relationship between mentoring and career satisfaction such that higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between mentoring and career satisfaction.*

## METHODOLOGY

After obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, this study was conducted with a digital survey using Qualtrics software. The 50-question survey was used to determine the relationship between a member's view of LMX, POS, mentoring, and career satisfaction. Three control variables were included whose influence on career satisfaction has been demonstrated empirically. Ethnic identity was also used to moderate the relationship between LMX, POS, mentoring, and career satisfaction.

### **Independent Variables**

*A member's view of LMX* was measured using a 7-item scale obtained from research developed by (Wayne et al., 1997). These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

*POS* was measured using a 9-item scale from research developed by (Wayne et al., 1997). These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

*Mentorship* was measured using an 18-item scale from research developed by (Dreher & Ash, 1990). These items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

## **Dependent Variable**

*Career success* was measured using a 5-item scale from research developed by (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990). This scale measured *career satisfaction* using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

## **Moderating Variable**

*Ethnic identity* was measured using a 9-item scale from research developed by (Phinney & Ong, 2007). This scale consists of items measuring *ethnic background*, *ethnic exploration*, and *ethnic commitment*. Three demographic items were answered by open text where individuals listed their ethnic group, the ethnic group of their mother, and the ethnic group of their father. The remaining 6-items were measured using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)

## **Control Variables**

The survey contained three control variables: demographic factors that have been shown to impact career satisfaction in the literature. The control variables were gender, education, and years of work experience.

**Table 1: Summary of Constructs**

Construct	Definition	Source
A member's view of LMX	An individual's (usually a subordinate's) perception of the quality of the relationship between them and their supervisor.	(Wayne et al., 1997)

Perceived organizational support	An employee's view that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being.	(Wayne et al., 1997)
Mentoring	A one-on-one relationship between a less experienced individual (protégé) and a more experienced individual (mentor) with the goal of providing information, support, and resources to advance the protégé's personal and professional growth.	(Dreher & Ash, 1990)
Career satisfaction	The extent to which one is satisfied with their career is further defined as satisfaction with success achieved, income, career goal attainment, advancement, and new skills.	(J. Greenhaus et al., 1990)
Ethnic identity	Sense of peoplehood within a group, a culture, and a particular setting. Further defined through the exploration of one's ethnic identity, and commitment to one's ethnic identity.	(Phinney & Ong, 2007)

## **Validation & Consent**

The survey included a “CAPTCHA” to verify the user’s identity and an IRB-approved online consent form to obtain participant consent before taking the survey. Important sections of the consent form included background information on the purpose of the study, the research objective, how participant data will be handled, and whom participants can contact with questions or concerns. No personally identifiable information was collected during the survey, and this was emphasized multiple times in the online consent form.

## **The Population of Interest and Sample Size**

The population of interest for this research was employed African American professionals with a proposed population size of  $n = 300$ . Prolific Academic services were used to recruit participants. An informed pilot group ( $n = 5$ ) and a formal pilot group ( $n = 75$ ) tested construct reliability and helped determine how much time it takes to complete the survey.

## **Data Analysis**

All data collected was uploaded into SPSS 28 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 28) software, where multiple analyses were run: Descriptive Statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Reliability Analysis, and Univariate General Linear Modeling.

## **Informed Pilot**

An informed pilot was conducted with four Doctor of Business Administration students from other cohorts to review the survey and provide feedback on the research topic, sample, and survey design. Overall, the survey received positive feedback and took

approximately 20 minutes to complete. Small tweaks were made to the survey design and demographic questions based on the informed pilot feedback.

### **Formal Pilot**

A formal pilot study was conducted using a web-based survey through Qualtrics and distributed within the Prolific Academic platform via a web link embedded in an online survey posting. In total, 75 individuals completed the survey, and five survey responses were removed due to completing the survey in less than 4 minutes, having a duplicate IP address, and failing the attention checks.

This left a total of 70 responses (n = 70) which were used for further analysis. When analyzing the sample, there were 48 males (68.6%) and 22 females (31.4%); a majority of the sample was between the ages of 24–35 (65.7%), had a bachelor's degree or above (58.6%), and work experience between 5–15 years plus (68.6%).

A reliability analysis was done on all constructs, with all having acceptable reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) above 0.8. Based on this, no questions were removed, and the descriptive statistics are outlined in Figure 3 below.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Pilot Data (N = 70)\***

<b>Construct</b> <b>(Reference)</b>	<b>Item Code</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>
<b>Career Satisfaction</b>				
(J. Greenhaus et al., 1990)	CS_1	4.49	1.74	0.96
	CS_2	4.60	1.80	

CS_3	4.36	1.89
CS_4	4.67	1.76
CS_5	4.89	1.72

### **Ethnic Identity**

(Phinney & Ong, 2007)	EI_1	5.47	1.09	0.83
	EI_2	5.64	1.22	
	EI_3	5.84	0.91	
	EI_4	5.6	0.97	
	EI_5	5.37	1.25	
	EI_6	5.59	1.29	

