PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND SPIRITUALITY AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality was explored in African American and Caucasian college students. Participants were two hundred and sixty-two undergraduate students from a large predominately White Midwestern university. African Americans reported higher levels of self-esteem, positive affect, and spirituality while Caucasians reported higher levels of social support. Self-esteem was the best predictor of psychological well-being in Caucasian participants while spirituality was the strongest predictor of well-being in African American respondents. Implications for counseling students of color are discussed.
Dedicated to African Americans and our ongoing struggle for equality
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, theorists have been curious about what contributes to well-being. Some have suggested that happiness stems from good food and fine wine while others have postulated that happiness is a function of youth (Diener, 1984). Present day counselors and therapists implicitly participate in this investigation when attempting to alleviate their client’s distress, and modern researchers continue to explore psychological well-being and its correlates. This exploration has been marked by pursuits of defining and measuring the construct, identifying the variables that enhance and those that diminish well-being, and how the impact of these variables varies across race and gender (Diener, 1984).

Throughout this investigation, various approaches to conceptualizing well-being have been proposed. Some have suggested that well-being results from achieving a goal (Diener, 1984; Wilson, 1960; Seitovsky, 1976) while other perspectives hold that happiness results from engaging in interesting and challenging activities (Diener, 1984; Coan, 1977; Chekola, 1975). Other conceptions of well-being have included life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993; Shin and Johnson, 1978), the experience of positive affect and an absence of negative affect (Pavot & Diener, 1993; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; Tellegen, 1985) and lower scores on measures of depression.
Despite the difficulty in defining and describing subjective well-being, researchers have identified numerous variables that appear to be associated with the construct. Positive associations include satisfaction with family life, standard of living, and physical health (Campbell et al., 1976), racial identity (Martinez & Dukes, 1997), satisfaction with income (Braun, 1977), marriage (Glen, 1975; Andrews & Withey, 1976), love (Anderson, 1977; Freedman, 1978) and education (Campbell, 1981).

Moreover, many studies have demonstrated the relationship between subjective well-being and self-esteem (Betton, 2001; Campbell, 1981; Taylor & Brown, 1988; Pelham & Swann, 1989) and social support (Pugliesi & Shook, 1998; Turner & Noh, 1983). Recently, spirituality has emerged as a variable of interest in explaining the occurrence of well-being (Wilson, 1960; Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Seybold & Hill, 2001).

While there is much we have learned about psychological well-being, there is still much we do not know. The research is lacking in its investigation of the above relationships in minority populations. Specifically, little is known about how African Americans differ in their experience of well-being and the unique factors that may contribute to well-being in this population. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality in minority and non-minority college students. Specifically, it will seek to identify the differences in the relationships between these constructs in African American and European American college freshmen. The hypotheses for the study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: African American students will report lower levels of social support than European American students. This outcome is expected due to the ethnic and racial composition of the university from which participants will be drawn. Specifically, participants will be students from a large predominately White university.
Hypothesis 1b: African American students will report higher levels of self-esteem, spirituality, and optimal worldview resulting in higher levels of psychological well-being than their European American counterparts. This prediction is being made based on past research with African American participants.

Hypothesis 2a: Based on previous research, it is expected that female respondents will report higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem than male respondents.

Hypothesis 2b: Also based on previous work, female participants are expected to report higher levels of social support and spirituality, and an optimal worldview compared to male participants. No predictions are being made regarding gender differences in psychological well-being due to incompatible findings for women on measures of self-esteem, social support, and spirituality.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review that follows is divided into five areas of research that were relevant to the formulation of this study. These five areas include: a) psychological well-being; b) psychological well-being and self-esteem; c) psychological well-being and social support; d) psychological well-being and African Americans; e) psychological well-being and spirituality.

2.1 Psychological Well-being

Psychological or subjective well-being may be defined as one's emotional and cognitive evaluations of his or her life (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). These evaluations include one's moods, emotional reactions to events, judgments about fulfillment and life satisfaction, and satisfaction with specific life domains. It also includes what lay people might refer to as happiness (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). While people's reactions, judgments, and moods vary it is believed that subjective well-being is stable over time and that it is influenced by life events, personality characteristics (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003), personal goals and cultural values (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Early investigators of well-being sought to understand the demographic correlates of this construct. Upon reviewing the literature, Wilson (1967) concluded that individuals who were happiest were those who had more advantages. Specifically,
Wilson held that a happy person is one who is a “young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person with high self-esteem, high job morale, modest aspirations, of either sex and a wide range of intelligence” (p. 294).

More recent research on psychological well-being has revealed that not all of Wilson’s conclusions are completely true. Those conclusions that have been substantiated include those regarding marital status, religiosity, and personality traits. Specifically, researchers have found that individuals who are married are happier than those who are single, divorced, or widowed (Diener, Gohm, Suh, & Oishi, 2000); that religiosity accounted for variance in well-being (Ellison, 1991); and that individuals who are extroverted (Lucas, Diener, Grob, Suh, & Shao, 1998) and optimistic (Taylor & Armor, 1996) reported higher levels of well-being.

2.1.1 Theories of Well-being

A great deal of the earlier work on psychological well-being focused on its definition and many conceptual frameworks for defining well-being have been proposed. Among these theoretical approaches are bottom-up situational influences, the Dynamic Equilibrium Model, discrepancy theories, and telic theories. Each will be briefly considered in turn.

The bottom-up approach to investigating well-being is founded on the notion that if a person is able to pursue and fulfill the fundamental universal human needs, he or she will be happy. This method of study seeks to identify the factors, specifically the situations, external events, and demographics, that impact subjective well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Unfortunately, this approach has yielded small effect sizes
when explaining the variance in well-being. As a result, researchers have gravitated
toward the top-down methodology, which suggests that one's well-being is not
determined by external circumstances or events but by one's personality (Suh, Diener, &
Fujita, 1996).

Personality has consistently been found to be a strong predictor of well-being
(Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Specifically, the Dynamic Equilibrium Model
(Headey & Wearing, 1992) asserts that individuals have a distinct average amount of
well-being that is determined by one's personality. Headey and Wearing maintain that
people with extraverted personalities, for example, are more likely to experience certain
events as compared to those who are more introverted. These events, in turn, serve to
affect one's baseline level of psychological well-being. While unusual events may shift
an individual above or below his or her normal level, the Dynamic Equilibrium Model
suggests that the individual will return to this baseline level as the circumstances
normalize (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003).

Another theory advanced involves social comparison. The Multiple Discrepancy
Theory of Satisfaction (Michalos, 1985) proposes that people compare themselves to
various standards that are based on their aspirations, ideal levels of satisfaction, goals,
needs, previous conditions, and other people. One's happiness or satisfaction judgments
are based on the discrepancies between one's current circumstances and his or her
standards (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). While earlier social comparison theories
were founded on the notion that one would be happy if those around him were worse off,
and conversely unhappy if those around him were happier, recent theories are more
complex in that they allow for differences with regard to the type of information that is
used in the comparison. They further allow for variation in how the information is used (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Finally, telic theories of well-being assert that the acquisition of happiness is based on the attainment of a goal or the meeting of a need (Diener, 1984). Diener and his colleagues suggest that the structure and types of goals an individual has, how successful they are at achieving them, and the rate at which they achieve these goals can impact one’s life satisfaction (Diener, Such, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Telic approaches suggest that certain factors may hinder well-being. These factors include a lack of goals or desires or an unconscious conflict between goals. Additionally, a person’s goals may promote immediate happiness but have consequences that decrease long-term happiness. Telic approaches also maintain that one may be unable to achieve his or her goals due to unrealistic goals or deficits in resources or skills (Diener, 1984).

These theoretical perspectives represent just some of the numerous frameworks that exist for understanding and defining well-being. In addition to delineating models through which subjective well-being may be explored, researchers have also concerned themselves with identifying the various components of well-being.

2.1.2 Components of Well-Being

Diener and his colleagues (1999; 2000) suggest that subjective or psychological well-being is a broad class of occurrences that is comprised of several components, including positive and negative affect, life satisfaction, and satisfaction with specific domains.
Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) maintain that positive and negative affect are not merely opposites. They are, in fact, distinct dimensions that should be measured separately (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Positive affect refers to the extent to which one feels active, enthusiastic, and alert whereas negative affect is a dimension of distress and unpleasurable engagement. This dimension includes several aversive mood states, including anger, guilt, and fear (Watson et al., 1988).

These researchers assert that high levels of positive affect can be characterized as a state of high energy, pleasurable engagement, and full concentration, while low positive affect involves sadness and lethargy. Low negative affect is characterized by a state of calmness and serenity (Watson et al., 1988). It has been demonstrated that trait positive and negative affect correspond to the extraversion and anxiety/neuroticism personality factors (Tellegen, 1985) and that low positive affect and high negative affect are distinguishing features of depression and anxiety, respectively (Tellegen, 1985).

Researchers have found that life satisfaction is a separate and distinct construct from positive and negative affect (Andrews & Withey, 1976; Lucas, Diener, & Suh, 1996). It is the process through which one assesses the quality of his or her life on the basis of his or her own unique criteria. Presumably, a comparison of one’s life circumstances with a personal set of standards is made. To the extent that one’s life conditions match the standards, the individual will report high life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Shin and Johnson (1978) more explicitly defined the construct as a “global assessment of a person’s quality of life according to his own chosen criteria” (p.478).
The final widely held component of well-being is domain specific satisfaction. Investigators have asked respondents to indicate their satisfaction with, for example, their work, family, marriage, leisure, health, and finances (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Each of the components of well-being have been found to correlate substantially with each other (Diener et al., 1999) so are therefore not completely independent. They do, however, appear to be distinct. Pavot and Diener (1993) assert that, when assessed separately, the constructs provide complementary information.

