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A qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews to describe how seven black male librarians' dual minority status within the profession influences the construction of their professional identities. Recently, successful professional identity construction has become an important theme in career literature because it has often been associated with career success. However, career literature fails to link the influence social identities have on the construction of professional identity, particularly if those identities are in some way marginalized within that profession and/or stigmatized within the society at large. Black male librarians hold both a marginalized and stigmatized identity in their profession and American society through their race and gender. Yet, in Library and Information Science (LIS) literature, there is little focus on the intersection between professional and stigmatized social identities, particularly when it comes to race and gender. This study addresses the knowledge gap in LIS literature.

Headings:

     African-American male librarians

     Black librarians---male

     Professional identity

     Social identity

     Racism

     Race discrimination

THE ONLY ONE IN THE ROOM:
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND BLACK MALE LIBRARIANS
IN NORTH CAROLINA

by
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INTRODUCTION

It is impossible in today's world to imagine one's career without incorporating one's social context into it; that is, such aspects of life as . . . the social stigma that may attach to one's race, religion, or gender. - Piore and Safford (2006, p. 319)

As a black librarian, I have discovered my approachability and image as a 'bearer of knowledge' are distorted by public perceptions. To be blunt, it has been my experience that the majority of patrons I serve see me first as a black man, and I can serve their information needs only after performing a great deal of placatory acrobatics to make them feel comfortable with me. – Patrick A. Hall (1988)

My professional life ran parallel to my private life. All my professional life and all my private life race was a major factor to others on what I do and what I could not do; what I could say and what I could not say; and where I could go and where I could not go. Some racial denial experiences were blatant and some were sullen, but the results were the same: you cannot produce solely because you are black. There was never a question of my education and experience. - Nicholas Edward Gaymon (1999)

Professional identity is defined as "the constellation of attributes, beliefs, and values people use to define themselves in specialized, skill- and education-based occupations or vocations (Slay & Smith, 2011, p. 86)." It is an aspect of personal and social identity that is formed over time through the negotiation between various lived experiences and meaningful feedback that supplies insight into a professional's own central and enduring preferences, talents and values (Schein 1978). Simply put, professional identity is the way in which one conceives of himself or herself as a result of his or her work activities. As outlined by Slay & Smith (2011), research on professional identity construction suggests that one's professional self-concept is constructed in three ways:

(1) the provision of information regarding the meanings associated with a profession by way of socialization processes and rhetorics (Hall 1987; Fine 1996), (2) continual adjustment and adaptation as one transitions through their career and (Nicholson 1984; Ibarra 1999) and, (3) the clarification of priorities and self-understanding through life and work experiences (Schein 1978).

Successful professional identity construction has often been associated with career success and thus it has become an important theme in career literature (Arthur et al, 1999; Hall et al, 2002). Equally prominent in such literature is social mobilization within the labor market based on social identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, or religion (Piore & Safford, 2006). However, career literature fails to link the influence social identities have on the construction of professional identity, particularly if those identities are in some way marginalized within that profession and/or stigmatized within the society at large (Slay & Smith 2011). In the field of Library and Information Science (LIS), the literature contains research on professional identity in terms of roles and duties (Walter 2008; Medaille 2011; Martin 2013; Freedman 2014), an increasingly technology dependent world (Jeevan 2007; Carson & Little 2014; Nelson & Irwin 2014), or specific institutional populations such as academic librarians (Belzowski *et al* 2013; Sare & Bales 2014).