### **Perceived**

<b>Organizational Support</b> (Wayne et al., 1997)	POS_1	5.33	1.34	0.92
	POS_2_RS	3.74	2.05	
	POS_3	4.73	1.73	
	POS_4	4.86	1.77	
	POS_5	4.86	1.75	
	POS_6_RS	4.76	1.81	
	POS_7	4.59	1.88	

POS_8	4.93	1.67
POS_9	5.30	1.56

**Leader-Member**

<b>Exchange</b> (Wayne et al., 1997)	LMX_1	4.91	1.55	0.95
	LMX_2	4.37	1.59	
	LMX_3	5.14	1.57	
	LMX_4	5.23	1.53	
	LMX_5	5.16	1.50	
	LMX_6	5.30	1.48	
	LMX_7	5.47	1.31	

**Mentoring** (Dreher & Ash, 1990)

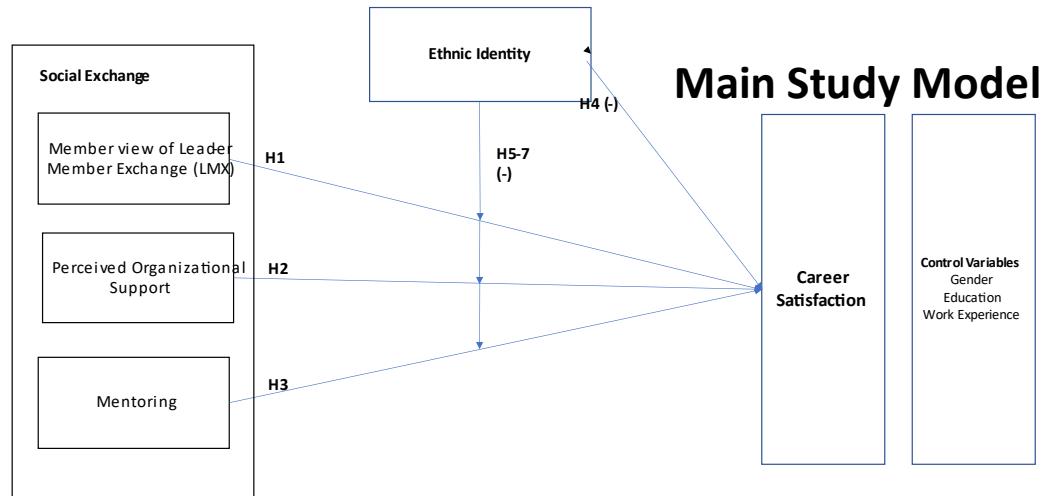
MENT_1	5.19	1.32	0.96
MENT_2	5.03	1.48	
MENT_3	4.90	1.47	
MENT_4	5.33	1.31	
MENT_5	4.94	1.46	
MENT_6	4.49	1.48	
MENT_7	4.81	1.60	
MENT_8	5.11	1.41	
MENT_9	5.49	1.29	

MENT_11	5.14	1.33
MENT_12	4.81	1.43
MENT_13	5.07	1.48
MENT_14	4.89	1.50
MENT_15	5.26	1.49
MENT_16	5.34	1.44
MENT_17	4.90	1.68
MENT_18	5.19	1.49
MENT_19	5.23	1.53

*\*MENT\_10 was used as an attention  
check*

A preliminary principal factor analysis (PFA) was conducted on all items using a varimax rotation to determine an acceptable factor structure before the main study. Although significant cross-loadings were present, specifically between LMX and POS, due to the size of the pilot and acceptable reliability, no constructs were removed. The only change was a reduction in the global mentoring scale (Dreher & Ash, 1990) using the first eight questions with the highest factor loadings. This reduction is supported by the literature, specifically regarding the relationship between social capital and career satisfaction through career-related mentoring (Seibert et al., 2001).

**Figure 2: Main Study Model**



## MAIN STUDY DATA AND ANALYSIS

The main study was conducted using a web-based survey via Qualtrics and distributed via the Prolific Academic platform via a web link embedded in an online survey posting. Over one week, 319 respondents completed the survey in an average of 7 minutes and 51 seconds. Following data cleansing, 31 survey responses were eliminated due to survey completion in less than 4 minutes (14), incomplete responses (10), attention checks (5), and duplicate IP addresses (2).

The main study sample characteristics for the remaining 288 survey responses are seen in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Main Study Sample Characteristics**

<b>Variable</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	141	49.0%
	Female	147	51.0%
<b>Age</b>	18–23	35	12.2%
	24–35	140	48.6%
<b>Experience (Years)</b>	36–45	63	21.9%
	46–55	29	10.1%
<b>Education</b>	55+	21	7.3%
	0–5	74	25.7%
<b>Industry</b>	5–10	78	27.1%
	10–15	42	14.6%
<b>Education</b>	15+	94	32.6%
	High School	74	25.7%
<b>Industry</b>	Associates	53	18.4%
	Bachelors	118	41.0%
<b>Industry</b>	Advanced	43	14.9%
	Consumer Goods	27	9.4%
<b>Industry</b>	Entertainment	23	8.0%