Having considered various paradigms and definitions for subjective well-being, three assumptions may be made with regard to research in this area. First, well-being is subjective and comes from within the individual. Second, well-being does not merely refer to an absence of negative factors but includes the presence of positive affect. Also, subjective well-being is a function of the individual's complete life. Therefore, to be comprehensive, research in this area must incorporate measures that assess various aspects of one’s life (Diener, 1984).

Even in the context of various definitions and numerous frameworks by which subjective well-being is explained, there is still a lack of clarity when certain demographic variables are considered in relationship to this construct. For example, studies citing gender differences in psychological well-being have been inconsistent. Haring, Stock, and Okun (1984) found that men were happier than women, Lee, Seccombe, and Shehan (1991) found that women were happier than men, and other studies have reported no significant gender differences (Diener et al., 1999). Early studies reported that those who are young are happier than the old (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965; Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960), but more recent research has revealed a
lack of significant decline in life satisfaction as one ages (Diener & Suh, 1998) or that life satisfaction in fact increases with age (Horley & Lavery, 1995).

In addition to age and gender, other factors that appear to influence psychological well-being include self-esteem, social support, ethnicity, and spirituality.

2.2 Psychological Well-being and Self-Esteem

Self-esteem has been defined in various ways and by numerous people over the years. For example, Rosenberg (1965) defined it as feelings of self-worth and self-respect. Rogers (1961) defined it as a congruence between one's ideal and real selves and termed it unconditional self-regard or self-acceptance. Self-esteem may also be defined as how much one values oneself. As such, high self-esteem refers to a positive definition of the self whereas low self-esteem refers to an unfavorable evaluation of the self (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Studying self-esteem has been complicated by the number of definitions for this construct as well as researcher's attempts to distinguish it from self-concept.

While some have viewed self-concept and self-esteem as synonymous, others conceptualize these ideas as the affective and cognitive components of self knowledge (Nurius, 1989). Specifically, as self-esteem is considered the affective evaluation of one's self, self-concept is the broader term that refers to specific behavioral and cognitive self beliefs (Betz, Wohlgemuth, Serling, Harshbarger, & Klein, 1995). Elliott (1986) endorses the notion that self-esteem refers to the global evaluation of one’s own characteristics and attributes, and maintains that self-esteem is related to self-consistency. In his analysis of data drawn from a sample of 1,988 Baltimore city public school children from grades three through twelve, Elliott found that high self-esteem is
associated with greater consistency in the self-concept. Elliott’s work illustrates that the components of the self-concept do not exist independently of each other. Considering the various elements of the self-concept together is a necessity for gaining insight into the structure of the self-concept (Elliott, 1986).

Measuring self-esteem has been, in many ways, problematic. Including the almost sole reliance on explicit measures, the heterogeneity of high self-esteem, and the inability to infer causality, the body of literature devoted to self-esteem clearly has its limitations (Baumeister et al., 2003). Despite these limitations, however, this body is vast.

Though the predominance of this research has historically emphasized personal and individualistic aspects of the self as important sources of self-worth, self-esteem may also arise from collective aspects of the self. Collective self-esteem may be defined as the extent to which one evaluates their social groups positively (Bettencourt, Charlton, Eubanks, Kernahan, & Fuller, 1999). Tajfel (1982) defines the social or collective self as “that aspect of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1982, p. 255). The membership of which Tajfel refers may include group memberships such as gender, racial or ethnic identity, or religion.

Many studies have demonstrated that group membership positively contributes to subjective well-being and psychological adjustment (Bettencourt & Dorr, 1997; Blaine & Crocker, 1995; Diener & Diener, 1995). Specifically, Crocker and her colleagues (1994) found that collective self-esteem was positively correlated to psychological well-being,
particularly for those who are members of ethnic minority groups. Additional studies have shown that those with higher collective self-esteem report better subjective well-being (Bettencourt & Dorr, 1997) and psychological adjustment (Blaine & Crocker, 1995).

Bettencourt and her colleagues (1999) surveyed a sample of 142 first year college students on measures of collective self-esteem, personal self-esteem, academic and social adjustment to college, student interpersonal relationships, and extracurricular activities on two separate occasions during the same academic year. These researchers found that academic adjustment at the end of the first year of college was predicted by development in collective self-esteem. It was also found that development in collective self-esteem was related to improvements in adjustment to college (Bettencourt et al., 1999).

Clearly, group membership has the potential to impact psychological constructs, particularly well-being and adjustment. The membership of which Tajfel and others refer may include group memberships such as gender, racial or ethnic identity, or religion. Ethnicity and spirituality will be considered in separate sections of this literature review, but gender will be considered here.

Findings have been mixed when considering the gender differences in self-esteem. Despite contradictory findings, it is often argued that men and women do differ in this construct. It is generally believed that these differences stem from divergent patterns of socialization that exist for men and women (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992).
Josephs and colleagues maintain that men are more likely to develop an individualistic, autonomous, or independent self-schema while women tend to have a collectivist, connected, or ensembled schema for the self (Josephs et al., 1992). Their findings suggest that men’s self-esteem can be characterized by an emphasis on personal distinguishing achievements, whereas the self-esteem of a woman is founded on attachments and connections to others (Josephs et al., 1992).

Not only do men and women differ in their construction of self-esteem but research also suggests that there are gender differences in reported levels of self-esteem. Quatman and Watson (2001) investigated these differences in adolescents. With a sample of 545 adolescents from eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade, Quatman and Watson found that boys scored higher on self-esteem than did girls (Quatman & Watson, 2001). This is consistent with other findings regarding gender and self-esteem (Brage & Meredith, 1994; Chubb, Fertman, & Ross, 1997; Bolognini, Plancherel, Bettschart, & Halfon, 1996; Martinez & Dukes, 1997).

This gender difference appears to be persistent and can be seen in adults, as well (Kling, Hyde, Showers, Buswell, 1999). Kling and colleagues conducted two meta-analyses to examine differences across gender in global self-esteem. In both analyses, which reviewed recent and relevant articles, they found that males consistently scored higher on measures of self-esteem than did females (Kling et al., 1999).

While these studies suggest males report higher levels of self-esteem, other investigations have revealed conflicting findings (Ma & Leung, 1991; Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994) while still others indicate no differences (Simpson, Gangestad, & Lerna, 1990; Mullis & Chapman, 2000; Greene & Wheatley, 1992). Despite these apparent
contradictions, it is generally believed that males score higher on most measures of self-esteem. Accordingly, theorists have proposed explanations for this gender effect. Gender roles, peer interactions, school environments, and cultural emphasis on female physical appearance have all been proposed as possible explanations for the observed gender differences in self-esteem (Kling et al., 1999).

Self-esteem is associated with how people experience themselves and the world around them (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994). Therefore, it should be clear that self-esteem is related to subjective well-being. In fact, self-esteem is not only considered a critical component of well-being (Taylor & Brown, 1988), but is believed to be the single best predictor of well-being (Diener & Diener, 1995; Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Betton, 2001; Schimmack & Diener, 2003).

To investigate the extent to which self-esteem predicts well-being, Schimmack and Diener (2003) surveyed 141 college students on measures of implicit and explicit self-esteem and subjective well-being. These investigators found that explicit self-esteem, measured by the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, was not only a significant predictor of all subjective well-being measures but was a better predictor than implicit self-esteem, measured by preferences for initials (Schimmack & Diener, 2003).

Furnham and Cheng (2000) sampled 233 students between the ages of 15 and 35 to examine lay theories of well-being or happiness. Participants responded to the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, the Oxford Happiness Inventory, and the Causes of Happiness Questionnaire. Furnham and Cheng found, like others, that self-esteem was the best determinant of happiness in this sample (Furnham & Cheng, 2000).
Betton (2001) investigated the relationship between psychological well-being, self-esteem, academic self-concept, social support, and worldview in African American and European American college students. In her sample of 264 female students, it was found that self-esteem accounted for approximately 30 percent of the variance in well-being, again supporting the notion that self-esteem may be the best indicator of subjective well-being in college populations (Betton, 2001).

Diener and Diener (1995) demonstrated the relationship between self-esteem and well-being in their study of 13,118 college students from various universities and countries. These students responded to inventories of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and satisfaction with friends, families, and finances. While all of the variables investigated were significant predictors of life satisfaction, self-esteem was the strongest predictor (Diener & Diener, 1995). When considering the cultural differences that exist in the relationship between these variables, these researchers found that while life satisfaction and self-esteem were significantly correlated across cultures, the correlation between them was lower in collectivistic cultures as compared to individualistic nations (Diener & Diener, 1995). These findings suggest that those who are collectivistic in their worldview may focus on their relationships and on groups while those socialized in an individualistic culture may have the proclivity to focus on self (Baumeister et al., 2003).

Despite the high correlations between self-esteem and well-being, research has indicated that self-esteem and well-being are separate and distinct constructs (Diener & Diener, 1995; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 2002). Those who have high self-esteem have a tendency to experience more pleasurable affect (Pelham & Swann, 1989) and tend to interpret information about themselves and the world around them in flattering ways.
Further, those reporting higher levels of self-esteem report having better relationships, making better impressions on others, being more attractive and likeable, and report performing better academically (Baumeister et al., 2003).

2.3 Psychological Well-being and Social Support

Social support has been defined as “those social interactions or relationships that provide individuals with actual assistance or with a feeling of attachment to a person or group that is perceived as caring or loving” (pp. 216; Pugliesi & Shook, 1998). Social support has been extensively studied and is thought to influence well-being in two ways. First, social support is believed to indirectly effect well-being in that it modifies the impact of life events and other stressors (Pugliesi & Shook, 1998). As a buffer, social support has been shown to diminish the effect of stressful events on well-being (Turner & Noh, 1983). Secondly, social support appears to directly influence well-being and health (Pugliesi & Shook, 1998).

