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Victoria Evans

Merrimack College, evansv@merrimack.edu

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A Case Study: What are the social experiences of an international minority male at a PWI really
like?

Victoria M. Evans

Merrimack College

Professor Mallona

December 8, 2017

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Abstract

International students of color often have trouble integrating socially into a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). The purpose of this study is to explore the social experiences of an international student of color at a Predominantly White Institution. My research methodology was a case study. The methodology and methods consisted of a study of a single international student of color at Merrimack College this fall semester. The data collection techniques included an in-depth interview, participant observation, and a journal written by the participant. After gathering my data, I used the coding method to analyze my data and find common themes throughout each data collection technique and from the review of literature. Through the findings I hope to facilitate awareness with my peers in my Diversity class through a meaningful final powerpoint presentation.

Introduction

On a predominantly white campus, international students of color often have trouble integrating with the majority population. I will collect data and analyze the social experiences of a single international student of color at a predominantly white college. Through my research I hope to dive more deeply into the social experiences of an international minority student at a Predominantly White Institution and seek to gain a deeper understanding for what it is like to socially integrate into to a predominantly white campus from a place that is not similar to the location they are at now.

The study will take place at Merrimack College in North Andover, MA. The population affected by the issue are international students of color, but they are not the only ones that will be affected by the study. The Merrimack College employees in the international student department will also benefit from the research. I will disseminate my findings and observations to that department. The findings may aid in implementing various activities or meeting groups that could benefit and support international students of color more than they do now. These new findings will help the international student department and other faculty perform their jobs as true experts by using this information to help support the international students fully and realize what needs they have that are not being completely satisfied. The international students of color will benefit directly from the findings of this research because any new information presented to that department will be used to create new amenities to further support this group of students.

To examine the social experiences of an international student of color, a qualitative research design was used. Through this method, I will use different forms of inquiry that focuses on understanding the social experiences from the perspective of the international student of color on a predominantly white campus. I will not begin with a hypothesis, but rather evolve a hypothesis or theory during the study that is subject to change. The qualitative research methodology I will use is a case study with a very small population involving one individual. The individual will be an international student of color at Merrimack College. I will delve into the social experiences of this student's life at Merrimack College and analyze my findings within the case study. My data collection techniques will include an interview, participant observation, and journal written by the student. The interview will involve a lengthy conversation about the reality of the student's experiences at Merrimack and whether or not integrating into a majority white population was difficult or not. This is referred to as a semi-structured, in-depth interview. The participant observation will connect the interview to how the student actually acts among their peers in a natural environment. Finally, the journal written by the student will give a deeper insight into why the participant's social experiences have gone the way they have.

Review of Literature

This study extends the work of previous scholars that have examined the social experiences of African American males at a Predominantly White Institution (PWI). Not many studies have been conducted that examine the social experiences of black men at a PWI in regards to how little African American people attend college. As of 2014, 12 percent of college students in the United States are represented by African Americans. Out of that 12 percent, approximately 85 percent of these students attend a PWI (Robertson & Chaney, 2017). This

leaves the question of how well do these men succeed at a PWI? And, why is the graduation rate of African American students behind white students? Is it because of their social experiences? Throughout this review and study we will examine how heavily the social experiences of African American males at a PWI reflect their overall social experience at college.

Social Support Networks

Typically, one's social support network positively correlates with the social experiences of that person. While reviewing five empirical articles about the socialization of African Americans at a PWI, the articles revealed that there are three common support systems that can be seen as both positive and negative; peers, professors, and multicultural programs.

Peers

When attempting to understand why people are friends, it is important to look at homophily. Homophily is the number of similarities in a background, personal characteristics, and affiliations that members of a support network might have (McGaskey, Freeman, Guyton, Richmond & Guyton, 2016). At a PWI the students are predominantly white. When the white students associate with the black minority students, it is not always in a good way. In a study conducted by Jones, Castellanos, and Cole (2002), the research expressed that race and ethnicity played a significant role in their social experience at college. The students voiced a feeling of alienation and discrimination from the other white students. On the other hand, in a study conducted in researching the social support networks of black males in doctoral programs, the research found that the development of their support networks were significantly influenced by their race, not so much gender (McGaskey, 2016). Taking a look back at the concept of homophily, these two findings make sense. While interacting with new peers, it only makes

sense that those with more similar backgrounds and personal characteristics will get along better because of the common aspects in their life (homophily). We have to remember that going to college is an experience where one typically doesn't know anybody and is thrown into a situation where they almost have to fend for themselves. Therefore, it is not a big surprise that those with the same backgrounds will get along and drift towards each other. In sum, black males can understand and support other black males better socially at an institution that is primarily white. They know exactly what the other person is experiencing and can offer words of advice to deal with the discrimination they may be encountering. As for the students who experiences racism and a feeling of alienation in the study conducted by Jones (2002), they simply ignored the comments and continued on with their life. The participants took no action over the rude comments even though they may have hurt them on the inside. Overall, students intentionally seek out those with whom they have common identities. The comfort level between those with common characteristics cannot be replaced and this allows them to communicate their concerns and needs about life or school without the fear of being misunderstood (McGaskey 2016).