	Food & Beverage	16	5.6%
	Government	11	3.8%
	Health Care	34	11.8%
	Manufacturing	23	8.0%
	Non-Profit	14	4.9%
	Tech	48	16.7%
	Other	92	31.9%
	White	41	14.2%
	Black	66	22.9%
	American		
	Indian/Alaskan	27	9.4%
<b>Mentor</b>	Native		
	Asian	20	6.9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Native		
	Hawaiian/Pacific	42	14.6%
	Islander		
	Hispanic/LatinX	63	21.9%
	Other	29	10.1%
<b>Manager</b>	White	146	50.7%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Black	107	37.2%

American			
Indian/Alaskan	3	1.0%	
Native			
Asian	3	1.0%	
Native			
Hawaiian/Pacific	1	0.3%	
Islander			
Hispanic/LatinX	21	7.3%	
Other	7	2.4%	

A PFA was conducted in SPSS v28 on all items using a varimax rotation. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor in the data. Six factors had eigenvalues over one and combined for 64.0% of the variance. The scree plot was ambiguous and showed inflections that justify retaining four and six factors. Due to significant cross-loadings between LMX and POS, and LMX having weaker factor loadings, it was removed from the analysis. Also, ethnic identity was combined into a single factor, which left four factors being retained. Table 4 shows the factor loadings after all significant cross-loadings were removed. The items that cluster on each factor below represent perceived organizational support (POS) (factor 1), career satisfaction (CS) (factor 2), ethnic identity (EI) (factor 3), and mentoring (MENT) (factor 4), and all factors had high reliabilities with (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) above 0.8 which is highlighted in Table 5.

**Table 4: Main Study Rotated Factor Matrix**

	<b>POS</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>EI</b>	<b>MENT</b>
POS_1	<b>0.84</b>	0.21	0.13	0.16
POS_4	<b>0.84</b>	0.26	0.10	0.13
POS_5	<b>0.83</b>	0.25	0.09	0.20
POS_3	<b>0.81</b>	0.30	0.18	0.19
POS_8	<b>0.80</b>	0.23	0.12	0.21
POS_7	<b>0.72</b>	0.29	0.14	0.21
POS_9	<b>0.71</b>	0.15	0.04	0.08
CS_2	0.27	<b>0.86</b>	0.09	0.15
CS_4	0.29	<b>0.85</b>	0.08	0.19
CS_1	0.30	<b>0.82</b>	0.12	0.16
CS_3	0.26	<b>0.78</b>	0.04	0.23
CS_5	0.27	<b>0.77</b>	0.15	0.13
EI_6	0.07	0.12	<b>0.87</b>	0.07
EI_2	0.07	0.10	<b>0.86</b>	0.04
EI_4	0.13	0.00	<b>0.74</b>	0.14
EI_3	0.11	0.16	<b>0.73</b>	-0.01
EI_5	0.13	0.02	<b>0.66</b>	0.25
MENT_2	0.22	0.27	0.14	<b>0.82</b>
MENT_3	0.26	0.30	0.11	<b>0.81</b>
MENT_4	0.30	0.15	0.22	<b>0.62</b>

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.<sup>a</sup>

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

**Table 5: Main Study Reliabilities**

Construct (Reference)	Item Code	Mean	SD	A
<b>Career</b>				
<b>Satisfaction</b> (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990)	CS_1	4.42	1.67	0.95
	CS_2	4.59	1.70	
	CS_3	4.05	1.82	
	CS_4	4.42	1.72	
	CS_5	4.73	1.63	
<b>Ethnic</b>				
<b>Identity</b> (Phinney & Ong, 2007)	EI_1	N/A	N/A	0.89
	EI_2	5.71	1.30	
	EI_3	5.87	1.12	

EI_4	5.38	1.36
EI_5	5.35	1.49
EI_6	5.73	1.33

<b>Perceived</b>			
<b>Organizational</b>			
<b>Support</b>	POS_1	5.09	1.56
(Wayne et al.,			0.95
1997)			
	<i>POS_2_RS</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	POS_3	4.67	1.69
	POS_4	4.69	1.71
	POS_5	4.70	1.66
	<i>POS_6_RS</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	POS_7	4.51	1.67
	POS_8	4.95	1.55
	POS_9	5.35	1.40

<b>Mentoring</b>			
(Dreher & Ash,	MENT_1	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
1990)			0.88
	MENT_2	4.67	1.76

MENT_3	4.51	1.81
MENT_4	5.15	1.52
<i>MENT_5</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>MENT_6</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>MENT_7</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>MENT_8</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>

**Leader-**

**Member**

<b>Exchange</b>	<i>LMX_1</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
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(Wayne et al.,

1997)

	<i>LMX_2</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>LMX_3</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>LMX_4</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>LMX_5</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>LMX_6</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
	<i>LMX_7</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>

Items italicized with *N/A* are survey items with low loadings/cross-loadings and are not factored in computing the  $\alpha$  for the construct.