Despite the large body of research devoted to this construct, a deficiency of exactitude still exists around social support. Some investigators subscribe to the person-environment fit model, which suggests that it is necessary to distinguish different forms of help to fully understand the functions of social contact. Others, however, believe that the feeling of being valued and loved is the core component of support and that this feeling can result from various supportive behaviors (Winefield, Winefield, & Tiggemann, 1992). In a sample of 483 adults, Winefield and her colleagues found a correlation between social support and well-being. It was also found that the type of support was insignificant as compared to the source of support. This suggests that dividing social support into distinct components does not add to our comprehension of
this construct (Winefield, Winefield, & Tiggemann, 1992.) Research has also indicated that perceived support is a better predictor of well-being than the actual support received (VanderZee, Buunk, & Sanderman, 1997).

Research has consistently demonstrated the association between social support and psychological well-being. Specifically, social support is believed to decrease psychological distress and levels of depression while enhancing subjective well-being (Turner, 1981; Holahan & Moos, 1981; Ensel & Lin, 1991; Winefield, Winefield, & Tiggemann, 1992; VanderZee, Buunk, & Sanderman, 1997).

Turner (1981), with 878 participants, found that there is a relationship between these constructs. Though social support and well-being are closely connected, they are separate constructs (Turner, 1981). Turner also reported that two-way causality exists between social support and well-being, implying that psychological well-being leads to social support and social support leads to psychological well-being (Turner, 1981).

Holahan & Moos (1981) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between psychological distress and social support. Holahan and Moos found that social support was indeed negatively related to psychological distress, findings that are consistent with other studies (Holahan & Moos, 1981).

Studies have highlighted the role of personality characteristics in developing social relationships. VanderZee, Buunk, and Sanderman (1997) examined the relationship between subjective well-being and social support, and the impact of locus of control. With a sample comprised predominately of females, these researchers observed findings consistent with previous work: that social support contributes to one’s well-
being. Specifically, these researchers found that social support was particularly related to well-being in individuals with an external locus of control (VanderZee et al., 1997).

Some researchers have been interested in differences in social support across gender. Studies of social support network size and composition have reflected inconsistent findings regarding such differences. While some have found that women have larger networks (Antonucci & Akiyama, 1987; Moore, 1990), others have found no differences (Coates, 1987). More consistent findings have been observed when investigating the composition of networks. Specifically, women's networks tend to be comprised of family and friend relationships (Acock, 1990) whereas men's networks are made up of employment (Moore, 1990) or neighborhood ties (Ishii-Kuntz & Seccombe, 1989).

Wohlgemuth and Betz (1991) investigated gender differences in social support. In a sample of 115 undergraduate students it was found that when compared to men, women reported significantly socially supportive behaviors, more stressful events, significantly larger perceived social support networks, and more satisfaction with the support they received from friends (Wohlgemuth & Betz, 1991). Relatedly, Pugliesi and Shook (1998) found that when compared to women, males reported lower average network size.

Research has also been devoted to understanding the role that social support may play in racial and ethnic minority students. For example, Shibazaki (1999) reported that higher levels of emotional support from family members led to lower levels of distress in Chicano college students. Research has consistently revealed that Latino and African American college students depend on informal social support connections and family
members to address concerns before seeking professional help at a counseling center (Boesch & Cimbolic, 1994; Alexander, 2000; Harris & Molock, 2000).

Additionally, social support variables were found to be the best predictors of academic persistence in a sample of 160 Asian American college students (Gloria & Ho, 2003), and African American female college students have been found to report emotional support from a connection to a faculty member, family members, and participation in church services as important social support factors (Carter, 2000).

In spite of these findings, the relationship between social support and psychological well-being is not fully understood. Diener and Seligman (2002) found in a sample of 222 college students screened for high happiness that very happy individuals have rich, rewarding social connections. It was also observed that while social relationships form a necessary condition for happiness, it is not a sufficient condition (Diener & Seligman, 2002). With the lack of clarity surrounding this issue, what is clear is that more research is needed, particularly to further explore gender and ethnic differences.

2.4 Psychological Well-being and African Americans

Studies indicate that there are many difficulties facing the subjective well-being of African Americans in higher education (Ewing, Richardson, James-Myers, & Russell, 1996). The research on racial identity suggests that people with less self-actualized racial identities have lower self-esteem and are more likely to experience feelings of hostility, insecurity, and anxiety. Moreover, optimal Afrocentric worldview literature suggests that self-esteem, depression, and general psychological distress are linked to one’s worldview (Ewing et al., 1996).
Mental health theorists, researchers and service providers generally agree that African Americans are “at high risk for the development of mental problems.” In fact, it has been demonstrated that when compared to European Americans, African Americans score higher on psychological distress measures than European Americans (Neighbors, 1990). Social conditions linked to racism, poverty, ghetto living, low self-esteem, personal competence, and lack of power have been suggested as the primary cause of psychological problems among African Americans (Neighbors, 1990).

Researchers believe that African American’s ability to overcome these negative social conditions is due in part to their social and family connections (Snowden, 2001). African Americans have found sanctuary in their more frequent interactions with neighbors and friends as compared to European Americans and their significant level of involvement in the Black church (Snowden, 2001).

In a household survey of more than 18,000 respondents, Snowden found several indicators of greater social embeddedness among African Americans than among European Americans. Findings revealed African American males had frequent interactions associated with high levels of community involvement and peer support networks. Further, African American females were more likely to attend meetings of clubs, churches and other groups (Snowden, 2001).

These findings, when considered together, suggest that additional factors may serve to influence subjective well-being in African Americans, and that predictors for subjective well-being may be different for African American populations than for other ethnic groups (Diener, 1984). One of these possible variables is spirituality.
2.5 Psychological Well-being and Spirituality

Spirituality and religiosity have recently emerged in psychological literature as theorists are beginning to understand their importance and impact on subjective well-being. This interest is evident in the proliferation of measures currently available to assess these variables (Seybold & Hill, 2001) and the number of studies devoted to their exploration. There has been some difficulty, however, in reaching a consensus about how to define these terms and, to some extent, whether these ideas are separate constructs.

Helpful definitions are offered by Mattis and Jagers (2001). These researchers define religiosity as “an individual’s degree of adherence to the beliefs, doctrines and practices of a religion” (pp. 522) and define spirituality as “an acknowledgement of a non-material force that permeates all affairs, human and non-human” (pp. 522). While acknowledging the absence of agreement in defining religiosity and spirituality, Mattis and Jagers maintain that they are related but distinct domains.

Adherence to religious beliefs serves several functions in our everyday lives. For example, it has been offered that religion helps individuals deal with crises; provides opportunity to understand the meaning of life, thereby integrating personality; assures superhuman help to individuals; and shapes one’s life. In light of these assertions, it is not surprising that spirituality is an important part of the lives of many Americans (Seybold & Hill, 2001).

Kim and Seidlitz (2002) sought to examine the function that spirituality plays in the lives of college students. In a sample of 113 undergraduates, these researchers found that spirituality had a direct beneficial effect on negative affect, and that it buffered the
detrimental effects of stress on negative affect and physical adjustment. In their study, the buffering effects of spirituality existed regardless of religious affiliation and other coping strategies (Kim & Seidlitz, 2002). These findings support the conclusion that spirituality and religious coping accounts for distinct variance in psychological and physical health outside of the effects of non-religious coping (Pargament, 1997).

Many other studies reveal a positive effect of spirituality on physical and psychological health (Matthews, Larson, & Barry, 1994; Maltby, Lewis, & Day, 1999; Clark, Friedman, & Martin, 1999). For example, Gartner (1996) found positive relationships between spirituality or religiosity and marital satisfaction, well-being, and general psychological functioning. Further, he also found negative correlations with drug and alcohol use, delinquency, criminal behavior, and suicide (Gartner, 1996).

These findings have been replicated in various religions, in both males and females, and across all age groups. However, gender and ethnic differences have been identified with regard to spirituality. Studies consistently indicate that females report greater spirituality than males, a finding that is true for both adolescents and adults (Gallup & Bezilla, 1992; Roehlkepartain & Benson, 1993; Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis, 1993). Knox, Langenhough, Walters, & Rowley (1998) found in their investigation of religiosity and spirituality among college students that women and younger students reported higher levels of religiosity than did men and older students. Consistent with other studies, Knox and his colleagues also found an association between religiosity and higher self-esteem and lower antisocial behavior (Knox et al., 1998).

Moreover, the relationship between spirituality and psychological functioning has been found to exist across ethnic groups and cultures, and in studies that have measured
religiosity in various ways (Seybold & Hill, 2001). Ball, Armistead, and Austin (2003) sampled 492 African American females between the ages of 12 and 19 to investigate the relationship between religiosity and adjustment in Black urban adolescents. It was observed that a higher level of religiosity was associated with higher self-esteem and better psychological functioning (Ball, Armistead, & Austin, 2003).

Further, African Americans consistently exhibit higher levels of spirituality than European Americans (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Benson et al., 1986; Snowden, 2001) and it has been suggested that spirituality may play a unique role in the lives of African Americans (Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998). Miller and her colleagues (1998) not only found that the African Americans in their sample reported higher levels of spirituality as compared to Caucasians, but they also found that the scale factors for the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982) revealed ethnic differences, which were based on cultural values (Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998).

