Academic Resilience in African American and Latina/o Adolescents: A Study of Emotional Intelligence, Discrimination, and GPA

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# Academic Resilience in African American & Latina/o Adolescents: A Study of Emotional Intelligence, Discrimination, & GPA

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature Review</th>
<th>Current Study</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Academic Resilience:**  
• Academic success despite statistical unlikelihood (Morales & Trotman, 2010)  
• Studies of successful students to better understand traits and factors that contribute to success.  

**Discrimination:**  
• Discrimination is a regular and significant part of life for many students of color in the U.S. (Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004)  
• Ability to recognize discrimination begins developing around 5 or 6, and is well-developed by age 10 (Brown & Bigler, 2005)  
• Neblett et al. (2006) found that student perceptions of discrimination negatively predicted three academic outcomes (self-reported GPA, academic curiosity, and academic persistence) among 548 African American students in grades 7 to 10  

**Trait Emotional Intelligence:**  
• “Self-perceptions concerning one’s ability to recognize, process, and utilize emotion-laden information” (Petrides et al., 2004, p. 278)  
• Studies have linked EI and academic achievement in high school and college students (Parker, Crecue, et al., 2004; Parker, Summerfield et al., 2004; Schutte et al., 1998), although this is not universally supported (see Bastian, Burns, & Nettelbeck, 2005; Mavroveli & Sánchez-Ruiz, 2011; Newsome, Day, & Catano, 2000; O’Connor & Little, 2003)  
• EI & academics with diverse samples:  
  • Ford, Kokjie, and Lewis (1996): EI contributed 5.5% of variance to academic resilience  
  • Morales (2008; 2010) qualitative research, assigned EI key place in Resilience Cycle  

| Methods:  
• 79 Afr Amer & Latina/o HS students (38% response)  
• EI measure: TEIQue—ASF (Petrides et al., 2006)  
• Disc measure: School Disc Scale (MADICS Study; Eccles, et al.)  

**Question 1:** To what extent do EI & discrimination predict GPA in Afr Amer & Latina/o HS students?  
• No relationship in sample: \( F(2, 71) = 2.098, p = .13 \)  
• SIG model for males: \( F(2, 26) = 3.921, p = .032 \)  
• 17.3% of the variance in GPA  

**Question 2:** Does EI moderate the relationship between discrimination and GPA?  
• No relationship in sample: \( (p = .827) \)  

**Question 3:** Is there a difference by gender in perceptions of discrimination at school?  
• No significant difference \( (t(45) = .79, p = .434) \)  

**Question 4:** Does gender moderate the relationship between discrimination and GPA in the sample?  
• No relationship in sample: \( (p = .057) \), BUT:  

**Gender Matters:**  
• SIG model for males, but not females  
• Supports previous research: (Alfaro et al., 2009; Chavous et al., 2008; Cogburn et al., 2011)  
• Reasons are unclear, but socialization may play a role (Azmitia & Brown, 2000; Valenzuela, 1999)  

**Discrimination:**  
• Contributed to GPA in males, but not females. Why?  
• Counselors/educators must work to reduce disc  
• School wide: cultural awareness and competency of school staff (Hollie, 2011; Singleton, 2005), anti-racism with students (Insley, 2010; West Metro Education Program, 2013)  
• Individuals: Increased ethnic identity may mitigate the impact of disc on Latina/o students (Umana-Taylor, Vargas-Chanes, Garcia, & Gonzales-Backen, 2008); strong group connectedness (O’Connor, 1999; Sanders, 1997; Ward, 1990) and a positive group identity (Wong et al., 2003) can shield students; Sample group in school: “The Brotherhood” (Wyatt, 2009)  

**Emotional Intelligence:**  
• Contributed to GPA in males, but not females. Why?  
• Findings conflict with those of qualitative researchers (Morales, 2010). Why?  

**More Research Needed:**  
• Role of gender in academic resilience  
• Role of EI  
• Role of discrimination—especially in males  
• Other factors contributing to academic success  
• Longitudinal studies  
• Advanced quantitative methods (SEM, etc.)