**Table 6: Main Study Descriptive Statistics**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Item Code</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Perceived Organizational Support	POS_1	5.09	1.56
	POS_3	4.67	1.69
	POS_4	4.69	1.71
	POS_5	4.70	1.66
	POS_7	4.51	1.67
	POS_8	4.95	1.55
	POS_9	5.35	1.40
	CS_1	4.42	1.67
	CS_2	4.59	1.70
Career Satisfaction	CS_3	4.05	1.82
	CS_4	4.42	1.72
	CS_5	4.73	1.63
	EI_2	5.71	1.30
Ethnic Identity	EI_3	5.87	1.12
	EI_4	5.38	1.36
	EI_5	5.35	1.49
	EI_6	5.73	1.33
Mentoring	MENT_2	4.67	1.76
	MENT_3	4.51	1.81
	MENT_4	5.15	1.52

**Table 7: Univariate Linear Regression Model**

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: MEAN_CS					
	Type II		Mean		
Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	276.313 <sup>a</sup>	10	27.63	18.47	0.00
Intercept	3.11	1	3.11	2.08	0.15
Gender	1.62	1	1.62	1.09	0.30
Education	2.67	3	0.89	0.60	0.62
WorkExperience	1.98	3	0.66	0.44	0.72
MEAN_EI	0.65	1	0.65	0.43	0.51
<b>MEAN_POS</b>	<b>82.04</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>82.04</b>	<b>54.83</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>MEAN_MENT</b>	<b>34.59</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>34.59</b>	<b>23.12</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Error	414.47	277	1.50		
Total	6372.56	288			
Corrected Total	690.78	287			

a. R Squared = 0.400 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.378)

Parameter Estimates				
Dependent Variable: MEAN_CS				
Parameter	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.
Intercept	0.52	0.50	1.05	0.30
[Gender = 1]	0.15	0.15	1.04	0.30
[Gender = 2]	0 <sup>a</sup>			
[Education = 1]	0.02	0.24	0.07	0.94
[Education = 2]	-0.05	0.26	-0.18	0.86
[Education = 3]	0.19	0.22	0.84	0.40
[Education = 4]	0 <sup>a</sup>			
[WorkExperience = 1]	0.00	0.20	-0.02	0.98
[WorkExperience = 2]	0.01	0.19	0.07	0.94
[WorkExperience = 3]	-0.23	0.23	-1.02	0.31
[WorkExperience = 4]	0 <sup>a</sup>			
MEAN_EI	0.05	0.07	0.66	0.51
<b>MEAN_POS</b>	<b>0.45</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>7.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>MEAN_MENT</b>	<b>0.28</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>4.81</b>	<b>0.00</b>

a. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

**Table 8: Hypothesis Summary**

	Hypothesis	Result	Significance
H1	A member's view of LMX has a positive impact on career satisfaction	N/A	
H2	POS has a positive impact on career satisfaction	Supported	$\beta = 0.45^*$
H3	Mentoring has a positive impact on career satisfaction	Supported	$\beta = 0.28^*$
H4	Ethnic identity has a negative impact on career satisfaction	Not Supported	
H5	Ethnic identity has a negative moderation effect on the relationship between a member's view of LMX and career satisfaction. The higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between member's view of LMX and career satisfaction.	N/A	
H6	Ethnic identity has a negative moderation effect on the relationship between POS and career satisfaction. The higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between POS and career satisfaction.	Not Supported	

	Ethnic identity has a negative moderation effect on the relationship between mentoring and career	
H7	satisfaction. The higher the level of ethnic identity, the weaker the relationship between mentoring and career satisfaction.	Not Supported

\* $p = < 0.001$

Hypothesis 1 (H1) proposed that a member's view of LMX has a positive impact on career satisfaction. Previous research noted that high LMX leads to a variety of positive outcomes for employees, including career satisfaction (Joo & Ready, 2012; METE et al., 2021). H1 was not tested due to LMX being removed during factor analysis. Although LMX and POS have been used as separate constructs (in the same study) in previous research (Wayne et al., 1997), the removal of LMX due to cross-loadings was disappointing but not surprising due to supervisor support being a significant factor in the development of POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986). One suggestion would be to leverage structural equation modeling as the statistical analysis tool for future research if using both constructs or to look at each construct separately due to possible issues with cross-loadings. Another suggestion would be to provide clearer prompting or more contextual information in the survey design to delineate the differences more effectively between both constructs.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposed that POS has a positive impact on career satisfaction. Previous research noted that increases in POS have been linked to positive outcomes for the individual and organization, including career satisfaction (Joo & Lee, 2017; Yu, 2011). A regression analysis was conducted using the univariate general linear model function in SPSS v28 to examine the relationship between POS, MENT, and EI with CS while controlling for gender, education, and work experience. The results of the regression analysis showed POS having a positive relationship with CS with each unit increase in POS representing an increase in CS of 0.45 and being significantly different from zero ( $p = < 0.001$ ). This result provides full support for H2.

Hypothesis 3 (H3) proposed that mentoring has a positive impact on career satisfaction. Previous research noted that strong mentorship relationships has led to positive career outcomes for individuals, including career satisfaction (Kammeyer-Mueller & Judge, 2008; Ng et al., 2005). The results of the regression analysis showed that MENT had a positive relationship with CS, with each unit increase in MENT representing an increase in CS of 0.28 and being significantly different from zero ( $p = < 0.001$ ). This result provides full support for H3.