There is little focus on the intersection between professional and social identities, particularly when it comes to race, although there have been published compilations of essays from African-American librarians within the profession (Josey 1970 & 1994; Jackson 2012), as well as individual essays, interviews and commentaries from African-American male librarians (Blue 1924; Cobb 1973; Hall 1988; Gaymon 1999; Neely 2004). Also present in LIS literature is scholarship that examines the relationship between gender

and profession (Morrisey & Case 1988; Cravey 1991; Carmichael 1994; Piper & Collamer 2001; Dickinson 2003; Hickey 2006). Nevertheless, there still exists a literature gap in regards to studies about gender, race and the profession. This paucity of research is surprising considering that there has been increasing emphasis on issues of diversity within librarianship, which is indicated by the growing amount of research on the strategic need for and challenges to the recruitment and retention of minorities within the profession (Josey 1989; Abdullahi 1992; Buttlar & Canyon 1992; Kim and Sin 2006; Sterling 1993; Jennings 1993; Neely 2005; Johnson 2007).

Black male librarians hold both a marginalized and stigmatized identity in the profession and in American society through their gender and race. In society at large, 2010 US Census data shows that African-Americans account for 14% of the population in the United States. However, African-Americans constitute just over 5% of the 118, 666 credentialed librarians in the United States according to the American Library Association (ALA)'s 2012 *Diversity Counts* study. African-American male librarians in the United States comprise a little more than .4% of all credentialed librarians as a whole and only 2.8% of all male librarians (who themselves only make up 17% of the profession with a total of 20, 393). In fact, this percentage of African-American male librarians has decreased over time as the number of librarians and male librarians has continued to increase. From the 2007 *Diversity Counts* study, African-American males made up .5% of the 109, 958 credentialed librarians in the United States and 3.2 % of the 19, 463 credentialed males in 2000. In 1990, African-American males represented .6% of all credentialed librarians and 4.3% of males. Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino and Native American/Eskimo also have been profoundly underrepresented in the profession.

Considering their diminishing professional presence, it is fitting to wonder about the intersection of black male librarians' social identities and the development of their professional ones. Put another way, how does their dual minority status within librarianship influence the construction of their professional identities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there is not a study that examines the professional identity of black male librarians specifically, there are relevant studies which individually investigate: professional identity theory, minority status and professional identity; and black male librarians and professional identity. In the aggregate, these studies reveal not only the process by which black male librarians possibly undertake to construct their professional identities but also the influence their dual minority status could have on this process; ultimately providing a firm foundation and motivation for this research.

Professional Identity Theory

Essential to professional identity theory is the definition of terms. A profession is an occupation with high standards of competence and responsibility that demands advanced education and the application of skills based on technical knowledge ('Doyin Atewologun & Singh 2010). It creates a path for people to follow (Schein 1978). Therefore, there is a structural mold already in place in which new recruits must position themselves to become a professional. Thus, the title of professional is something that one *achieves*. Identity, on the other hand, is the *self-ascribed* notion of how one conceives of himself or herself. It refers to the multiple meanings attached to a person by self and others. These meanings are based on social roles and social identities in addition to innate characteristics that the person displays and are attributed to him or her by outsiders based on his or her conduct (Ibarra 1999). "Identity denotes the ways in which individuals and collectivities

are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins, 2008, p. 18)." Identity helps us understand who people are and why they do what they do. Ultimately, the individual engages in a reflexive relationship with his or her identity as it continues to be socially constructed ('Doyin Atewologun & Singh 2010).

In terms of one's profession, negotiations occur when people adapt aspects of their identity to satisfy role demands and modify role definitions in order to retain cherished parts of their identity (Nichols 1984). These negotiations, or identity construction, processes are most notably described by Schein (1978) and Ibarra (1999).

From the outset of his seminal text, Schein develops a theoretical framework that he calls the "career development perspective." It emphasizes the influence society and culture have on the interaction that occurs between people and their employing organizations overtime, thereby determining the matching processes between people and their professions and their individual outcomes in that profession (2). He also proposes the idea of an occupational self-concept that consists of three components: 1) self-perceived talents and abilities 2) self-perceived motives and needs 3) self-perceived attitudes and values (p. 125). This self-concept makes up what he calls a person's "career anchor," or "the pattern of self-perceived talents, motives, values [that] serves to guide, constrain, stabilize, and integrate the person's career (p. 127)."