Professors

The social experiences of black male students at a PWI is not just limited to student to student. The social experiences of the student also includes interactions between them and their professors. The professors are supposed to be there for their students and be open to one-on-one time to review class material or even be there as a mentor. As Chaney (2017) expressed in his study, it is just as important for the professors to interact with black males as it is their other white students. In doing so, it makes the University's mission to increase and validate diversity more consistent. Yet, when it comes to socialization experiences for black minority students at

most PWIs, this statement is not being fully carried out. Throughout all the articles evaluated, they came to the common conclusion that academic departments and the faculty received both positive and negative evaluations. The research showed that when interacting with faculty in small groups or individually, the students reported stereotyping and “different” expectations (Jones 2002). By different expectations the students meant that because they are black, they are not expected to perform as well as the other white students. Therefore when the black student earns a C they did really well for how they are expected to do. On the other hand, if a white student were to earn a C, it is assumed that the professor would pull them aside and give them extra help because the expectation of the white student is higher than that of their black peer. When speaking to expectations and how they’re different for each race, the participants in Robertson’s (2017) study reported of “always having to make sure to interact” with their professors in order to be better understood by them. Here, the participants are aware of the different levels of expectations and don’t want to be misunderstood for why they’re at the PWI. They’re there to get an education with the best grades possible, despite other stereotypes or expectations. To ensure they get the attention they need, the black male minority students had to reach out themselves and make an effort to get the extra help they needed (Robertson, 2017). While this should not be the case and professors should have the same expectations for all students regardless of race, it is good to be aware that the students are also observe this disconnection and do make an effort to take the matters into their own hands. At this Predominantly White Institution, the participants commented several times on the lack of multi-racial faculty involvement with black males. So, it is not only the white professors not making an effort with their minority students, but the multicultural professors as well. This

speaks to how black males are treated at a PWI and because the institution is predominantly white, they seem to be tossed to the side because of stereotypes, and low expectations all put out there by the faculty and academic departments. On the other side of this argument, in Jones' (2002) study, his participants reported that on a few occasions the faculty were perceived to be supportive and willing to assist the students and provide extra time and individual attention if the student visited them during office hours. Even though these comments were only made a couple times, it leaves the potential for the PWI to turn its faculty around and help them learn to be more involved with their multicultural students. For the participants in these studies to fully succeed they need support from their professors academically and emotionally. With a type of multiplexity relationship formed, it would strengthen the students trust and dependence in not only their faculty and peers, but institution as well (McGaskey, 2016).

Multicultural Programs

While peer and professor relationships are extremely important in the socialization of a black minority student at a PWI, there is another piece of their social experience that can make all the difference. This piece is a multicultural center or some sort of club for multicultural students. Throughout all of the studies, this piece seemed to contribute the most positivity to the social experiences of minority male students. In a study conducted by Rome (2005), he examined a specific mentoring program called *Student African American Brotherhood (S.A.A.B.)* and how it improved the social experiences of black minority students at a PWI. Right the participants responses acknowledged that students social interactions at their institutions directly affect their connecting and remaining at the institution and S.A.A.B. greatly influences that. Just because African American males are the minority at a PWI doesn't mean they don't want leadership roles

or to become extremely involved with campus life. The participants in this study firmly believed that they need such programs such as S.A.A.B. at other PWIs or any other institution because of how positively it impacted their college experience (Rome, 2005). The author recommended that even though not all African Americans need this type of mentoring program, it is advised that all institutions have the option for this type of socialization and that the prospective students are aware of these types of programs before they apply because it could help narrow down their decision process (Rome, 2005). Also, by obtaining some sort of financial support for these types of programs can demonstrate how the minority or ethnic students are in fact important to the institution they belong to. As for other participants in a separate study, they reported that the cross-cultural center as a “place to relax,” “stress free,” and “a good place to address personal and social issues.” Not only are black male minority students having a chance to come together with other ethnic students, but students of all cultures are welcomed (Jones 2002). One of the viewed studies hypothesized that “institutional identity would be positively related to self-esteem, and that the relationship would not differ by institutional type.” The social identity theory assumes that part of the way one views himself is defined by the social groups they belong to (Thomas, Smith, Marks, Crosby 2012). These different dimensions and hypothesis positively correlate with self-esteem. Being involved with a group such as S.A.A.B. or dropping by the multicultural center to hangout with friends and feel a sense of belonging increases the participants self-esteem. This demonstrated that the hypothesis is important to the topic of multicultural programs because the participants in these studies are attending a PWI. Attending these types of groups helps the participants feel a sense of belonging, then a higher self-esteem, and finally those aspects rolled together helps formulate success at their PWI, more motivation to

complete academic work and a higher likeliness that the student will stay at their institution and graduate. (Thomas 2012).

Methodology

This research project is an in depth investigation using a case study design. It involved observing a single individual. I will be observing and analyzing the social experiences of an individual who attends a Predominantly White Institution. A case study typically involves using a variety of sources to gather data to analyze the topic of interest (Cherry, 2017). By using different techniques to gather data such as, a semi-structured in-depth interview, participant observation, and a journal written by the participant, allows me, the researcher, to gain up-close and in-depth information about the population of international minority males through a sampling frame of a single individual.