Hypothesis 4 (H4) proposed that ethnic identity has a negative impact on career satisfaction. Previous research noted that socially identifying strongly with one group (including ethnic groups) reduces the openness to social influence from non-group members (Turner et al., 1987) and viewing them with less trust, less positively, and as dissimilar (Jetten et al., 1996). It also theorizes that the higher the level of an individual's ethnic identity, the less comfortable they may feel being a minority in an organization where the majority are from another ethnic group (Brown & Ford, 1977; Dickens &

Dickens, 1991; James & Khoo, 1991) and may have a higher sense of awareness to issues related to or affecting their ethnic group (Operario & Fiske, 2001; Tajfel, 1981). The results of the regression analysis showed that EI did not have a significant relationship with CS and was not significantly different from zero ( $p = < 0.001$ ). This result does not provide support for H4. Although the hypothesis was not supported, one suggestion would be to identify a multi-dimensional versus one-dimensional construct which may help create more variance between survey participants and provide richer data and insights for analysis.

Hypothesis 5 (H5) proposed that ethnic identity will have a negative moderation effect on the relationship between a member's view of LMX and career satisfaction. As stated above, the LMX construct was removed due to significant cross-loadings during factor analysis, which means that H5 was not tested

The final set of hypotheses (H6–H7) proposed that ethnic identity will have a negative moderation effect on the relationship between perceived organizational support, mentoring, and career satisfaction. Previous research noted that individuals with high ethnic identity might feel more comfortable investing in same-race work relationships (Brown & Ford, 1977; Dickens & Dickens, 1991; James & Khoo, 1991), have a higher awareness of issues relevant to their ethnic group (Operario & Fiske, 2001; Tajfel, 1981), and may report more workplace racism or less successful careers when they are minorities in majority workplaces (Fernandez, 1972). Because career satisfaction is an intrinsic measure based on an individual's workplace experiences (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990), the factors above could negatively impact career satisfaction. For both hypotheses, a regression analysis was conducted using the univariate general linear model function in

SPSS v28 to examine whether EI will have a moderating (interaction) effect on the relationship between POS and CS and MENT and CS while controlling for gender, education, and work experience. The results of this analysis showed no significant moderation effects of EI on either variable. This result does not provide support for H6 or H7. As discussed above, although the hypotheses were not supported, one area of improvement would be to identify a multi-dimensional versus one-dimensional construct for ethnic identity which may create more variance between survey participants and provide more rich data and insights for analysis.

The study's control variables (gender, education, and work experience) were all tested for significance during the linear regression analysis in combination with the variables outlined above. All p-values were over the established threshold of significance (0.05) indicating no significant relationship with CS and not being significantly different from zero ( $p = < 0.001$ ).

## IMPLICATIONS

The first aim of this research study was to explore the workplace experiences of African Americans by understanding how their workplace relationships and levels of organizational support through social exchange impact the satisfaction achieved in their careers. The second aim was to take a novel approach by treating them as a diverse versus a nominal or homogenous cultural group to enable the development more tailored and effective interventions and career management strategies (Blustein et al., 1989; Kerka, 1998; Parham & Austin, 1994). Although not all of the hypotheses were supported, the positive relationship between POS, mentoring, and career satisfaction

creates important implications for future exploration of how quality social exchange can create more positive career outcomes for this underrepresented group.

### **Theoretical Implications**

As we evaluate the theoretical implications of this study, we will focus on the extension of theory in our main theoretical framework of social exchange as well as other adjacent theories in career literature. Also, even though ethnic identity didn't show a moderating effect in the analysis, we will also address potential implications for research on social identity theory.

This research extends the theory of social exchange by providing initial evidence of its applicability to the African American population. This is important because it showcases that the structure and outcomes of social exchange are applicable to marginalized populations and could become the basis of further research on the specific antecedents, responses, or behaviors which may differ from the majority population. For example, when evaluating social exchange theory and culturally driven-relational orientation, research has found that a culture's prioritization of relationships influences their response to negative reciprocity behaviors and these differences differed based on nationality (Chen et al., 2009; Flynn, 2005). This type of nuance is critical in understanding how social interactions impact specific positive or negative behaviors and responses for specific populations. This is why it is important to look at organizational theories through the lens of the specific sub-groups versus assuming generalizability across all populations.

As we look at the relationship between social exchange and career satisfaction, understanding that the constructs of POS and mentoring are antecedents of career

satisfaction create an additional area of research discovery for organizational behavior and career theorists. As it pertains to African Americans there is some research comparing their level of career satisfaction to other ethnic groups (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1993; J. H. Greenhaus et al., 1990); however, there is limited to no research looking at the antecedents of their career satisfaction. This research provides a foundation by providing two specific constructs which can be leveraged for future research on the topic. Having initial quantitative evidence of the positive relationship between POS and mentoring on African Americans' career satisfaction provides an opportunity to better understand "why" and delve deeper into which antecedents of each construct could provide the biggest impact and how this impact may change over time. This research answers the call from previous scholars for evaluating social exchange constructs such as career mentoring through an identity lens (Randel et al., 2021) which has been hypothesized to enable more specific interventions for the career development of African Americans. This study supports this request by understanding the applicability of social exchange theory and showing the complexity of evaluating inter-group variance in ethnic identity which could enable better framing, context, and use of alternative measures in future studies.