Hill & Butter (1995) suggest that spirituality is in part beneficial through the social resources that it creates. Religious communities provide opportunities for companionship, community involvement, and fellowship (Hill & Butter, 1995; Snowden, 2001). It has also been suggested that religion acts as a coping mechanism for life events through its social networks (Seybold & Hill, 2001). Diener and his colleagues (1999) assert that spirituality and religion may serve social functions by providing a collective identity and social networks comprised of individuals sharing similar values and attitudes (Diener et al., 1999).
2.6 Summary

To summarize, psychological well-being has been extensively investigated in the literature. Among its correlates is self-esteem, which appears to be the single best predictor of well-being. Social support also appears to be positively associated with well-being, and researchers believe that it has a direct influence as well as an indirect impact on well-being through its buffering effects on life stress. Additionally, spirituality has more recently been identified as a predictor of subjective well-being, providing beneficial effects as a coping mechanism and as a source of fellowship and camaraderie.

Men and women are believed to differ in each of the above constructs. Specifically, while findings have been contradictory, men generally score higher on measures of self-esteem than women, whereas women report larger perceived social support networks and greater satisfaction with this support. Moreover, women score higher on measures of spirituality when compared to their male counterparts.

Research suggests that African Americans and European Americans differ in their experience of self-esteem, social support, spirituality, and well-being. Specifically, it appears that traditional conceptions of self-esteem may not apply to African American populations, and that individuals of African descent report higher levels of spirituality and social support than European Americans. Findings have been inconclusive regarding the well-being of African Americans. While some reports suggest higher levels of distress in this population, others suggest that African Americans are able to overcome negative influences on well-being through familial and community connections and spirituality.
Taken together, these findings suggest that further investigation into psychological well-being and its correlates is needed. It is also clear that the relationship between these variables warrants further examination in minority populations, specifically in the African American community.

2.7 Purpose and Hypotheses

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality in minority and non-minority college students. Specifically, it will seek to identify the differences in the relationships between these constructs in African American and European American college freshmen. This study should be considered the first in a series of studies that will attempt to investigate the previously stated relationships. If significant differences are found across race and gender, future studies will further investigate these differences across various school environments. The hypotheses for the study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: African American students will report lower levels of social support than European American students. This outcome is expected due to the ethnic and racial composition of the university from which participants will be drawn. Specifically, participants will be students from a large predominately White university.

Hypothesis 1b: African American students will report higher levels of self-esteem, spirituality, and optimal worldview resulting in higher levels of psychological well-being than their European American counterparts. This prediction is being made based on past research with African American participants.

Hypothesis 2a: Based on previous research, it is expected that female respondents will report higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem than male respondents.

Hypothesis 2b: Also based on previous work, female participants are expected to report higher levels of social support and spirituality, and an optimal worldview compared to male participants. No predictions are being made regarding gender.
differences in psychological well-being due to incompatible findings for women on measures of social support, spirituality, and well-being.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.1 Participants

The participants for this study were obtained from a large, public, predominately White Midwestern university. Two hundred and sixty two African American and European American introductory psychology students were given course credit for their participation. While data were collected from approximately 284 students, those who did not respond to all of the items as well as those who identified themselves as graduate or professional students were omitted from the sample. Of the 262 respondents, 118 were African American (45%), and 144 were European American (55%). Further, 145 were female (55.3%), and 117 were male (44.7%). More specifically, 74 were African American females (28.25%), 71 were European American females (27.1%), 44 were African American males (16.8%), and 73 were European American males (27.87%). The class status of the participants were as follows: 175 (66.8%) were freshmen; 43 (16.4%) were sophomores; 30 (11.5%) were juniors, and 12 (4.6%) were seniors. Two participants did not identify their class status.

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1 Psychological Well-being. Psychological well-being was assessed by measuring life satisfaction, depression, and positive and negative affect.
Life Satisfaction. Life satisfaction refers to one's assessment of the quality of his/her life on the basis of his or her own unique criteria (Shin & Johnson, 1978). Life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985), shown in Appendix A. The SWLS is a five item measure designed to assess an individual's global judgement of life satisfaction. Individuals respond using a 7-point Likert scale, which includes a neutral response option. All of the items are worded positively, and "I am satisfied with my life" is a sample item from the inventory. Scores can range from 5 to 35 and are interpreted in terms of absolute life satisfaction, with scores between 15 and 19 representing slight dissatisfaction and scores between 21 and 25 representing slight satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Diener and colleagues (1985) found the measure to be reliable with an alpha coefficient of .87 and test-retest stability coefficient of .82. Additionally, the SWLS has demonstrated construct validity in its convergence with other measures of life satisfaction, including Andrews and Withey's (1976) scale (r=.68) and Fordyce's (1978) Global scale (r=.58). The SWLS has also been shown to have a negative correlation with measures of distress (Pavot & Diener, 1993). These measures include the Beck Depression Inventory (r = -.72, p = .001) and a measure of negative affect (r = -.31) (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Cronbach's alpha for this scale herein was .82.

Depression. Depression was assessed using the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D Scale; Radloff, 1977). The CES-D, shown in Appendix G, is designed to measure one's present level of depressive symptomatology, emphasizing
mood and affect. While the symptoms assessed by this scale are central to the diagnosis of clinical depression, the CES-D was designed for use in the general population.

Consisting of twenty items, respondents are asked to specify the extent to which they have experienced each item during the past week. Responses are based on a 4-point Likert scale with the following options: rarely or none of the time (less than one day); some or a little of the time (one to two days); occasionally or a moderate amount of time (three to four days); and most or all of the time (five to seven days). Four items are positively worded and require reverse scoring, but all responses are summed to yield a total score. Total scores range from 0 – 60, with higher scores reflecting greater depressive symptoms. “I felt lonely” is a sample item from this inventory.

The CES-D has shown itself to be psychometrically sound. Radloff (1977) reported reliability coefficients of .80 and higher with various populations, including men and women and African American and European American samples. Further, the CES-D has demonstrated construct validity in its ability to distinguish between clinically depressed and non-depressed populations (Radloff, 1977). The value of the coefficient alpha for this scale herein was .88.

Positive and Negative Affect. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) was used to measure positive and negative affect. The PANAS is shown in Appendix E and was designed to assess two distinct affect state dimensions. Respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they generally experience a list of twenty items using a five-point Likert scale. The following are potential responses: very slightly or not at all (scored 1); a little; moderately; quite a bit; and extremely (scored 5). Consisting of ten positive items and ten negative items, the
scale yields two scores acquired by summing across each dimension. Higher scores on each scale represent more positive or negative affect. Sample mood states include "enthusiastic", "ashamed", and "scared".

Watson, Clark, and Tellegren (1988) report high alpha coefficients for the PANAS ranging from .86 to .90 for positive affect and from .84 to .87 for negative affect. Additionally, test-retest reliability for the two scales has been reported at .68 for positive affect and .71 for negative affect with an eight-week retest interval. While the instrument does allow some flexibility regarding the temporal instructions, the scale’s reliability is not affected by the instructions used. Correlations between the positive and negative scales have been consistently low, ranging from -.12 to -.23 and indicating high discriminant validity (Watson et al., 1988). Cronbach's alpha for positive and negative affect herein were .87 and .85 respectively.

3.2.2 Self-Esteem. Self-esteem was assessed using the Unconditional Self-Regard Scale (USRS; Betz, Wohlgemuth, Serling, Harshbarger, & Klein, 1995). The USRS was designed to measure global self-esteem and is conceptually based on the idea of unconditional positive regard postulated by Carl Rogers (1957) and is shown in Appendix C. Participants respond to a total of twenty items, including 9 positively worded and 11 negatively worded items, using a 5-point Likert scale. Response options include: strongly disagree (scored 1), moderately disagree, aren’t sure or neutral, moderately agree, and strongly agree (scored 5). After reverse-scoring the negatively worded items, all items are summed to yield a total score that can range from 20 to 100 with higher scores indicating higher levels of self-esteem. “Even though I make mistakes, I still feel good about myself as a person” is a sample item for this measure.
Betz et al. (1995) reported reliability coefficients for this measure to be .87 and .90 in two separate samples of college students. Further, scores on the USRS have been shown to be strongly correlated with other measures of self-esteem and adjustment. Specifically, correlations with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory were .77 and .78, and higher scores on the USRS were significantly correlated with lower scores on inventories of depression and anxiety. These measures include the Beck Depression Inventory \( r = -.65, p < .001 \) and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory \( r = -.75, p < .001 \) (Betz et al., 1995). For the present study, Cronbach's alpha was .89.

3.2.3 Social Support. The Social Support Questionnaire-6 (SSQ-6; Sarason et al., 1989) was used to measure social support. The SSQ-6, shown in Appendix D, is a shorter version of the original Social Support Questionnaire and is designed to assess respondent’s perception of the number of individuals in their lives who are supportive as well as their satisfaction with the provided support.

Respondents may identify a total of nine individuals to whom various statements apply. They are then able to indicate their satisfaction with the support received for each item. Satisfaction responses are organized along a 6-point Likert scale with the following potential responses: very dissatisfied (scored 1), fairly dissatisfied, a little dissatisfied, a little satisfied, fairly satisfied, and very satisfied (scored 6). Thus, the SSQ-6 yields two separate scores: one score indicating the number of supportive people in one’s life (SSQ-N), which ranges from 0 to 9; and one score for satisfaction with the available support (SSQ-S), which ranges from 1 to 6. This brief measure has six items; a sample item is as follows: “Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?”
Reliability data for the SSQ-6 have been favorable. Betton (2001) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of .90 for SSQ-N and .88 for SSQ-S in her study using African American and European American female college students. Wohlgemuth and Betz (1991) have reported internal consistency as .91 for both the SSQ-N and the SSQ-S. These researchers also reported that the SSQ-N and the SSQ-S correlated with the longer version of the scale with coefficients of .81 and .50, respectively (Wohlgemuth & Betz, 1991). Cronbach's alpha for both the SSQ-N and the SSQ-S herein was .92.