Methods

Participants

The data for the present study included a single participant. He was an African American male and an international student who was a sophomore at Merrimack College. At the time, he was 19-years-old. The participant was chosen out of all the students at Merrimack College in North Andover, MA because I seeked to investigate the social experiences of a minority student of color at a predominantly white institution. The participant is not a U.S. citizen. His country of origin is Uganda. He took part in the research because I asked him to be my single participant. I chose my participant through a type of nonprobability sampling. The participant needed for this study was extremely specific and there were limited available cases therefore convenience sampling was used as the sampling method.

Data Collection Techniques

Interview. An interview was conducted with a single participant. The purpose of the interview was to study the participant within a broader context of the study. The interview lasted about an hour. The interview took place in a private classroom on the third floor of Crowe Hall at Merrimack College. When the participant arrived, he was instructed to sit wherever he like and make himself comfortable. Before the interview began, the participant was asked to read over the informed consent form and sign it if he agreed to the terms. The informed consent form told him was going to be asked questions about his social experiences at his Predominantly White Institution (PWI) and how these social experiences affect him daily, the benefits and risks to the study, along with the fact that he was going to be audio recorded the entire time. It was noted that if at anytime the participant felt uncomfortable, he was allowed to take a break or withdraw from the interview at any time with no repercussions.

Observation. After the interview, a participant observation was conducted. The participant was observed for sixty minutes. The observation took place in the morning during the participants introduction to business class after acquiring permission from his professor. While observing the participant, detailed notes were taken about how he interacted with his peers and professor. Anytime the participant raised his hand or interacted with others it was noted how the others around him reacted and how he reacted himself. The participant observation helped gain a closer insight to how his social experiences at a predominant white institution are on a day to day basis.

Journal. Finally, the participant was asked to write a journal entry. The journal entry question was, “In your opinion, what personal aspect do you possess and how has this aspect shaped your social experiences at Merrimack College? Please provide an example and explain.” The participant was also instructed to answer as truthfully and accurately as possible while trying to make the entry at least one page.

Data Analysis.

After collecting data through three different techniques, the data was analyzed through a coding method. Coding is the act of identifying labels or ideas from each of the data collection techniques. The codes represent information that was expected to find, unexpected to find, or other interesting or unusual information. The coding method was executed by reviewing the data from the interview first. The transcribed interview was read over several times while pinpointing different ideas throughout. After this, the codes pulled out from the data were then defined in order to gain a better understanding to what each one meant. Next, the codes were looked at again and those that repeated multiple times or had common aspects within them were identified and highlighted the same color. Finally, the codes that were identified as similar and highlighted the same color were compiled together to formulate two or three overarching themes from the interview. These steps were followed for the participant observation data and the journal entry data. After identifying overarching themes for each data collection technique, those themes were then triangulated and looked at altogether. From there, two main themes that trended throughout each data collection technique were identified.

Results

High Self Confidence

The first major common theme identified throughout all data collection techniques was the participants high self confidence. In the interview, the participant spoke of making his own choices and decisions on several counts such as starting a new chapter of his life at Merrimack College, and deciding to play on the soccer team. He also mentioned how he loves to meet new people, make new friends, likes to try new things, and is always true to himself. At one point during the interview he exclaimed:

“I think it’s good to have all types of different friends. I’m the only kid on the [soccer] team who branches out with friends. Usually kids on my team are only friends with each other, but I like to meet new people.”

In regards to everyday life, the participant does not feel more or less comfortable based on who is in the vicinity in terms of race, gender, or ethnicity. This includes in the classroom. He will participate the at the same rate despite if there are other black/international students in the class or not. He also made it clear that no matter who is around he always tries his best to continue to be himself while not paying attention to those who may be rude because he doesn’t think it is worth it to spend his time on people like that. Even though the participant is experiencing a brand new environment at Merrimack College, this did not stop him from setting goals for his time here even though there is a possibility he could fail. “My goal is to go back to Uganda after I get my education and see how it is,” was one goal that the participant set for himself. These different codes all intertwined into the overarching theme of high self confidence that the participant possesses, but are not limited to just the interview. Other codes were also demonstrated within the participant observation and journal that reflect upon the main theme of high self confidence.

During the participant observation, I witnessed on many counts my participant displaying high confidence. The day of the observation he was required to present a group powerpoint. While in front of the class presenting, his body language was calm, and collected. He also had a sense of preparedness about him because he went up to present with a small journal of notes to reference while presenting. During his group presentation, he interacted freely with his group mates and looked out to his classmates and professor while speaking. At one point, one of his classmates had trouble with a video they were trying to present and the participant stepped in confidently. It was noted during the observation:

“The group had a separate video that was not working when they tried to present it. When one of the group mates could not fix it, the participant immediately stepped in to help without her having to ask.”

He was willing to try to fix the problem whether or not he failed in front of his class and professor.

In the journal entry written by the participant, he exclaimed that one personal aspect about him that has affected his social experiences while at Merrimack College is the fact that he has a lot of confidence in himself. He discussed how having confidence has helped him as a person as a whole and helped him make friends. He wrote:

“Being true to myself, and loving me for the person I am has helped make numerous friendships here at Merrimack College that my fellow friends appreciate.”