Schein's proposition of an occupational self-concept is further explored by Ibarra (1999) in her qualitative study of financial services professionals in transition to more senior roles. She uses it to describe how people adapt to new roles by experimenting with provisional selves which serve as trials for possible but not yet fully elaborated professional identities. Her conceptual framework shows that role adaptation involves three basic tasks:

1) observing role models to identify potential identities 2) experimenting with provisional selves and 3) evaluating experiments against internal standards and external feedback (p. 771). The ability to experiment with possible selves is one of the important ways professional identity is acquired (p. 782). From her conceptual framework, she develops a model of the role adaptation process which is characterized by iterative cycles of observation, experimentation and evaluation. The negotiation between situational influences of the profession and individual influences of the professional mediate this adaptation process (p. 787).

These definitions and theories are pertinent to exploring the influence of minority status on the construction of the professional identities of black male librarians. Librarianship is undoubtedly a profession, requiring a particular educational background in order to be considered credentialed and promulgating a particular set of values through the codification of its professional ethics by the ALA (2008). The existence of institutional minorities across many professions is the result of American society and culture being riddled with the historic, endemic and pervasive problem of institutionalized racism (Josey 1994). American society consists of a system of hierarchical stratifications based on race, class and gender which produces different life experiences and life chances (Ball 1992). This systemic unequal distribution of society's resources alters the career development perspectives of minorities. It is within this marginalized context that black male librarians must develop their own career anchors and adapt to their various roles within the field of librarianship.

Minority Status and Professional Identity

Social identity theory guides scholarship on minority status and professional identity. Social identity is defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [sic] knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Sacharin *et al*, 2009, p. 275)." Social identity is heavily shaped by these groups in which people classify themselves and are classified by others as insiders or outsiders. Favoritism is shown to insiders or ingroup members (Tajfel & Turner 1986; 'Doyin Atewologun & Singh 2010). Thus, a person has many social identities because he or she does not have only one self but multiple selves associated with his or her group memberships. Some of these social groups can have conflicting values and practices (Sacharin *et al*, 2009).

Social science literature explores minority status and professional identity in terms of social identity specifically by investigating the conflict between one's gender and one's professional identity. Sacharin *et al* (2009) and Wallen *et al* (2014) investigated gender-work or gender-professional identity integration for women in male-dominated professions and men in female-dominated professions respectively. Identity integration refers to the measure of the degree to which two social identities are represented as compatible and overlapping, as opposed to conflicting and divided. Originally conceived of in relation to bicultural identity, identity integration moderates how individuals with two cultural identities shift between them in response to primers in their social environment (Benet-Mart´ınez & Haritatos 2005). It does not refer to cognitive perceptions of the difference between identities, but rather to feelings of conflict between identities and focuses specifically on individuals who strongly identify with both social identities. Conflicts

between identities can become more pronounced when the identities are important to the individual and vice versa. Therefore, the more integrated an individual is, the less problematic it is for him or her to identify strongly with two groups simultaneously; Whereas less integrated individuals feel caught between the two identities and prefer to keep them separate, despite the fact that they strongly identify with both identities (Sacharin *et al* 2009).

Through this framework, the studies of Sacharin *et al* (2004) and Wallen *et al* (2014) confirm that high identity integration positively affects professional existence in terms of performance for women in male-dominated occupations and job attitudes, job satisfaction and commitment for men in female-dominated occupations. Thus, for black male librarians, a question that these studies raise is whether one of their institutionally marginalized social identities is more significant to the construction of their professional identities. If so, in what way?