3.2.4 Worldview. Worldview was assessed using the Belief Systems Analysis Scale (BSAS; Fine, Schwebel, & Myers, 1985), shown in Appendix B. Designed to assess where one’s beliefs fall along an optimal to sub-optimal worldview continuum, the BSAS is comprised of the following factors: interpersonal valuing, de-emphasis on appearance, integration of opposites, non-material-based satisfaction, and optimism. The inventory consists of thirty-one items to which individuals respond using a 5-point Likert scale. Strongly disagree (scored 1), moderately disagree, uncertain, moderately agree, and strongly agree (scored 5) represent the response options. Negatively worded items are reversed scored and all items are then summed. Higher scores on the BSAS indicate a higher degree of belief in connectedness of all that exists, and low scores are indicative of a higher belief in separateness of all that exists. “When considering all the difficulties of life, I have trouble seeing any meaning or order to it” is a sample item.

Montgomery, Fine, and James-Myers (1990) reported a reliability coefficient for the BSAS of .80 and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .63. It was also found to correlate positively and significantly with the Social Interest Scale and negatively and
significantly with the Symptom Checklist-90-R and the Dogmatism Scale (Montgomery et al., 1990). Cronbach's alpha for this measure herein was .66.

3.2.5 Spirituality. The Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS; Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982) was used to measure spirituality and is shown in Appendix F. This instrument was designed to assess two dimensions of spiritual well-being: religious and existential well-being. Religious Well-Being (RWB) measures one's perception of his or her relationship with God, while Existential Well-Being (EWB) assesses the meaning of life and one's satisfaction with it. Individuals respond to twenty items using a six point Likert scale with response options ranging from strongly disagree (scored 1) to strongly agree (scored 6). The SWBS yields two scores for its two sub-scales, with higher ratings indicating greater spirituality. Sample items include: "I believe that God is concerned about my problems" and "I feel unsettled about my future."

The SWBS is one of the most commonly used measures of spirituality, and much evidence has accumulated to support its psychometric soundness. For example, alpha coefficients for the subscales and the total measure have been reported at .84 and higher for several samples, and the test-retest reliability for the subscales and total measure has been reported as .85 with a ten week interval (Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2001). Cronbach's alpha with the present sample for the RWB and EWB subscales were .95 and .84, respectively. For the total inventory, Cronbach's alpha herein was .93.

The measures used in this investigation are presented as appendices in the order in which they were presented to all participants. In addition to the measures, participants also completed a demographic survey to ascertain gender, ethnicity, and academic level.
3.3 Procedure

The participants for this study were obtained from the introductory psychology course at a large mid-western predominately White institution. Participants had the opportunity to sign up for the current study using the internet. They were volunteers in that they were able to choose from many psychological experiments. Participants were able to read a brief description of the study as well as eligibility criteria for participation. They received the date, time, and location to which they were to report to complete the questionnaires in groups of 35 to 40. This script is shown in Appendix H. Participants had one hour to complete the 128-item battery and were given course credit for their participation, however most participants finished in approximately 30 minutes. Upon completion of the inventories, participants received a debriefing statement informing them of the purposes of the study and the hypotheses being advanced. The debriefing script is shown in Appendix I.

Initially, both African American and Caucasian participants were recruited simultaneously. However, an overwhelming number of Caucasian students responded relative to African Americans, which led to the attainment of the desired number of European Americans prior to the attainment of the desired number of African Americans. As a result, African Americans were eventually specifically recruited. Due to the demographics of the university and the students enrolled in introductory psychology courses, data collection occurred over the course of multiple quarters to obtain the number of participants observed herein.
3.4 Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the data to identify group and total means for each of the constructs studied. Multivariate analyses of variance were conducted to assess significant differences between groups. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were also conducted to assess the relationship between the variables of interest, and the differences in the strength of the correlations across ethnicity were also assessed. Further, psychological well-being was treated as a dependent variable and step-wise regressions were applied to the data to determine the extent to which self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality predict psychological well-being.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Means and Standard Deviations

Means and standard deviations for the measured variables are presented in tables 1 through 3. Table 1 presents means and standard deviations for the entire sample. Descriptive statistics are reported only for total SWBS scores and not for its subscales as they were not conceptually relevant for the current investigation. Examination of Table 1 shows that the mean scores for the SWLS, CES-D, PA, and NA were 24.66, 33.47, 35.69 and 20.29, respectively. Means for the USRS, SSQ-N, SSQ-S, BSAS, and SWBS were 54.01, 4.69, 5.35, 103.37, and 89.99 respectively.

For purposes of comparison, the mean for satisfaction with life for this sample was significantly higher than the published mean for college students sampled in 1993 as reported by Pavot & Diener (1993) (M = 23.7, SD = 6.4; t(1, 261) = 2.96, p < .01). Regarding negative affect, the mean for NA for the current sample was also significantly higher than that reported by Watson, Clark, & Tellegen (1988) (M = 18.1, SD = 5.9; t(1, 261) = 5.16, p < .01). Conversely, the means for USRS reported for male and female students by Smith and Betz (2002) were significantly higher than those for the current sample (M = 55.85, SD = 15.36; t(1,123) = -1.95, p = .05; M = 56.09, SD = 11.12; t(1,138) = -2.77, p < .01, respectively).
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<td>.93</td>
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Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for Total Sample
The results of the multivariate tests are presented in Table 2 while Table 3 presents means and standard deviations by race for the sample, as well as Cohen's d effect size for comparison of obtained differences. Cohen (1988) suggested that in assessing the magnitude of the differences in group means, effect sizes between .20 and .50 indicate a small to moderate difference, whereas effect sizes of .50 to .80 reflect large differences.

As shown, several significant differences were found between the African American and Caucasian students. Specifically, African American students (M: 37.33, SD: 7.08) reported higher levels of positive affect as measured by the PANAS than the Caucasian students (M: 34.35, SD: 7.25) (F = 11.87, p < .001). The effect size for this comparison was moderate, .42. African American students (M: 56.86, SD: 9.90) also reported higher levels of self-esteem as measured by the USRS than their Caucasian counterparts (M: 51.67, SD: 9.07) (F = 18.94, p ≤ .001). With an effect size of .55, this comparison was large. Caucasian students, however, (M: 4.99, SD: 2.06) reported higher levels of social support as measured by SSQN than the African American students (M: 4.34, SD: 2.29) (F = 5.14, p = .02). The effect size for this comparison was .30. Finally, African American students (M: 96.86, SD: 17.77) reported higher levels of spiritual well-being as measured by the SWBS than the Caucasian students (M: 84.38, SD: 18.57) (F = 27.65, p ≤ .001). The effect size of this comparison was .69, indicating a large difference between African Americans and Caucasians with regard to spirituality.
<table>
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<td>1.91</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>Interaction</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.982</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Multivariate Test for Ethnicity, Gender, and the Ethnicity/Gender Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>African American (n = 118)</th>
<th>Caucasian (n = 144)</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with Life</td>
<td>24.26 5.60</td>
<td>24.99 4.97</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>34.33 9.86</td>
<td>32.77 9.00</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affect</td>
<td>37.33 7.08</td>
<td>34.35 7.25</td>
<td>11.87**</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affect</td>
<td>20.10 6.68</td>
<td>20.44 7.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>56.86 9.90</td>
<td>51.67 9.07</td>
<td>18.94**</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support (N)</td>
<td>4.34 2.29</td>
<td>4.99 2.06</td>
<td>5.14*</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support (S)</td>
<td>5.43 1.01</td>
<td>5.29 .86</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldview</td>
<td>103.85 11.52</td>
<td>102.99 10.26</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>96.86 17.77</td>
<td>84.38 18.57</td>
<td>27.65**</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Multivariate F's by Ethnicity. Note. * indicates p = .02; ** indicates p ≤ .001.
Table 4 presents means and standard deviations by gender for this sample. Examination of this table reveals no significant gender differences.

A two by two analysis of variance was conducted with gender and ethnicity as the independent variables to assess the presence of any gender by ethnicity interactions. This analysis revealed no such interactions.

4.2 Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients

Tables 5 and 6 present matrices of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients for the variables studied. Table 5 shows correlations for the total sample. As shown in this table, all indices of psychological well-being were significantly correlated with all other variables. Additionally, each variable was significantly correlated with all other variables. The strongest correlations for the total sample are those between depression and negative affect ($r = .54$), self-esteem and negative affect ($r = -.52$), self-esteem and positive affect ($r = .51$), and self-esteem and depression ($r = -.51$). Other correlations worth noting are those between spirituality and self-esteem ($r = .48$), spirituality and positive affect ($r = .47$), depression and life satisfaction ($r = -.47$), and self-esteem and life satisfaction ($r = .46$).