The participant exclaims that through his self-love and confidence, he has acquired many different friendships and his friends appreciate the fact he is himself. Throughout the journal entry he portrays how important it is to be confident and genuine in the person you are and

therefore his social experiences at Merrimack College have been more meaningful because of that.

Professors

Across all three data collection techniques, the topic of professors arose several times. During the interview, the participant was asked about his relationship with his professors. He described these relationships as “strictly professional.” When probed as to why his relationships with his professors are strictly professional, he explained that he doesn’t need any extra help in his classes and if he does, he would go to the math or writing center offered by Merrimack College instead. He also mentioned how he has not seen or taken a class with any black professors at Merrimack College but would love to see some in the future. Even though there are slim to no black professors at Merrimack College, the participant does not blame this on racism. He addressed it in this way:

“I know that Merrimack College as an institution is not racist. You can’t blame it on the school. You have to ask why aren’t black professors applying here?”

The participant chooses to think about why there is not black professors at Merrimack College through a different lense rather than race. He instead wonders, “why aren’t black professors applying here?” Which is an interesting question to consider.

During the participant observation, the participant interacted with his professor on many counts. The professor for his introduction to business class was female. When the participant walked into class that morning he greeted her with a smile, hello and asked how she was. She replied and asked the same question back and then he sat down. While the participant was presenting his group powerpoint it was observed that:

“While he was speaking, he mostly looked out to the professor rather than the audience as a whole.”

They would make occasional eye contact and she would sort of nod her head while him and his other teammates spoke as a method of validation.

While the journal entry written by the participant mainly revolved around his own personal aspects, he did mention his professors. He wrote:

“This aspect [self confidence] has also helped me interact freely in classes with both my professors and classmates.”

The participant attributes the personal aspect of having confidence in himself as to why he is able to participate, make eye contact, and speak freely during class in the presence of his professors.

Interpretation

The purpose of this research project was to explore the social experiences of an international student of color at Predominantly White Institution. In order to do so, several empirical articles were reviewed and analyzed. After the analyzation, three different social support networks were identified that contribute to the social experiences of most international minority students of color at a Predominantly White Institution. Those support networks were the students peers, professors, and multicultural programs. After collecting, observing, and analyzing data, these three social support networks are and aren't relevant to my participant's social experiences at Merrimack College in different ways.

Peers

In Jones' (2002) study, students reported feelings of alienation and discrimination at their Predominantly White Institution. After interviewing, observing, and reading a journal entry

written by the participant, he never once mentioned feelings of alienation or discrimination at Merrimack College. Now why is this? Looking from the outside in, it would be easy to assume that someone who is an international minority student at a PWI would have at one point experienced alienation or discrimination. The reason my participant never mentioned an experience like this at Merrimack College can be attributed to his very high self esteem which is a major theme derived from the data. During the interview, the participant mentioned how he chooses to view life as, “if I don’t lose my life over it, then I’m not going to worry about it” while we were on the topic of discrimination. Due to the fact that he has extremely high self confidence, if an incident of discrimination or alienation were to occur, he would instead brush it off and continue on living a happy life rather than dwelling on the one bad thing that happened. He sticks to his motto so much that he didn’t even feel the need to mention ever feeling discriminated against or provide an example while at Merrimack College.

In a different article, it was found that black men at a Predominantly White Institution support networks were mainly influenced by their race rather than gender (McGaskey, 2016). In the participants case, this finding does not apply. During the participant observation, he interacted with any and all classmates never once turning a shoulder or ignoring someone because of their race or gender. He also made it clear on several counts during the interview that he “thinks it’s good to have all type of different friends” and “everytime [he] sees someone [he] wants to crack up a conversation.” This is not typical behavior of an international minority student at a PWI. Typically, they tend to integrate into peer groups of the same race because that is what is more comfortable (McGaskey, 2016). What makes my participant different from the other minority males studied is again, his extremely high self confidence. The participant was not

scared to be rejected or ignored in a conversation with someone or if saying a quick hello when passing. He truly desires to bring a bright light to everyone's day and be friendly to all people despite their gender, race, or ethnicity and is able to do so because of his high self confidence.

Professors

As Chaney (2017) expressed, it is just as important for the professors to interact with black males as it is their other white students, though that is not always the case. In a separate study, the participants reported of "always having to make sure to interact" with their professors in order to be better understood by them (Robertson, 2017). In the data collected on my participant, he explained how he knows that the professors at Merrimack College are available for extra help during their office hours, but he chooses not to take advantage of it and described his relationship with his professors as "strictly professional." When probed as to why he doesn't take advantage of the extra help, he exclaimed that he would rather use the services provided by the math and writing center at Merrimack College. He also mentioned that most of the time, he doesn't need extra help with his work anyways so he doesn't see a point in seeking out his professors. In this case, it is a two way street. The participant is aware that his professors are there for extra help, but he doesn't take advantage of that and therefore no deeper relationship is formed and his professors are no longer a large part of his social support network. On the other hand, the participants in Robertson's (2017) study wanted the extra help from their professors but had to be the ones to reach out because their professors would not. One reason that the participant may think or know he does not need extra help with his schoolwork is because of his high self confidence. He is not only confident in his physical appearance and social skills, but

also confident in his academic abilities. Due to his confidence in his academic abilities, there is no apparent need for extra support from his professors, even though that may be helpful regardless of how confident one is in their academics.