In their study on the construction and negotiation of ethnic and gender identities of black professionals of the United Kingdom while at work, Doyin Atewologun & Singh (2010) discovered through semi-structured focus groups that their black male participants drew upon both their racial and gender identity by using agentic, or proactive, strategies to further their careers and develop themselves as professionals. Black professionals in general felt compelled to actively promote a positive identity to counter negative stereotypes (p. 339). While black males experienced both negative and positive stereotyping at work, they saw their dual minority status as "black male" within their chosen professions as a positive, ultimately providing them an advantage to raise colleagues expectations (p. 341). They were consciously engaged in integrating their

professional and social identities and working towards ingroup favoritism: "They would not voice opinions on race/ethnicity issues at work, such as views about slavery. Appropriate dress in the business context was also raised" (p. 342). They saw their workplace as "identity-challenging structures," and their navigation strategies included "assessing the battlefield before deciding on the strategy required to alter the structure" (p. 344). Their main strategy was impression management, which they used to promote more amenable black identities at work. Although none of the black male participants in this study were librarians, it nevertheless raises interesting questions about black male librarians' perception of their respective institutions in regards to their identity and if they too feel compelled to be strategic in the construction of their professional identities at work because of their race and/or gender.

Slay & Smith (2011) develop a model for how stigmatized cultural identity influences professional identity construction in their study using content analysis of oral and written histories of twenty African-American journalists from Wallace Terry's *Missing Pages*. They attempt to extend Ibarra's (1999) professional identity construction theory by asserting that racism and discrimination may limit possible and provisional selves, therefore providing an impetus for the impression management strategy described by black male participants in 'Doyin Atewologun & Singh's (2010) study. "In a society where stigmatized minority group members have been depicted as non-professionals and persons with limited opportunities or potential, minority individuals may have a restricted view of who they may become professionally (p. 88)." Slay & Smith continue on to say that Ibarra's (1999) concept of provisional selves based on role models may be restricted for professionals from stigmatized groups due to the absence of minorities in organizations

and executive roles (p. 88). This analysis also harkens back to Schein's (1978) career development perspective model as well in regard to the greater impact of society and culture has on matching organizations with individuals.

Slay & Smith echo aspects of social identity theory in reference to ingroup membership: "membership in a profession influences self-definition and shapes how others think about an individual" (p. 87). Also, they posit that a black person in a particular profession may have a different sense of what it means to work in that role due to receiving different messages about appropriate role behavior from those inside and outside one's cultural group. Hence, basing one's provisional selves on a role model may be restricted for professionals from stigmatized groups because they sense the behaviors displayed by whites would be unacceptable if performed by them (p. 88). Moreover, Slay & Smith specifically question the possibility of identity integration of stigmatized cultural identity and professional role identity in terms of the construction of professional identity: "Is there conflict between the two identities that has an influence on professional identity development" (p. 88)?

With these facets of social identity and professional identity in mind, Slay & Smith's (2011) model details how early familial and cultural influences along with professional experiences inform the repertoire of professional possible selves for members of stigmatized cultural identities by defining who the journalists' could *not* be (p. 99). In contrast to Ibarra's (1999) theory, they contend that members of stigmatized cultural identities experience redefinition rather than adaptation tasks in regards to redefining their occupational rhetorics, stigma and self, based on their own positive sense of black identity (p. 100-1). The first two tasks explain the impression management strategy of the black

male participants in 'Doyin Atewologun & Singh's (2010) study since their focus is counteracting stereotypes. The third task reflects the concept of identity integration in that black journalists report ways of achieving balance between their cultural and professional identity: "whether or not black journalists maintained a cultural identity invoked a strong reaction from blacks if they did not maintain that identity, and from whites if they did" (p. 101).

Black Male Librarians and Professional Identity

As a population, black male librarians are severely understudied in LIS literature. However, there are two studies by Ball (1992) and Davis-Kendrick (2009) that examine this population. Ball performed a descriptive study of black male library administrators from public and academic libraries utilizing a survey questionnaire in order to find out common characteristics among black male administrators, their status in the profession, and perceived perceptions of discrimination among them (p. 7). Davis-Kendrick's article included a mixed-methods study that utilized a questionnaire and follow-up interviews to identify internal and external factors that influence black male librarians' career choices and to determine the degree these men are satisfied with their job (p. 25).