This research also extends theories within vocational psychology by providing empirical evidence on the environmental factors that influence African Americans' career satisfaction. Having a better understanding of the environmental and identity factors that impact African Americans in the workplace will provide career counselors with more insights on how to meet the specific needs of their clients and provide relevant

interventions to better understand, influence, or change the vocational aspirations and outcomes for this population (Parham & Austin, 1994).

Lastly, this research also showcases the complexity of leveraging constructs such as ethnic identity in the study of social identity in the workplace. As stated above, organizational and vocational scholars have been advocating for more research through an identity lens (Blustein et al., 1989; Chrobot-Mason, 2004; Emerson & Murphy, 2014; Parham & Austin, 1994; Randel et al., 2021); however, this research study provides evidence on the complexity of executing this request and the need for stronger contextual framing in the research design and testing of different identity constructs to potentially yield more insightful results.

### **Managerial Implications**

As we look at the managerial implications, the results of this study provide benefits across a multitude of domains, including career counseling and development, employee engagement, and inclusion and diversity.

From a career counseling and development standpoint, having specific information around the enablers of a construct such as career satisfaction creates a toolkit for career counselors to enable deeper conversations into what the individual values, how they feel their organizations can further support them, and what actions they can take to change their circumstances. Having a set of tools to understand the challenges facing their African American clients in the workplace could be a critical enabler for a career counselor (Murry & Mosidi, 1993), and leveraging the constructs of POS and mentoring could provide a great foundation to facilitate this conversation. From a career self-management standpoint, it could also provide a conceptual framework for an

individual to evaluate the level of reciprocity they are receiving and want to receive from their work environments. The social exchange framework could enable a protean career approach (Hall, 2004) where African American professionals make more informed decisions based on their values and have tools to evaluate what corporate environments will provide them the most reciprocity, support, and pathways to career success.

The results are also encouraging from an employee engagement standpoint because it provides evidence that the constructs of social exchange are relevant for understanding the African American experience in the workplace. This is important because it provides an additional tool for leaders, human resource practitioners, and DEI experts to gauge the level of organizational support their African American employees perceive they are receiving. In the same way, engagement surveys are used to identify opportunities for workplace improvement; leveraging the constructs of POS, LMX, and mentoring could help identify opportunities to improve the work conditions, employee commitment, job performance, and career satisfaction for this population.(Ng & Feldman, 2014; Riggle et al., 2009). This is important because the emotional state of the African American workforce isn't positive with higher levels of disengagement, turnover, and less career satisfaction (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990; Hancock et al., 2021; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Thompson & Sekaquaptewa, 2002). This is what makes leveraging constructs such as POS and mentoring in applied research so critical because it could provide additional insights on how managers, leaders, and organizations can improve the conditions for this population.

Lastly, this research could provide additional insights on how to improve diversity and inclusion within organizations. As discussed previously, understanding the level of

social exchange in the workplace is critical for African Americans but is also critical for other ethnic groups including the dominant group because it could enable deeper insights of employee perceptions of reciprocity on a corporate and sub-group level. This is important, because as articulated by R. R. Thomas (1990), to effectively manage diversity it is important for companies to identify the root causes of prejudice and inequality in their workplace and modify their cultural norms, behaviors, and systems to create a more inclusive environment where everyone can succeed, including white males. This is also supported by the Global Parity Alliance, a cross-industry group committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) around the world,. The *DEI Lighthouses 2023 Insights Report* (2023) states that the first step in driving sustainable, quantifiable, and scalable change for underrepresented groups is a “nuanced understanding of the root causes” (p. 11).

For example, leveraging the construct of LMX at an individual and group level could create robust conversations on what actions or activities the subordinate needs to execute to improve the quality of the relationship with their manager. It could also identify certain biases or blind spots for the manager which could enable richer and deeper conversations based on quantitative data and in a safe and less politically charged way. Leveraging the constructs on POS and mentoring could have the same effect by providing data on the employee perception of support and the level of mentoring prevalent in the organization. Understanding this data as a whole and by sub-groups could provide information to create more effective interventions and increase the return on investment for diversity activities for employers and employees. This is important

because, at this time, improvements in diversity and inclusion in corporations have been slow or declining (Society, 2023), so identifying additional tools to create more successful outcomes is critical.

## LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations that should be acknowledged in this research paper. First, the cross-sectional design does not allow us to make any inference of causality on the hypothesized relationships between the study's independent and dependent variables. Future research should examine the relationships between these variables using longitudinal designs with repeated measures.

A second potential limitation is the use of self-reported measures, which may have exposed our results to common method bias. Although the use of self-reported measures was important to the research's purpose and procedural and statistical processes were used to reduce and identify potential biases (Podsakoff et al., 2003), common method variance could exist. Using a dual source research design, specifically for constructs such as LMX and career mentoring, in the future could reduce the presence of common method variance, while also providing a more robust study design.

The third limitation is that by leveraging the crowdsourcing platform Prolific Academia, the generalizability could be questioned because participation is based on awareness and membership on the platform. Suggestions would be to find a more robust sample pool to ensure stronger randomization and generalizability or to take an applied

approach by finding a particular organization, sampling its population, and collecting data over multiple periods of time.