On another note, in Jones' (2002) study, his participants reported that on a few occasions that the professors were supportive and willing to assist the students and provide extra time and support outside of the classroom. Similar to the participants in Jones' (2002) study, there was one occasion where the participant found a professor at Merrimack College that aided him in his academics, but also acted like a mentor to him. He had her as a professor first semester his freshman year. When asked why the participant would seek extra help or casual conversation with her but not make much of an effort with his other professors, he responded with, "we were both from different countries because we came here to better our lives and that is something we often talked about." The professor he spoke about was from India and he was from Uganda. They were both international minorities at Merrimack College except one was in the student role and the other was in the professor role. There is a lack of diverse professors at Merrimack College. The reason that my participant bonded so well with this specific professor can be attributed to homophily. Homophily is the number of similarities in a background, personal characteristics, and affiliations that members of a support network might have (McGaskey, 2016). In this case, the participant and his professor had several things in common. Such things included being from a different country and "sharing the same values because they were both colonized by the British" which my participant mentioned during the interview. On this rare occasion, my participant found a professor whom he trusted and considered a mentor. Although my participant does have extremely high self esteem, the reason he really connected to her was

because of homophily which provided a sense of comfort to him while being a first semester freshman at Merrimack College. As for the participants in Jones' (2002) study, they never mentioned having a deep personal connection with a specific professor because they were all white professors at their PWI and therefore they lacked homophily which often brings that sort of mentor-mentee relationship.

Multicultural Programs

The main purpose of multicultural programs at Predominantly White Institutions is to implicate an already sense of belonging during or even before the student applies to the college (Rome, 2005). The participants in Jones' (2002) study described their cross-cultural center as a "place to relax," "stress free," and "a good place to address personal and social issues."

Homophily is another reason as to why international or minority students who join multicultural programs feel like they belong there. It is because with homophily, they have a number of similarities with the people in that group that they normally wouldn't with the entire student body at their PWI. When my participant was asked if Merrimack College had a multicultural program and if he had explored it, his response was, "I think there is but I haven't explored it." Based on prior research, this is a big surprise. It would have been expected that his answer would have been yes and I often go there to hangout, but it was not. Why does he not go to Merrimack's multicultural center? In my literature review I acknowledged that college is an experience where one typically doesn't know anybody and is thrown into a situation where they have to fend for themselves. According to previous research, this is when an international minority student would begin going to the multicultural center to try to make friends and feel apart of something (Jones, 2002). In my participants case, he was thrown into college and onto

the soccer team at Merrimack. Before classes start officially, all of the fall sports teams arrive and reside at Merrimack College before anyone else. As a freshman, my participant had to do this if he was going to play on the team. That being said, when he first arrived to Merrimack he already had a preset group of people he was required to spend everyday with during preseason. They worked out together, played soccer together, ate meals together, and relaxed together. By the time the rest of the student body arrived on campus and classes started, my participant already had a very close knit group of people. When asked how he would describe his soccer team he said, "I would refer to them as my family." Therefore, the soccer team provided my participant a sense of belonging which only helped raise his already high self confidence while at Merrimack College. At the start of the academic year, he began with high self confidence at a Predominantly White Institution versus the other international minority students who did not get the option to come to campus before everyone else as a freshman and be placed in a team of people who trust and rely on each other. That is why others go to the multicultural center to seek out the same sense of belonging that my participant found within the soccer team at Merrimack College. The soccer team, a sense of belonging, and high self confidence has helped him down the path of making new friends and continuing to stay true to himself without having to participate in the social support network of multicultural programs at a Predominantly White Institution.

Suggestions for Further Research

When moving forward with this topic, it is important to look at the data and realize why my participant differs so much from other participants in prior research. The main reason why they are so different is because of his high confidence levels in his appearance, personality,

academics, and immediate involvement with Merrimack's mens soccer team. These two aspects have led my participant down the road of several new friendships, fresh opportunities, and overall success at a Predominantly White Institution. In order to ensure that all other international minority males have the same success as my participant, we have to ask the question, how do we raise the self confidence of all other international minority males at Predominantly White Institutions? One way to do this is that while touring a group of minority or international students at a PWI, the tour guide has to make it clear that there is a multicultural program at their institution and all the benefits and sense of security it provides. In doing so, this could help narrow down the college search for some applicants because they know they would find a sense of belonging at that institution. If a certain PWI does not have a multicultural program, they should immediately implement one similar to the *Student African American Brotherhood (S.A.A.B.)*. In Rome's (2005) study, right away it was acknowledged that students social interactions at their institutions directly affect their connecting and remaining at the institution and S.A.A.B. greatly influenced that. If all institutions implemented a multicultural program and made it widely known with how successful it was and reached out to more international minority males to join and participate, I predict the success of international minority males and graduation rate would increase at a Predominantly White Institution.