Not listed in Table 5 are the correlations between the subscales of the SWBS. Like the other variables included in this investigation, Religious Well-being (RWB) and Existential Well-being (EWB) were related to each other ($r = .44$, $p = .01$) and to the total spiritual well being score ($r = .93$, $p = .01$, and $r = .74$, $p = .01$, respectively).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Females (n = 145)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Males (n = 117)</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
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<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9.74</td>
<td>32.37</td>
<td>8.90</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affect</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.48</td>
<td>7.45</td>
<td>35.97</td>
<td>7.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative Affect</td>
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<td>19.97</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td>20.69</td>
<td>6.77</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td>54.14</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>53.85</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.03</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support (N)</td>
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<td>4.72</td>
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<td>4.67</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1.02</td>
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<td>Worldview</td>
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<td>102.03</td>
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<td>2.89</td>
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<td>Spirituality</td>
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<td>87.06</td>
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<td>2.43</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and Multivariate F's by Gender
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<th>6</th>
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<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SWLS</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CES-D</td>
<td>-.47*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PA</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>-.42*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. NA</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. USRS</td>
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<td>-.51*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. BSAS</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. SSQN</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>-.39*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. SSQS</td>
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<td>-.33*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. SWBS</td>
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<td>.47*</td>
<td>-.37*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Matrix for Total Sample (N = 262). Note. * indicates $p < .01$. SWLS = satisfaction with life; CES-D = depression; PA = positive affect; NA = negative affect; USRS = self-esteem; BSAS = worldview; SSQN = number of social support; SSQS = satisfaction with social support; SWBS = spirituality.
Table 6 shows correlations for African Americans and Caucasians. The upper diagonal reflects the coefficients for African Americans while the lower diagonal reflects coefficients for Caucasians. The correlations that are strongest differed across ethnicity. Specifically, the strongest correlations for African Americans are those between depression and negative affect ($r = .70$), depression and self-esteem ($r = -.63$), and spirituality and depression ($r = -.56$). Also among the stronger correlations for African Americans are those between spirituality and life satisfaction, negative affect, and self-esteem ($r = .55$, -.54, and .49 respectively). For Caucasians, the strongest correlations are between self-esteem and positive affect ($r = .56$), self-esteem and negative affect ($r = -.52$), and self-esteem and life satisfaction ($r = .50$).

Using the z-test for assessing differences in correlations, several statistically significant differences between African Americans and Caucasians were observed. These include the correlations between spirituality and life satisfaction ($r = .55$ and .32; $p = .01$), spirituality and negative affect ($r =-.54$ and -.26; $p < .01$), self-esteem and depression ($r = -.63$ and -.48; $p < .05$), and self-esteem and worldview ($r = .44$ and .20; $p < .05$). In each of these relationships, the correlations were higher among African Americans. Significant differences were also observed between satisfaction with social support and life satisfaction ($r = .37$ and -.01; $p < .001$), and with positive affect ($r = .47$ and .11; $p < .001$). In these relationships, the correlations were higher in Caucasians.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SWLS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.44*</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CES-D</td>
<td>-.49*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.43*</td>
<td>.70*</td>
<td>-.63*</td>
<td>-.42*</td>
<td>-.40*</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
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<td>.38*</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.47*</td>
</tr>
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<td>.42*</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.55*</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
<td>-.54*</td>
</tr>
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<td>.56*</td>
<td>-.52*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.49*</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. BSAS</td>
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<td>-.19*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
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<td>.29*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
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<td>8. SSQS</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>.38*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Matrix by Ethnicity. Note. * indicates $p < .01$. The upper diagonal reflects coefficients for African Americans ($n = 118$). The lower diagonal reflects coefficients for Caucasians ($n = 144$). SWLS = satisfaction with life; CES-D = depression; PA = positive affect; NA = negative affect; USRS = self-esteem; BSAS = worldview; SSQN = number of social support; SSQS = satisfaction with social support; SWBS = spirituality.
Step-wise regression was applied to the data to assess the extent to which self-esteem, spirituality, social support and worldview predict psychological well-being. The regression analyses were performed separately in the African American and Caucasian samples. Tables 7 and 8 present the results of these analyses. Examination of these tables indicates that self-esteem, spirituality, and social support predicted psychological well-being differently across ethnicity. Specifically, for Caucasian participants, self-esteem, as measured by the USRS, accounted for twenty-five percent of the variance in the cognitive component of psychological well-being as measured by the SWLS ($F (1, 142) = 48.12, p < .001$). Further, when social support was added to the model, it was also a significant predictor of psychological well-being but accounted for only a small amount of variance over and above self-esteem. Spirituality was excluded from the model as it did not account for additional variance beyond that accounted for by self-esteem and social support.

For African American participants, spirituality, as measured by the SWBS, accounted for thirty percent of the variance in well-being ($F (1, 116) = 50.58, p < .001$). Self-esteem accounted for an additional seven percent when added to the model and was also a significant predictor. Social support and worldview did not account for additional variance and were excluded from the model.
### Table 7. Regression Analyses with Psychological Well-being as the Dependent Variable for Caucasians

*Note.* * indicates p < .001. ** indicates p = .01  Spirituality refers to the total score on the SWBS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>6.06*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.04**</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>2.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 8. Regression Analyses with Psychological Well-being as the Dependant Variable for African Americans

*Note.* * indicates p < .001.  Spirituality refers to the total score on the SWBS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>4.79*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>3.52*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support (N)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldview</td>
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Caucasians

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
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<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>6.06*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Support</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.04**</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>2.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
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</table>

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African Americans

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<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Beta</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Spirituality</td>
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<td>.30*</td>
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<td>.07*</td>
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<td>3.52*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Support (N)</td>
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<tr>
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CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality in minority and non-minority college students. Specifically, this study sought to identify the differences in the relationships between these constructs in African American and European American college freshmen. The results of the investigation revealed several significant differences, all of which supported the hypotheses advanced.

5.1 Summary of Results of Hypotheses Tested

The first hypothesis presented was that African American students would report less social support than European American students and, in fact, they did. This finding was expected given the academic environment from which the sample was taken. The demographic and cultural makeup of the institution helps to explain this group difference. Specifically, the idea that African American students feel less supported and feel socially isolated at predominately White institutions has been supported by previous research (i.e., Nottingham, Rosen, & Parks, 1992; Sedlacek, 1999).

That African Americans would report higher levels of self-esteem and spirituality was the second hypothesis, and the results herein provide support for this theory, as well. The fact that African American students felt better about themselves despite having less social support when compared to their Caucasian counterparts suggests that other
influential factors may be at work. One such factor might be collective self-esteem. The conventional perspective of self-esteem may be problematic when applied to African Americans and other people of color (Obiakor, 1992). This generally held view: a) is based on the belief system of the dominant society; b) ignores the situation-specific, multidimensional essence of self-esteem; and c) does not address strengths and weaknesses (Obiakor, 1992).

To account for possible conceptual flaws in the self-esteem construct when applied to African Americans, assessing collective self-esteem may be illuminating. Collective self-esteem, defined earlier (Tajfel, 1981), has been found to relate to psychological well-being (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994) and may help to compensate for deficits in the amount of traditional social support.

As postulated, the African American participants reported higher levels of spirituality than did the Caucasian participants. This finding was expected and has been replicated by other researchers (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Benson et al., 1986; Snowden, 2001). Spirituality and religion have long been central to the African American culture (Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998; Long, 1997; Taylor & Chatters, 1991). Blain and Croker (1995) maintain that spirituality and the African American church experience is both a means of coping and a form of social identification. Mattis and Jagers (2001) assert that spirituality plays a role in the development and maintenance of social relationships. This suggests that spirituality acts as an additional source of support for African Americans, which may also help to explain why the African Americans in the current sample, who endorsed higher levels of spirituality than the Caucasian participants, also felt better about themselves despite reporting lower amounts of support.
It is also interesting to note that there were no significant differences in the report of satisfaction with the social support received across ethnic groups.

The second hypothesis included the prediction that African Americans would endorse a more optimal worldview when compared to Caucasians in the sample. No significant differences were found, however, with regard to worldview. This could be due, in part, to the measure selected to operationalize this variable and its psychometric properties. Specifically, the BSAS had low scale reliability with an alpha coefficient of .66.

The remaining hypotheses advanced in this study involved the prediction of gender differences. It was theorized that female participants would report higher levels of depression, lower levels of self-esteem, and more social support than male participants. However, no significant gender differences for these constructs were observed. These findings are in line with the literature that has been inconsistent in its reports on gender differences on self-esteem (Quatman & Watson, 2001; Kling, Hyde, Showers, Buswell, 1999; Fertman, & Ross, 1997; Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994; Simpson, Gangestad, & Lerna, 1990; Mullis & Chapman, 2000; Greene & Wheatley, 1992); depression and well-being (Okun & George, 1984; Lee, Seccombe, & Shehan, 1991; White, 1992); and social support (Wohlgemuth & Betz, 1991; Constantine, Wilton, & Caldwell, 2003).

It was further hypothesized that female participants would report higher levels of spirituality than their male counterparts. No gender differences were observed for any of the variables investigated.
While no predictions were made about group differences in psychological well-being, one significant difference was observed: African Americans reported higher levels of positive affect, an affective aspect of psychological well-being, than did the Caucasian participants. This finding is not surprising when considering that participants of African American descent also reported higher levels of self-esteem and spirituality. Previous research has demonstrated the predictive relationship between well-being and self-esteem (Taylor & Brown, 1988; Diener & Diener, 1995; Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Betton, 2001; Schimmack & Diener, 2003) and spirituality (Mattis & Jagers, 2001; Seybold & Hill, 2001; Gartner, 1996).

Correlational analysis of the data revealed that all measures of psychological well-being were moderately and significantly related to all other variables of interest in the total sample. This reflects the consistent relationship between well-being and self-esteem, social support, spirituality, and worldview that has been well documented in the literature. Those relationships that were strongest differed across ethnicity, and several significant differences were observed. These differences taken together reveal interesting findings: spirituality and self-esteem were more strongly related to well-being in this sample of African American students than they were among the Caucasian students. Additionally, among Caucasian students social support and well-being were more strongly correlated than they were in the African American sample.

The differential impact of spirituality, self-esteem, and social support in the African American and Caucasian samples was echoed in the regression analyses. Among Caucasian participants, self-esteem and social support were the best predictors of well-being, accounting for a total of approximately 30% of the variance. Winefield,
Winefield, and Tiggermann (1992) reported similar findings when they investigated the relationship between self-esteem, social support, and well-being in a sample of young adults. Conversely, among African American respondents in this study, spirituality was the best in predicting well-being as it accounted for 30% of the variance. Self-esteem accounted for an additional 7% of variance.