Both authors found it necessary to place their respondents within a professional historical context by acknowledging black male librarians who were influential pioneers in the field. Edward Christopher Williams was the first documented African-American to receive his professional degree in librarianship in 1900. He helped charter the Ohio Library Association and was instrumental in establishing and developing the curriculum of Western Reserve University's Library school, where he also taught a variety of library science courses (Ball, p. 35; Davis-Kendrick p. 26-7). Although never formally educated in library

science like Williams, Thomas Fountain Blue directed the first public library branch to serve African-American patrons with an all African-American staff in 1905 Louisville, Kentucky. By the early 1920s, he also established a library apprentice program, the first of its kind for black librarians in the South (Ball, p. 36; Davis-Kendrick p. 27). In 1932, Arturo Alfonso Schomburg became the curator of the New York Public Library's research collection, which is now the well-known Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (Ball, p. 36; Davis-Kendrick p. 26). 1968 brought the election of E. J. Josey, the first black male president of the ALA and, in 1972, Robert Wedgeworth was appointed as the organization's first black Executive Director (Ball, p. 36-7; Davis-Kendrick p. 27). These men, in addition to others profiled by Ball (1992) and Davis-Kendrick (2009), not only opened doors for black male librarians of the present day but also provide role models through which black male librarians can model their possible selves in line with Ibarra's (1999) and Slay & Smith's (2011) construction of professional identity theories.

In regards to the influence race and gender has on black male librarians' professional identity, Ball's (1992) study touched more on race; whereas Davis-Kendrick's (2009) study focused more on gender, particularly in discussing male librarian stereotypes. Ball's study referred to the conflict between ascribed and achieved status: "...race is an ascribed status, something the individual has no control over. Achieved status relates to the occupation of a person. The two come into conflict when an individual is treated according to his ascribed status (race) regardless of his achieved status (p. 93)." African- American male administrators in Ball's study indicated that they believe their opportunities for advancement in librarianship are limited and that their professional competence is doubted due to subtle racism and that they are regarded by their ascribed status first rather than their

achieved status of prestigious positions in the professions as well as having earned the highest degrees in their field (p. 93).

Davis-Kendrick's (2009) study reveals some of the impacts that gender has on black male librarians' identity through the degree that male librarian stereotypes affect them, particularly in how they classify themselves and are classified by others. Moreover, the study provides insight into the degree that they believe their gender is an asset or liability in the LIS profession (p. 32). Although 61% of respondents indicated that they were not bothered by male librarian stereotypes, about half of the 39% who said they were bothered indicated that they take issue with the misconception that male librarians have a questionable sexual orientation. This sentiment applied to homosexual and heterosexual black male librarians (p. 39). Closely tied to conceptions about male librarian sexuality is that the profession is a feminized one. However, 45% of the respondents were completely unconcerned with this issue and 77% of all respondents say they identify themselves as a "Librarian" despite public association of that title with females (p. 40-41). In contrast to the issue with race, over one-third of respondents largely agreed that their gender gives them an advantage to advance in their LIS career whereas another third neither agreed nor disagreed (p. 42).

For the purposes of this research, the results of Ball's (1992) and Davis-Kendrick's (2009) studies provide an impetus for further investigation into the influence of race and gender on the construction of black male librarians' professional identities. The participants of their studies acknowledged that as dual minorities in the field, racism and positive gender discrimination are factors influencing their career trajectories. However, since Ball's and Davis-Kendrick's research was not designed to investigate professional

identity specifically but rather focus more exclusively on either race or gender, their studies do not make clear how race and gender influence the construction of black male librarian identities.

METHODS

The researcher conducted a qualitative descriptive study using semi-structured interviews in-person or by video conference. Snowball sampling was used to locate seven black male librarians from academic and public libraries in North Carolina with no less than five years' experience in the profession, who are still currently employed, and are between the ages of 25 and 65. This method was selected over surveys due to the small sample size and in order to understand the depth and nuance of the research subjects' perspectives.