The fourth and final limitation is that although LMX and POS have been used as separate constructs in previous research (Wayne et al., 1997), we encountered issues in our factor analysis which caused the elimination of LMX in this study. This was unfortunate because of the need to better understand the impact of diversity on LMX, especially within cross-race relationships (Scandura & Lankau, 1996); however, this is not surprising due to supervisor support being a significant factor in the development of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) One suggestion would be to leverage structural equation modeling as the statistical analysis tool for future research if using both constructs, to look at each construct separately due to possible issues with cross-loadings, or to increase the sample population to yield stronger cross-loadings during the analysis.

## **Future Research**

When looking at areas of future research, although LMX was eliminated early in the study due to substantial cross-loadings with POS, it is still possible to examine the relationship between LMX and ethnic identity. Using a multi-dimensional construct instead of a unidimensional one and providing additional contextual information may result in a different outcome. Utilizing the LMX construct in small workgroups or leadership teams is one area of applied research which could be impactful. By providing a more specific organizational context and focusing on LMX and ethnic identity through a multi-dimensional approach, the leader and his or her team could gain valuable insights into opportunities to foster closer collaboration and inclusion.

For POS, it could be theoretically and practically beneficial to examine the antecedents and factors that negatively impact the level of POS with large African American samples. Researchers would benefit from a better understanding of how social exchange and organizational theory apply to marginalized groups, what antecedents have the greatest influence on POS for these groups, and what factors negatively influence the levels of POS for these groups. As discussed in managerial implications, a greater understanding of the overall levels of POS in an organization, comparisons by group, and key antecedents and factors that negatively impact POS could aid in developing more effective diversity and inclusion strategies. For example, employee resource groups could support this work and direct their attention and investments based on which findings have the greatest positive or negative impact on their subgroup and the organization.

For career-related mentoring or sponsorship, a deeper understanding of the ethnicity, gender, and position of the sponsors may yield additional insights for future research. For example, it would be advantageous to determine whether a person's identity level influences their mentor choice. In addition, from a practical standpoint, knowing the ethnic and gender composition of a company's formal mentoring programs could help ensure strong inclusion and diversity by encouraging more inclusive and diverse participation.

Lastly, there are an abundance of areas to explore regarding social identity in the workplace. Leveraging other researched constructs such as identity orientation (Flynn, 2005) or acculturation preferences (Jian, 2012) could provide an alternative way of understanding social exchange through an identity lens for African Americans. Also, understanding how ethnic identity influences the potential reduction of career satisfaction

based on significant negative workforce events is another area of exploration. For example, understanding how areas such as threats to social identity (Emerson & Murphy, 2014), perceived discrimination (Operario & Fiske, 2001), and mega-threats (Leigh & Melwani, 2019) and its potential impact on career satisfaction for African Americans and how ethnic identity may moderate or mediate this impact could be an interesting area of future research.

## CONCLUSION

When evaluating African Americans' progress since the 1960s, it would be hard to argue against the fact that things have progressively improved (Collins, 1983). We have seen many historical firsts, including membership into the highest echelons of power and influence, CEOs of Fortune 50 companies, additions to the U.S. Supreme Court, and becoming the Vice President and President of the United States.

However, although progress has been made, there is still a significant opportunity to improve inclusion, equity, and diversity within our American institutions (Roberts et al., 2019). African Americans still have challenges obtaining the support, opportunity, and sponsorship they need to have equity in career outcomes, which is an issue that needs addressing (J. Greenhaus et al., 1990). By showing evidence that perceived organizational support and career mentoring could lead to higher levels of career satisfaction, human resource groups, leaders, and diversity and inclusion practitioners have an additional tool to evaluate the health of their African American employee

relationships within their organizations. This is important because in order to identify the right strategy, we must first identify the problem, and leveraging the theory and principles of social exchange could lead to more robust conversations and hopefully more impactful solutions.

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## APPENDIX

### **Ethnic Identity & Social Exchange Final Survey- Prolific**

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ID Please enter your Prolific ID below

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CAP Please click below, prior to taking the survey

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Consent

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This quantitative study aims to understand what key factors predict career success in the workplace. Specifically, how social factors like relationship with your manager, sense of identity, or mentoring influence an individual's career satisfaction.

#### **NUMBER OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

If you decide to participate, you will be one of 300 people in this research study.

#### **DURATION OF THE STUDY**

It should take ~10 minutes to complete the study.

#### **PROCEDURES**

If you agree to be in the study, we will ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete an online questionnaire consisting of a predetermined number of items.
2. Choose the response that best represents your situation or sentiments regarding the statements provided

#### **RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS**

The study has the following possible risks to you: First, the possible risk and discomfort are minimal in taking this survey; Second, we have reduced the amount of non-value-added questions and made the survey mobile-friendly to enable ease of use.

#### **BENEFITS**

There are no known benefits for participants for participating in this study. The benefit to society is that the research will identify insights that could aid in career development. The knowledge attached could also enable practitioners and scholars to increase knowledge and improve training and development programs which could aid in improving Inclusion & Diversity which has been shown to benefit all populations.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The records of this study will be kept private and will be protected to the fullest extent provided by law. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher team will have access to the records. However, your records may be inspected by authorized University or other agents who will also keep the information confidential.