Observation

After researching, collecting data, and analyzing, it was found that my participant is not the typical international minority student. Due to his high self confidence and immediate involvement with Merrimack's mens soccer team, he has always felt a sense of belonging at his Predominantly White Institution, which is different than the social experiences of those in prior

studies. Even when asked about discrimination or racism on campus, his self confidence is so high that he doesn't feel a need to pay attention to those who try to drag him down. Instead, he would rather carry on life with positive thoughts and interactions with all different people in terms of race, gender, and ethnicities on campus. While professors and multicultural programs play a minimal role in his social experiences, he has found other social activities to take part in that has provided him an overall positive social experience at his Predominantly White Institution.

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Appendix A - Interview Protocol

- How did you come to choose Merrimack College?
- How did you feel about getting accepted to Merrimack College?
- What schools did you look into while applying to college?
- Can you walk me through your experiences during your first year here at Merrimack College?
- What do you think about having friends who are different from you with different interests or hobbies?
- Why do you think that you're the only one on the soccer team that really branches out friend wise?
- Were you always that comfortable with yourself?
- Can you describe your relationship with your peers?
- Can you talk about your relationship with your soccer team first?
- You know a lot of people and are kind to most people, but is that always reciprocated back to you?
- Can you provide an example?
- What about your relationship with your professors?
- Was she like a mentor to you?
- Have any other professors ever tried to reach out to you at all?
- Do you know if there's any other African American professors on campus?
- How do you feel about that?

- Do you think black professors would be hired if they applied here?
- Would you like to see black professors at Merrimack College?
- Do you feel more comfortable when there are other black people around?
- What about in the classroom?
- Do you feel more comfortable when there are other black people in your class?
- Is there a multicultural program at Merrimack and have you ever explored it?
- Have they ever reached out to you?
- Do you feel that you don't need the extra support?
- Do you think if you tried it, it would be beneficial?
- What as a community do we need to work on?
- In today's society, do you think race plays a big role in getting jobs, etc.?
- What do you think her goal was out of that situation?
- What is your support network at Merrimack?
- In other words, who do you go to for academic, social, or even emotional support?
- Do you use that support?
- Is there a specific event at Merrimack that has shaped your experiences thus far?
- There is nothing that has really stood out to you?
- Why do you think that there hasn't been an experience that has shaped your experiences yet?
- Have you ever experienced a life changing experience in general?
- Are you still a practicing Muslim?

- What idea did you have about Merrimack College prior to attending in terms of racial and ethnic student body composition?
- What change are you referring to?
- So, knowing Merrimack was a Predominantly White Institution didn't stop you from attending?
- Do you still notice Merrimack is predominantly white day to day?
- What year are you at Merrimack?
- What is your major?
- When did you come to the United States?
- Why did you come to the United States?
- How old were you?
- How did you feel about coming to the United States?
- What would you do in Uganda after you got your education?
- What is a main difference between the cultures that you have noticed?
- Would you ever change religions?
- Can you describe to me in more detail how you practice the Muslim religion?

Appendix B - Informed Consent Statement

Merrimack College

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to understand the social experiences of an international minority male at a predominantly white institution (PWI).

Information

By participating in this study, it will be asked of the participant to engage in an in-depth interview. The interview will last between one and two hours. It will take place in a private, quiet area as provided by the interviewer. The interview will involve question regarding participants social experience inside of Merrimack College. The interview will be audiotaped. Also, the participant will be asked to record a journal entry. The journal entry will encompass any social experiences that the participant forgot to mention in the interview or anything else he wants to include. Third, a participant observation will be conducted. The researcher will observe the participant in a natural setting (i.e. the classroom) and record how he interacts with those around him. Prior to these methods of data collection, the participant will be contacted to set up times for an interview, participant observation and to collect the journal entry.

Risks

There is a potential risk for the participant to feel uncomfortable or to become upset during the interview. The questions regard the social experience and how the individual came to be where he is now which could trigger different emotions. If after the interview the participant feels unstable or like he needs to talk to someone, professional counseling is available at the Hammel Health and Counseling Center at Merrimack College. The participant can contact them at (978)-837-5441 if needed.

Benefits

By participating in this study, the information gathered will include direct and indirect benefits for the participant. The direct benefits of participating in this study are, a contribution of research information to other international minority students of color, and the clarification of one's own identity and experiences. The indirect benefit will include the expansion of knowledge on this topic which can aid in future research and program development. Knowledge of the social experiences of an international minority male at a predominantly white institution will be of value to Merrimack College as well. It will help provide a stepping stone for new programs to aid in the social experiences of international minority students overall, including the participant.

Confidentiality

The participant's name will remain confidential and will not be documented anywhere in the final research paper. Anything said or written in the interview or journal will remain completely confidential as well. Also, at the end of the interview the participant and interviewer will review the audio recording and the notes the interviewer took. Anything the participant does not approve will be deleted.

Compensation

For participating in this study you will receive a thank you card. If you withdraw from the study prior to its completion, you will still receive a thank you card.

Contact

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study), you may contact the researcher.

Victoria Evans Merrimack College (413)-386-3040 evansv@merrimack.edu

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in this research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Merrimack College's International Review Board.