5.2 Cultural Variations in Source of Well-Being

Several factors may help to shed light on the findings observed herein. First, researchers have suggested that the variables leading to well-being differ across culture. For example, Deiner, Oishi, and Lucas (2003) asserted that culture may moderate which variables most influence well-being. These researchers suggest that there are various pathways to well-being and that, based on internalized cultural values, they are different across cultures (Deiner, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) maintain that what is essential for happiness or well-being in one culture may be less essential in another. This implies that particular features of life are valued differently because individuals have, to some extent, different goals in different cultures (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith, 1999). It is also implied that what leads to happiness is the fulfillment of cultural values (Deiner, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003).

One aspect of culture that is useful in understanding the differences in well-being is individualism and collectivism (Triandis, 1989). These constructs involve the extent to which people see the self as self-sufficient and autonomous. Individualists attempt to differentiate themselves from others. As a result, feelings, which are viewed as unique to the individual who experiences them, are typically significant predictors of subjective well-being. So then, in individualist cultures such as North America, it is not unexpected
that feelings about the self, specifically self-esteem, strongly relate to happiness (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Conversely, those with a collectivistic orientation value connectedness and rather than striving to differentiate themselves from others they attempt to maintain harmony. For those who are collectivists, one's personal needs and desires are de-emphasized while those of the group are of greater importance. Due to the lessened importance of the individual, the feelings experienced by the individual are less predictive of life satisfaction and subjective well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). African Americans tend to be collectivists (Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998), which is helpful in understanding the differential role that self-esteem played in predicting well-being herein. Diener and Diener (1995) observed similar findings. These investigators found that the correlation between self-esteem and life satisfaction was lower in collectivistic nations (Diener & Diener, 1995).

Understanding the role of spirituality among African Americans might also be helpful in comprehending the current findings. Miller, Fleming, and Brown-Anderson (1998) assert that there is a cultural difference in the nuance and prominence in the religious experience of African Americans as compared to other populations. This difference is connected to the pervasiveness of spirituality in the lives of individuals of African American descent. Miller and her colleagues assert that African Americans consider themselves to be spiritual beings living in a spiritual universe (Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998).

Mattis and Jagers (2001) assert that spirituality and religion are relational phenomena for African Americans. This centrality of relationship and intimacy in
African American spirituality and religiosity can be seen in the styles of worship, prayer, and musical traditions (Mattis & Jagers, 2001). They suggest that believing in God or some other Higher Power places one in a relationship with this Being. Others suggest that this relationship dictates one's relationship to others (Miller, Fleming, & Brown-Anderson, 1998). As stated earlier, spirituality is believed to play a role in the development and maintenance of social relationships (Mattis & Jagers, 2001) and it is further believed that the impact spirituality has on well-being is due in part to increases in social support (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999).

Given the connection between social support and spirituality in the African American community, it is no surprise that spirituality was the best predictor of well-being in African Americans in this sample. Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999) state that certain coping mechanisms, specifically spiritual beliefs, are consistently related to subjective well-being. Others have also asserted its mediating effects on psychological well-being (Williams, Larson, Buckler, Heckmann, & Pyle, 1991; McAdoo, 1995; Kim & Seidlitz, 2002).

In sum, the results of this study suggest that (a) a relationship does exist between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview and spirituality in both African American and Caucasian college students; (b) the strength of the correlations between these constructs differs across ethnicity; and (c) the variables investigated differentially predict well-being in the African American and Caucasian samples.
5.3 Limitations

The results observed herein should be interpreted with caution due to the limitations of this study. First, the participants for this investigation were African American and European American college students at a large Midwestern university. As such, findings cannot be generalized to non-student populations. Additionally, findings should be used cautiously when making suppositions about other racial/ethnic minority groups. Second, students were offered course credit for their participation in this study; this incentive may have influenced their motivation and response patterns.

Third, the measure used to operationalize worldview, the BSAS, had low scale reliability. With an alpha coefficient of .66, this inventory was the least reliable measure used in this investigation, which may help to explain the modest correlations between worldview and the other variables of interest. Further, the limited reliability observed for this measure may also be explanatory in understanding the exclusion of the BSAS in the step-wise regression model predicting well-being.

Fourth, the findings of this study are limited by the approach employed to measure well-being. Specifically, in measuring well-being, personality was not assessed. Much research in recent years has been devoted to the relationship between well-being and personality. This research has suggested that the key connection between well-being and personality are the traits neuroticism and extroversion (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Further, Diener and his colleagues maintain that personality is one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of well-being (Diener et al., 1999). By omitting personality as a construct of interest, this study provides an incomplete picture of well-being.
Fifth, the methodological choices made in this study represent additional limitations to the present investigation. In particular, the data collected were obtained using self-report measures. As such, the extent to which respondents were truthful may be mitigated by their attempt to respond in socially desirable ways. Moreover, the cross-sectional design of this study has provided information from a discrete period of time in the respondent's life. As a result, the single occasion self-reports used herein are subject to biases. For example, their mood at the time of the assessment or recent life events may have influenced the way in which they responded.

Finally, the correlational design of the investigation removes the possibility of drawing conclusions about causal relationships between the variables studied. Whereas higher self-esteem, more social support, stronger spirituality, and an optimal worldview may lead to higher levels of psychological well-being, it is also true that higher well-being can lead to increased self-esteem, greater social support, stronger spirituality, and a more optimal worldview. It may also be true that other variables may account for increases in these constructs.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

Additional research investigating psychological well-being is needed. Specifically, studies that explore the cross-cultural differences that exist for this construct will be of particular importance. Replication of the unique role of spirituality in the well-being of African Americans, as well as studies that investigate other distinct correlates of well-being in African American and other minority populations, will serve to continue to advance our knowledge in this area.

Further, future research should include improved methods of measuring
subjective well-being. Future investigations should assess various components of well-being. For example, Diener (2000) suggests that measuring all components of well-being would include assessing life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, and satisfaction with specific domains (i.e., marital satisfaction). Assessing widely accepted predictors of psychological well-being will also be important in gaining a complete picture of this variable. Research suggests that personality has been found to be a strong and consistent predictor of well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). Prospective explorations should also build upon the current one-time self-report measures that are extensively used in the assessment of well-being. Diener (2000) suggests the use of naturalistic experience-sampling methods that assess participant's subjective well-being at various points throughout their day. Additional methods suggested include reports by informants, physiological measures, and memory and reaction-time measures (Diener, 2000).

Finally, researchers should continue the exploration of gender differences that exist in psychological well-being and its correlates.

5.5 Implications for Counseling

Clinicians are encouraged to consider the implications of the findings observed herein in their work with college student populations. When conceptualizing the needs and concerns of their clients and developing treatment interventions, the culturally competent practitioner will be cognizant that the variables predicting well-being in African Americans, and perhaps other minority populations, are distinct. Specifically, efforts to increase self-esteem may not be as useful in improving well-being for these individuals as it may be among Caucasian students. Instead, interventions that aid in the
fulfillment of cultural values may prove more beneficial in ethnic minority populations (Deiner, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). For example, Constantine, Wilton, and Caldwell (2003) caution clinicians who subscribe to an individualistic versus collectivistic cultural orientation with regard to interpersonal relationships against wrongly encouraging African American students to distance themselves from principal others in order to attain psychological health.

The field of psychology continues to trail other disciplines in its understanding and valuing of the role of religion and spirituality (Mattis & Jagers, 2001). Clinicians and other counseling center staff are encouraged to consider its function in the development and maintenance of psychological well-being. Integrating spirituality and its development into our therapeutic work and outreach programming may be especially efficacious among minority populations (Constantine, Robinson, Wilton, & Caldwell, 2002). Moreover, this integration may help to increase utilization of services and retention among those African Americans who do seek counseling.

5.6 Conclusion

In summary, it is clear that there is a consistent relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality in African American and Caucasian student populations. This study revealed group differences across ethnicity with regard to mean levels of positive affect, self-esteem, social support, and spirituality, and with regard to the strength of the correlations among all variables of interest. Further, the present study indicates that self-esteem is the best predictor of well-being in Caucasian samples, but that spirituality is the best predictor among African American populations.
Future research is needed to further investigate the unique correlates of subjective well-being in African American and other ethnic minority populations. Clinicians are encouraged to consider these distinct influences when working with persons of color.
APPENDIX A

SWLS

Please read each statement and indicate how much you are satisfied with each of the following by filling in the letter that corresponds to your answer using the following scale:

A  Extremely Satisfied
B  Slightly Satisfied
C  Satisfied
D  Neutral
E  Dissatisfied
F  Slightly Dissatisfied
G  Extremely Dissatisfied

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.
APPENDIX B

BSAS

Please read each statement and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each item by filling in the letter that corresponds to your answer using the following scale on the scantron provided.

A. Strongly Disagree
B. Moderately Disagree
C. Uncertain
D. Moderately Agree
E. Strongly Agree

1. The more important consideration when looking for a job is not the money offered, but the people I would be working with.

2. Sometimes when I am good and do my best I still suffer; this is an indication that good does not necessarily triumph over evil.

3. When I meet acquaintances on the street, I note the type of clothes they are wearing and compare them to mine.

4. It is easy for me to see how the entire human race is really part of my extended family.

5. Race or nationality reveals more about an individual than he/she may realize.

6. More than anything else, I am most convinced by another’s opinion if she/he has the statistics to back it up.

7. Although I have a favorite kind of music I listen to, I can usually get into and enjoy most kinds of music.

8. When I encounter new acquaintances at meetings or work-related activities, I note the type of clothes they are wearing and am impressed if they are “dressed for success.”

9. English should be the only language. If one wants to live in this country, one should learn to speak the language; bilingualism is unimportant.

10. If I could make a choice, I would prefer to lead a wealthy, exciting life as opposed to one that is peaceful and productive in terms of helping other people.
11. Past philosophers like St. Augustine and Descartes are less relevant today than they were 100 years ago, before the modern age.