Names of potential participants were gathered via personal contacts in the School of Information and Library Science (SILS) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill well as through self-referral by the participants. Referral information was further investigated via a web search in order to ascertain contact information and/or verify employer. Potential participants were contacted via email describing that the researcher is conducting a qualitative study on black male librarians, including participant criteria and requesting that they reply with their general availability if they are interested. A notice advertising a research opportunity for black male librarians was also sent out via the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) listserv. Once an affirmative response of interest to participate was received, participants were chosen based on timing of their reply, their current location, current institutional positions, and general availability for interviews. Preference for date, time and place of the interview was agreed to by the interviewee.

The researcher developed an interview guide (see Appendix I) in order to gather basic background information on the participant, and then posed ten main interview questions which were divided into three categories. These categories focused on building a rapport, professional identity, and, finally, minority status and professional identity. The interview guide was reviewed by SILS faculty and submitted to the Internal Review Board (IRB) as part of the required application; but, due to time constraints, it was not pretested with potential participants (Wildemuth, 2009, p. 239). The interviews took between 30-45 minutes.

Interview Questions

For the background portion of the interview, each participant was asked his age, number of years of experience, job role, the type of institution that he currently works for, and his undergraduate degree subject. These background questions were necessary to establish commonalities between the subjects' personal characteristics. The ten main interview questions sought to understand the motivations behind the participants' career choices, the participants' personal understanding of the concept of professional identity, and the factors that have influenced the construction of their identities, with specific questions on the influence of race and gender in case interviewees did not bring up the topics themselves. The questions were developed with particular reference to Schein (1978), Ibarra (1999) and Slay & Smith's (2011) professional identity theories and concepts of minority status and professional identity explored in the other literature that is referenced in the literature review.

In the first section of the interview guide, the questions not only had the intention of easing the interviewee into the interview process but also to get a sense of the

interviewee's ideal self-concept of himself prior to entering the field of librarianship. The researcher wanted to understand what parts of the interviewee's social identity and life experiences led him to choosing the profession as a career. In order to understand the professional identity construction process, it was important to the researcher to begin before the beginning, or prior to when the individual became a professional. These questions were designed with Schein's (1978) career development perspective theory in mind.

The second set of interview questions on professional identity wished to ensure that the participant and the researcher were approaching the main emphasis of the research, professional identity, with the same understanding of terminology. Thus, in questions three and four, it was important that the interviewer and interviewee discuss definitions of each part of the phrase "professional identity." The researcher also hoped that similar insight would also be gained about how the subjects operate within these definitions in their professional lives by detailing how they understood these terms.

Furthermore, questions five and six referenced both Ibarra's role adaptation process model (1999) and Slay & Smith's (2011) professional identity redefinition model. The researcher sought to discover if the research subjects, in fact, had significant role models to observe, emulate and evaluate themselves against as argued by Ibarra; or, as argued by Slay & Smith, if the participants' repertoire of professional selves, indeed, were born out of their early familial and cultural influences along with their professional experience and, when faced with challenges to their professional identity, whether the subjects spent their professional lives redefining their occupational rhetorics, stigma, and themselves. Moreover, the goal of question six was to understand how black male librarians managed

challenges to their professional identity from those within the profession and outside of it. Were they more agentic when experiencing a conflict because of their social identities, as suggested by Doyin Atewologun & Singh (2010)?

The final part of the interview guide consisted of the most the significant questions that earnestly aimed to understand the influence of the black male librarians' race and gender on the construction of their professional identities, in addition to how well the participants' social identities and professional identities integrated. Question seven was designed to understand if the participants saw themselves as having a stigmatized identity in the profession. If so, what experiences led the, to believe such? Question eight and nine sought to confirm that the participants' perceived that their race and/or gender held any power over their professional self-concepts and in what ways is that power shared by these two social identities. Finally, in question ten, the researcher wanted to determine if the research subjects' social identities helped or harmed them in terms of job search, advancement and/or daily professional interactions and, if so, in what ways do the research participants' respond to discriminatory situations. This final line of inquiry was created to fill in the gaps left by the research of 'Doyin Atewologun & Singh's (2010), Ball's (1992) and Davis-Kendrick's (2009) studies in regards to how black male librarians renegotiate their social identities in the profession.