315 Turnpike Street North Andover, MA 01845 (978)-837-5000 irb@merrimack.edu

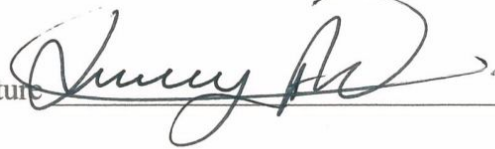
Participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may refuse to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

Consent

I have read this form and received a copy of it. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this study.

Subject's signature



Date

11/16/17

Appendix C - Participant Observation

- The observation took place on December 6, 2017
- Introduction to Business: 11:00am - 12:15pm
- There were twenty one people in the class
- Eighteen caucasian students and three minority students at a glance
- At the start of class everyone was working in groups
- The participant was in a cluster of four people; two females and one male
- As the group completed the worksheet, they talked quietly amongst themselves
- The participant and the other minority students did not sit near each other
- The other minority students also sat next to their caucasian peers
- As everyone finished up, the participant sat quietly on his phone because he was finished
- It appeared as though he wasn't trying to avoid socializing by being on his phone because he clearly looked engaged with whatever he was looking at
- As the professor walked around the room, the participant would periodically engage with her
- He asked her how her day was going and she replied politely while the class was still finishing up the worksheet
- A white male student tried to squeeze behind the participants chair
- He kindly tapped him on the shoulder, they exchanged a friendly smile, and he passed by
- It was time for the participants group to present their powerpoint project so the professor called them to the front of the room

- The group consisted of the same people the participant was sitting with at the beginning of class
- As the group was pulling up their powerpoint to present, the participant stood off to the side while the other three team members talked quietly
- Their presentation was on the application Snapchat
- The white male presented his slides first
- As he presented, the class was quiet with a few audience members on their electronics
- Next, one of the females has trouble getting their video to work
- The participant was standing next to her and stepped in to help without her having to ask
- He successfully helped her with the video volume and controlled it for the duration of the video
- Then the other female in the group presented her slides
- Nobody in the audience was on their electronics while she presented
- The other female presented her slides next
- During the presentation, one of the other minority students interrupted to make a joke about one of the slides
- The participant replied in a jokingly manner back while standing in front of the class
- Finally, the participant presented his slide about SnapMap
- He read his notes from a small notebook
- While he was speaking, he mostly looked out to the teacher rather than the audience as a whole

- Him and his professor would periodically make eye contact and she would nod in validation
- While the participant was still presenting his slide, his male teammate tried to interrupt him
- He let his teammate say what he wanted to say then calmly continued with his slide
- The group then had another video to present but again, was not working
- The participant again immediately stepped in without being asked to help his teammate
- While the video, made by the group, played in front of the audience, the participant smiled and looked happy with his work because he was actually in the video
- At the end of the video, the participant wrapped up the presentation and they all received a round of applause
- After the presentation, the group opened up the class for questions
- Anytime someone from the audience asked a question, the participant immediately answered and his group mates added onto what he said
- When the professor asked a question directly to the group, the participant answered it confidently
- Once the group sat back down, the participant discussed quietly how it went with one of his female group members
- They then both proceeded to go on their phones once the discussion ended
- While the second group presented, the participant was on and off his phone, sometimes just listening and other times listening and watching
- Throughout the entire class, the participants body language was relaxed and calm

Appendix D - Journal Entry

- In your opinion, what personal aspect (ie. bravery, talkative, friendly etc.) do you possess and how has this aspect shaped your social experiences at Merrimack College? Please provide an example and explain.
- Other questions to consider...
 - Has this aspect about yourself made your social experiences better or worse?
 - How do you think you came to possess this aspect?
 - Do the people you socialize yourself with also possess this aspect?
- The participant wrote about his personal aspect of self confidence.
- He mentioned how it is not easily possessed by very many people which he wishes was not the case.
- In his opinion, low self confidence occurs when an individual does not feel comfortable with their physical appearance and tend to care about other people's opinions on his or her life.
- The participant recognized how he pays little to no mind to people's negative opinions on his life as he knows for a fact that he cannot please everyone on campus.
- Being true to himself and loving him for the person he is has helped him make numerous friendships at Merrimack College.
- This aspect about himself has also helped him interact freely in classes with both his professors and classmates which in turn creates a more friendly environment to learn in.

Appendix E - Codes Defined

Interview

- Making a choice: the ability to decide something for oneself
- Known territory: something that is familiar
- Making a choice: the ability to decide something for oneself
- Feelings of acceptance: knowing that people want you there
- Making new friends: the act of putting oneself out there to meet others
- New chapter in life: the act of trying something somewhere else that's new
- Meeting new people: the act of putting oneself out there to have new social interactions
- Being himself: not changing who he is based on what others want to see
- Meeting new people: the act of putting oneself out there to have new social interactions
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Family: people who are there for each other no matter what
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Friendly: not being afraid to talk to new people
- Professors: people who teach students
- International student: someone who came from a different country to learn
- International professor: someone who came from a different country to teach
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance

- Lack of black professors: having all caucasian professors
- Comfortable whether or not other black people are around: confidence
- Doesn't need extra support: confidence
- Family influence: people who help make life changing decisions
- Racism: the act of discriminating against someone because of the color of their skin
- Doesn't need extra support: confidence
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Strictly academic relationship with professors: not having a deeper personal connection with one's professors
- Life changing experience: an event that altered the way one lives out the rest of their life
- Muslim: A type of religion
- Religion: the act of praising a higher power
- PWI: predominantly white institution
- Goals: something one wants to achieve one day
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Muslim: A type of religion

Observation

- Class demographics: the race, gender, ethnicity, SES, etc. of the people in the classroom
- Group work: having to complete an assignment with other classmates
- Cell phones: technology

- Professor: someone who teaches a college course
- Snapchat: an application used with technology
- Stepping in to help a classmate: confidence
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Joking around with classmates: having a light conversation with peers
- Reading notes while presenting: to make sure the information being spread is accurate
- Stepping in to help a classmate: confidence
- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Satisfied with work: a feeling of accomplishment
- Eager to answer classmates questions: confidence in one's knowledge
- Answers quickly and correctly: confidence
- Cell phones: technology
- Open body language: confidence

Journal

- Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance
- Social experience: one's experience with other people
- Physical appearance: how one and others perceives himself on the outside
- Being true to oneself: not changing based on what others want to see
- Making numerous friendships: being confident to talk to several different people

- ❑ Interacting freely in class: the confidence to speak in class
- ❑ Professor: those who teach a college course
- ❑ Acquire knowledge: how one learns through others, text, or life experience
- ❑ Confidence: having a sense of security and comfort in one's personality and physical appearance

Appendix F - Research Journal

My research question for my research project was what are the social experiences of an international minority student at a predominantly white institution (PWI)? Before beginning this project, I was not sure what exactly I wanted to research for my Diversity and Social Justice class. As I talked through topics with Professor Mallona, we realized that I am interested in analyzing the social experiences of people and since it was for a diversity class, we thought why not do it on minority people? As we discussed further I thought of a few friends I have here at Merrimack College who are minority and international students. From there I began to wonder what their social experiences are like at Merrimack College, a predominantly white institution, and how that has affected them today. After that we seamlessly formed my research question together. I expected to gain a deeper understanding of the social experiences of international minority students because I have never thought of their perspective before. I've probably never thought of their perspective of Merrimack College before because it is a PWI and I am in fact white. I hoped to expand my perspective on other people's social experiences not just during my research but permanently. This research project could help me as a future human service worker because I will have a better understanding of how minority persons perceive an environment when it is predominantly white. This will help me help them better in those situations because one day I wish to counsel or help in some way minority children or teens who are struggling in some way. By having some sort of idea about how they feel in situations where everyone else is white will better help me to respond to them in the best way possible.

Before this research project, I had minimal knowledge about the qualitative research process. Now that I have completed my project I have gained a new and better understanding of

the process. I had never written a literature review before. Once I found my empirical articles and formulated my annotated bibliography, I had no idea where to go from there. After reading my articles several times over, I found three common themes within them. The themes were three different social support networks of international minority students which included, peers, professors, and multicultural programs. From there I formulated the different ideas and findings together until it was complete. Besides never writing a literature review before, I've never collected data myself before. For my project I conducted an in-depth interview, participant observation, and a journal written by the participant. By having three different data collection techniques I was able to triangulate the different forms of data and come to a conclusion based on common themes.

As being the role of the researcher in a qualitative research process, I realized it's a lot more work than it looks. Besides extensive research, setting up and correctly executing the data collection techniques took a lot of planning and time. A previous assumption I had about the role of the researcher was that it was easy and the writing is always the hard part, but I was proven wrong. I'm now a lot more appreciative of those who conduct the data collection, but I also had a good time while doing it myself.

My race is the biggest social identity I think that could influence the interview with the participant. In fact, I think it did influence how the interview went with my participant. I am white and he's Ugandan. While I was conducting the interview I was very sure not to say anything that could possibly offend him. That was not only the last thing I wanted to do, but outside of this research he is my friend so I really did not want to offend him. With that being said, if I had been less conscious of the way I phrased my questions I think that I would have

gotten more responses pertaining to race and how it truly is. Instead he didn't get that deep about how race has really shaped his social experiences because I was too nervous to offend him. On the other hand, we talked a quite bit about race because he is a Muslim and that religion interests me quite a lot. Since I was very interested in his religion, I wasn't too nervous about asking him deep questions about that, but I also knew the correct terminology to use when addressing that topic because I had just completed an extensive project on the Muslim religion. Overall, the interview is only something I can learn and improve upon for future in-depth interviews I conduct in the future. Before conducting my interview, I wrote down a list of probing questions to ask in case I didn't know what to say in response to my participant. That was my strategy during the interview to get my participant to explain their stories, experiences, and points of view. If my participant gave me a short answer to the question I asked then I rephrased it and then usually added a probing question to the end of it as well.

Throughout my research project, the step that helped me better understand my project the best was the literature review. Because I had to write it before I began to conduct my data collection methods, I had a better understanding of the topic I was researching overall. With that being said, the literature review helped me formulate my interview questions along with the question I have my participant for the journal entry. Overall, this research project was a lot of work but I'm glad I did it because I feel like I'm already way ahead in the human services field and qualitative research area for a Sophomore.