12. In order to know what’s really going on, you need to look at the scientific data rather than an individual’s personal experience.

13. When considering all the difficulties of life, I have trouble seeing any meaning or order to it.

14. I find myself worrying a lot about circumstances in my life.

15. If I just had more money, my life would be more satisfying.

16. Pain is just the opposite of love: in other words, an act of love cannot cause pain.

17. Despite my religious preferences (e.g. Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, etc.), I still believe there are teachings from different religions that are valid.

18. When someone challenges my beliefs, I am eager to set him/her straight.

19. Winning the lottery would solve all of my problems.

20. When I am confused or unclear about myself or the world around me, I try to push these concerns out of my mind and go on with my life as usual.

21. Working at a job with meaning and purpose is more important than the money received from a job.

22. I am uneasy and bothered by responsibilities at work and at home.

23. If I were better looking, my relationships with others would be more satisfying.

24. I can remain calm and peaceful even when my boss blames me for another’s mistakes.

25. If a “friend” were to betray my confidence and tell some other people a secret of mine, the best way for him/her to learn a lesson is for me to do the same thing to her/him when I get a chance.

26. If my opinion of my uncle has always been different than everyone else’s, then I must be perceiving him wrong.

27. If I were president, I would invest more money to develop social programs and less money in high tech development.
28. I feel badly when I see friends from high school who have better cars, clothes, or homes than I do.

29. There are some people in my past that I believe I should never forgive.

30. This country would be better off if we restricted immigration to a very select few.

31. Welfare is a mistake: individuals must learn to help themselves.
APPENDIX C

USRS

The 20 questions below deal with the attitudes of college students towards themselves and others. Please read each statement carefully. Then decide how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Mark your answers on the answer sheet provided, in the row of circles corresponding to each item number. Your response letter indicates how closely each statement describes you and your feelings at the present time. There are no right or wrong answers. Please use the following key and DO NOT make up any of your own letters:

A  Strongly Disagree
B  Moderately Disagree
C Aren't Sure or Neutral
D Moderately Agree
E Strongly Agree

1. I feel good about myself as a person.
2. I make time for relaxation activities.
3. I like who I am.
4. It is hard for me to remember the positive things people say about me.
5. I am very critical of myself.
6. I think I am a worthwhile person.
7. I argue a lot with my parents.
8. I enjoy spending time with my friends.
9. Even though I make mistakes, I still feel good about myself as a person.
10. I think of myself in negative terms (e.g., stupid, lazy).
11. It is easy for me to list 5 things I like about myself.
12. I like to spend the holidays with my family.
13. I can never quite measure up to my own standards.
15. I like to be involved with team sports.
16. Even when I goof up, I basically like myself.
17. There are times when I doubt
18. I tend to look at what I do badly rather than what I do well.
20. When I look in the mirror I like who I see.
APPENDIX D

SSQ - 6

The following questions ask about people in your environment who provide you with help or support. Each question has two parts. For the first part, list all the people you know, excluding yourself, whom you can count on for help or support in the manner described. In the space provided, give the persons’ initials and their relationship to you (see example). Do not list more than one person next to each of the numbers beneath the question. Then fill in the appropriate number on your answer sheet.

For the second part, indicate how satisfied you are with the overall support you have by filling-in the appropriate letter on your answer sheet at the corresponding number.

If you have no support for a question, check the words “No one,” and fill in the circle for 10 (J) but still rate your level of satisfaction. Do not list more than nine persons per question.

EXAMPLE

1. Who do you know whom you can trust with information that could get you in trouble?

___ No one 1) T. N. (brother) 4) T. N. (father) 7) 
2) L. M. (friend) 5) L. M. (employer) 8) 
3) R. S. (friend) 6) 
You would then fill in 5 (E) on your answer sheet.

2. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied B – fairly satisfied C – a little satisfied D – a little dissatisfied E – fairly dissatisfied F - very dissatisfied

2. How satisfied?

1. Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?

___ No one 1) 4) 7) 
2) 5) 8) 
3) 6) 9) 
You would then fill in 5 (E) on your answer sheet.

2. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied B – fairly satisfied C – a little satisfied D – a little dissatisfied E – fairly dissatisfied F - very dissatisfied
3. Whom can you really count on to help you feel more relaxed when you are under pressure or tense?

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4. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied  B – fairly satisfied  C – a little satisfied  D – a little dissatisfied  E – fairly dissatisfied  F – very dissatisfied

5. Who accepts you totally, including both your worst and best points?

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6. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied  B – fairly satisfied  C – a little satisfied  D – a little dissatisfied  E – fairly dissatisfied  F – very dissatisfied

7. Whom can you really count on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you?

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8. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied  B – fairly satisfied  C – a little satisfied  D – a little dissatisfied  E – fairly dissatisfied  F – very dissatisfied

9. Whom can you really count on to help you feel better when you are feeling generally down-in-the-dumps?

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10. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied  B – fairly satisfied  C – a little satisfied  D – a little dissatisfied  E – fairly dissatisfied  F – very dissatisfied
11. Whom can you count on to console you when you are very upset?

_____ No one  1)  4)  7)  
2)  5)  8)  
3)  6)  9)  

12. How satisfied?

A – very satisfied  B – fairly satisfied  C – a little satisfied  D – a little dissatisfied  E – fairly dissatisfied  F – very dissatisfied
APPENDIX E

PANAS

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. **Indicate to what extent you generally feel this way.** Use the following scale to record your responses on the answer sheet provided.

A Very slightly or not at all
B A little
C Moderately
D Quite a bit
E Extremely

1. Interested
2. Distressed
3. Excited
4. Upset
5. Strong
6. Guilty
7. Scared
8. Hostile
9. Enthusiastic
10. Proud
11. Irritable
12. Alert
13. Ashamed
14. Inspired
15. Nervous
16. Determined
17. Attentive
18. Jittery
19. Active
20. Afraid
APPENDIX F

SWBS

For each of the following statements fill-in the choice that best indicates how much you agree or disagree as it describes your personal experience.

A  Strongly Agree
B  Moderately Agree
C  Agree
D  Disagree
E  Moderately Disagree
F  Strongly Disagree

1. I don't find much satisfaction in private prayer with God.
2. I don't know who I am, where I cam from, or where I am going.
3. I believe that God loves me and cares about me.
4. I feel that life is a positive experience.
5. I believe that God is impersonal and not interested in my daily situations.
6. I feel unsettled about my future.
7. I have a personally meaningful relationship with God.
8. I feel very fulfilled and satisfied with life.
9. I don't get much personal strength and support from my God.
10. I feel a sense of well-being about the direction my life is headed in.
11. I believe that God is concerned about my problems.
12. I don't enjoy much about life.
13. I don't have a personally satisfying relationship with God.
15. My relationship with God helps me not to feel lonely.
16. I feel that life is full of conflict and unhappiness.
17. I feel most fulfilled when I'm in close communion with God.
18. Life doesn't have much meaning.
19. My relation with God contributes to my sense of well-being.
20. I believe there is some real purpose for my life.
APPENDIX G

CESD

Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved. Please indicate how often you have felt this way during the past week.

A Rarely or None of the Time (Less than 1 Day)
B Some or a Little of the Time (1-2 Days)
C Occasionally or a Moderate Amount of Time (3-4 Days)
D Most or All of the Time (5-7 Days)

During the Past Week:
1. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
2. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
3. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.
4. I felt that I was just as good as other people.
5. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
6. I felt depressed.
7. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
8. I felt hopeful about the future.
9. I thought my life had been a failure.
10. I felt fearful.
11. My sleep was restless.
12. I was happy.
13. I talked less than usual.
15. People were unfriendly.
16. I enjoyed life.
17. I had crying spells.
18. I felt sad.
19. I felt that people dislike me.
20. I could not get "going."
APPENDIX H

Introductory Script Participants read online through the Research Experience Program.

This study is an investigation of psychological well-being and its correlates. To be eligible for participation, English must be your first language and you must be of African American or European American descent. This study will require one hour of participation. Participation is voluntary; students can withdraw from the study at any time.

*Date, time, and location of research sessions were included.
APPENDIX I

Debriefing Script

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: A COMPARISON OF MODELS BETWEEN AFRICAN AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and self-esteem, social support, worldview, and spirituality in minority and non-minority college students. Specifically, it will seek to identify the differences in the relationships between these constructs in African American and European American college freshmen. It is hypothesized that the factors contributing to well-being in African American populations may differ from those factors contributing to well-being in European American populations. Therefore, the hypotheses for this study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: African American students will report lower levels of social support than European American students. This outcome is expected due to the ethnic and racial composition of the university from which participants will be drawn. Specifically, participants will be students from a large predominately White university.

Hypothesis 1b: African American students will report higher levels of self-esteem, spirituality, and optimal worldview resulting in higher levels of psychological well-being than their European American counterparts. This prediction is being made based on past research with African American participants.

Hypothesis 2a: Based on previous research, it is expected that female respondents will report higher levels of depression and lower levels of self-esteem than male respondents.

Hypothesis 2b: Also based on previous work, female participants are expected to report higher levels of social support and spirituality, and an optimal worldview compared to male participants. No predictions are being made regarding gender differences in psychological well-being due to inconsistent findings for women on measures of self-esteem, social support, and spirituality.

Answers to questions about the nature of this study and information about the results of this research may be obtained by contacting the researcher at betton.4@osu.edu. If any issues or concerns have been raised as a result of your
participation in this study, you are strongly urged to follow up with one of the counseling services available here on campus:

Counseling and Consultation Services  292-5766
Psychological Services Center   292-2059

The researcher thanks you for your participation in this study.
LIST OF REFERENCES