### **USE OF YOUR INFORMATION**

Your information collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed for future research studies even if identifiers are removed.

### **COMPENSATION & COSTS**

You will receive a payment for the completion of the survey, and the selected online research platform will distribute payment once you complete the survey. There are no costs to you for participating in this study.

### **RIGHT TO DECLINE OR WITHDRAW**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You will not lose any benefits if you decide not to participate or if you quit the study early. The investigator reserves the right to remove you without your consent at such time that he/she feels it is in the best interest.

### **RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions about the purpose, procedures, or any other issues relating to this research study you may contact Sy August Henderson at Florida International University, at [shend047@fiu.edu](mailto:shend047@fiu.edu).

### **IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you would like to talk with someone about your rights of being a subject in this research study or about ethical issues with this research study, you may contact the FIU Office of Research Integrity by phone at 305-348-2494 or by email at [ori@fiu.edu](mailto:ori@fiu.edu).

### **PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

I have read the information in this consent form and agree to participate in this study. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been

answered for me. By clicking on the “consent to participate” button below I am providing my informed consent.

- Consent to Participate
- Decline Participation

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INTRO Please do not use the “BACK” and “FORWARD” buttons on your browser. Instead, use the “NEXT” or “BACK” buttons at the bottom of each screen.

Please read the content carefully. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

You may opt out of the study at any time only by closing your browser. Your responses will remain confidential and only be published in aggregate form.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey.

**End of Block: INTRO**

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**Start of Block: Career Satisfaction**



CS Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current level of career satisfaction.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Career Satisfaction

Start of Block: Ethnic Identity

DEM\_EI In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or *ethnic groups* that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican American, Hispanic, Black, Asian-American, American Indian, Anglo-American, and White. Every person is born into an ethnic group, or sometimes two groups, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behavior is affected by it.

These questions are about your *ethnicity* or your *ethnic group* and how you feel about it or react to it.

In terms of *ethnic group*, I consider myself to be

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EI Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DEM\_EIM\_F How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

DEM\_EI\_M How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

MENT Consider your career history and the degree to which “influential managers” have served as your mentor (this need not be limited to one person)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements based on the extent to which your mentors have.....

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Given or recommended you for challenging assignments that present opportunity to learn new skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Given or recommended you for assignments that required personal contact with managers in different parts of the company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Given or recommended you for assignments that increased your contact with higher level managers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Given or recommended you for assignments that helped you meet new colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helped you finish assignments/tasks or meet deadlines that otherwise would have been difficult to complete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protected you from working with other managers or work units before you knew about their likes/dislikes, opinions on controversial topics, and the nature of the political environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gone out of his/her way to promote your career interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kept you informed about what is going on at higher levels in the company or how external conditions are influencing the company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DEM\_MENT Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statement based on the extent to which your mentors have.....

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Shared the same or similar ethnicity (Black, African American)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

POS Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements based on the organization you currently work for.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The organization values my contribution to its well-being	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If the organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary, it would do so	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization strongly considers my goals and values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization really cares about my well-being	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization feels there is little to be gained by employing me for the rest of my career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please select “Strongly Disagree”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Help is available from my organization when I have a problem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DEM\_POS Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements based on the organization you currently work for.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My current organization has a large population of Black or African Americans in leadership positions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Perceived Organizational Support

Start of Block: Leader-Member Exchange



LMX Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements based on the relationship with your current manager.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Regardless of how much power he/she has built into their position, my manager would be personally inclined to use their power to help me solve problems in my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can count on my manager to “bail me out” even at his or her own expense when I really need it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager understands my problems and needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager recognizes my potential	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager has enough confidence in me that they would defend and justify my decisions if I were not present to do so	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I usually know where I stand with my manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My working relationship with my manager is effective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

DEM\_LMX How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latinx
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Leader-Member Exchange

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Start of Block: Demographic Questions

DEM Which of the following industries most closely matches the one in which you are employed?

- Consumer Goods
- Entertainment/Hospitality
- Food & Beverage
- Government
- Health Care
- Industrial Manufacturing
- Non-Profit
- Technology
- Oil & Gas
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

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DEM What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)
- Associate degree (e.g., AA, AS)
- Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BS)
- Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, MEd)

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DEM How many years of work experience do you have?

- 0-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15+ years

DEM What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

DEM What is your age?

- 18-23
- 24-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 55+

End of Block: Demographic Questions

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## VITA

## SY AUGUST HENDERSON

Born, Austin, Texas

1999-2005 B.S. Business Administration

## Master of Business Administration

Florida A&M University

Tallahassee, Florida

2005-2009 Procurement Manager

## The Procter & Gamble Company

Cincinnati, Ohio

2009-2011 Senior Procurement Manager

## The Clorox Company

Atlanta, Georgia

2011-2014 Director of Procurement

## Mars, Incorporated

Newark, NJ

2014-2016 Director of Procurement

Mondelez International

East Hanover, NJ

2016-2019 Sr. Director of Procurement

Coca-Cola Bottling Sales and Services

Atlanta, Georgia

2019-2022 Sr. Director of Procurement

Kimberly-Clark Corporation

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