Data Analysis Methodology

The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, then fully transcribed with F4 transcription software and coded using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The researcher used an iterative open coding process to identify major concepts and then

themes related to those concepts. Concepts were derived primarily from the questions being asked; whereas the themes were identified through each subject's response. The researcher then developed a hierarchical coding frame in order to understand the relation between certain concepts and themes. In the final part of the analysis, a table of the coding scheme (see Appendix II) was created that included the major concepts, themes, definitions of each of the themes within those conceptss and how many participants referred to that topics.

Limitations

Sampling technique and size were the most significant limitations to this study. Participants were self-selected making sampling bias highly probable. Thus, it cannot be guaranteed that this method resulted in a representative sample of black male librarians. However, the intent of the sample was not to be representative but rather illustrative since this study did not seek to generalize, but rather describe particular aspects of identity related to an understudied population in the profession. Nevertheless, considering the paucity of research on this topic, the researcher hoped that the study is transferable in that it can be performed in another context involving a larger sample of other black male librarians and derive similar results.

RESULTS

The results that follow detail the participants' shared background and their discussion with the researcher about professional identity in general, influences that have aided in their professional identity construction, and race, gender and professional identity intersectionality.

Participants' Backgrounds

The researcher collected information about each participant's age, years of work experience, current job roles, current institutions and undergraduate majors in order to get a sense how their demographic and professional backgrounds could inform their perspectives on professional identity and minority status.

Participants were born between 1950 and 1979 and five out of the seven received their Master's degrees in the late 80's and early 90's whereas the other two received theirs within the last fifteen years. **Table 1.1** shows that over half of the total number of participants are between the ages of 36 and 45. Two of the seven participants fall in the 46-55 age range, while only one is equal to or greater than the age of 56, but below the age of retirement or 65 years old.

Ages of Participants	
Age Range	# of Participants
26-35	0
36-45	4
46-55	2
56-65	1

Table 1.1

In **Table 1.2**, the total years of experience are spread pretty evenly between 10 and 40 years among participants, with only one having less than 10 years of experience in librarianship. Due to some participants started working in libraries prior to receiving their library degree, the researcher asked for the sum of their total library experience instead of the sum of their experience after receiving their Master's degrees.

Participants' Years of Work Experience	
# of Years Range	# of Participants
$5 \leq \# < 10$ years	1
$10 \leq \# < 20$ years	2
$20 \leq \# < 30$ years	2
$30 \leq \# < 40$ years	2

Table 1.2

There is also a relatively even split in the types of current job roles held by the interviewees, with 86% (six out of seven) of the research subjects working in either public services or management according to **Table 1.3**. Job roles are grouped to signify whether the interviewee works more behind the scenes in technical services (i.e. serials, acquisitions, collection development, etc.), or in public services in a front-facing position

such as in reference, research or instruction or, finally, is in an administrative position (i.e.

library director, department supervisor, branch manager, etc.).

Current Job Roles of Participants	
Job Role	% of Participants
Technical Services	14%
Public Services	43%
Administrative	43%

Table 1.3

As **Table 1.4** demonstrates, 71% of the participating black male librarians filled these job

roles in academic institutions.

Current Institutions of Participants	
Type of Institution	% of Participants
Special Library	0%
Public Library	29%
Academic Library	71%

Table 1.4

At the same time, five out of the seven participating black male librarians also

envisioned themselves working in different type of institutions than their current one. Two

of these librarians had also previously worked as school media specialists for a significant

number of years prior to entering academic and public libraries. The academic librarian

had specifically aimed to become a school media specialist because he wanted to be an

educator. He also worked in public libraries before accepting his first academic position at

a community college. The public librarian had initially planned to work in academic

libraries since he was familiar with them through using the university library during his

undergraduate studies but, after ten years in school libraries, he received an offer to work in public libraries and chose to continue advancing in those institutions.

The remaining three of the five are all currently academic librarians. One imagined that he would become an administrator in a law library but those jobs were quickly taken by lawyers who could not find law work. He began working in an academic library while in graduate school. Another interviewee designed his graduate coursework around working in either a public library or academic library so he could choose between the two institutions. Yet, he entered academic librarianship with his first job offer and stayed in that realm. The third of these three academic librarians initially desired to be a special librarian, specifically imagining that he would become a research analyst at a growing telecommunications company since they were hiring individuals with library science degrees. He had gained some special library experience interning at a research consultancy firm one summer, as well as gained some academic library experience while a graduate student. By the time he had finished his degree, his dream institution, the telecom company, had collapsed and he did not receive job offers from other special libraries where he had applied. An academic library offered him his first job and he came to view academic librarianship as a great fit for his interest in research.

Undergraduate major was an interesting commonality that was not initially intended to be captured by the researcher but became of notable significance throughout the course of the research. Six out of the seven subjects mention that they pursued library science as a graduate degree as a result of seeking a way to apply their undergraduate major professionally. Their undergraduate education strongly helped shaped their ideal concept of their professional selves:

At the time, I was going through a career change and it was an opportunity for me to find a career that let me use some of my undergraduate degree, which was in communications (strictly production work), and also kind of get moving into a new career. So those were the things that kind of motivated me to be a librarian. - Participant D

As **Table 1.5** demonstrates, communication studies is the most prevalent major among study participants, with 43% having a bachelor's degree in it. One participant reports receiving his bachelor's degree in library science. Two participants also share the same social science degree while only one participant has a humanities degree.

Undergraduate Majors of Participants	
Major	% of Participants
Library Science	14%
Humanities	14%
Social Sciences	29%
Communication Studies	43%

Table 1.5

A General Discussion of Professional Identity

Participants define what it means to be a professional and professional identity generally in terms of the following themes: obtaining certain credentials, working in a position related to one's education and/or training and being satisfied with the work that one does. Specific to the field of librarianship, participants describe their preconceived notions of librarianship and the necessary professional identity traits (skills, attitudes and/or values) that librarians must possess that they came to understand once they actually began working in the profession.

Five out of the seven subjects view possessing certain credentials, or specialized education or training, as essential to being able to call oneself a professional and being perceived as such. These participants concede that owning the professional label is heavily associated with having a Master's degree in librarianship:

> "I always think of professionals as I guess doctors, lawyers, engineers, [and] librarians. We're part of [the professions] because you have [to have] the educational credentials. There's sort of a structure set up... So I guess I would consider us one of those professions."- Participant B

> "Well to be a professional I think it is actually who holds a professional degree, who holds an MLS or even when I didn't have an MLS, when I had a BS in library science."- Participant C

> "Professional, well the definition is two-fold. First of all, of course, that means that you have a professional or advanced degree, which means that you have a Master's degree, a PhD in some circles, a JD in other circles. That means you have demonstrated that you have fulfilled a particular course of study in order to receive the particular title that you're wishing to achieve.' -Participant G

While acknowledging the distinction, some of the participants also lament that education was the demarcating line in the profession:

> Right now the profession of library science is kind of torn between, there's that schism between "oh you're not a professional if you don't have a degree"...That's only fair that you receive acknowledgement that you are professional in that regard. But I really think that in the real world of managing the library if you make that distinction, it can cause problems. - Participant A

> …Seventeen years ago when I started working in [library system], if you had asked me the same question, I probably would have told you a professional is a person with a library degree versus the other kind of staff that is often referred to as paraprofessionals. I think in my seventeen years that opinion has changed quite a bit. I kinda think that we're all professionals and libraries as a whole employ professionals because our work is very much of a professional nature. -Participant E

For one participant, credentials are not a factor at all but rather a general enthusiasm for

the work one does that defines him or her as a professional:

> I feel that if someone dedicates themselves and they apply themselves to the best
> of their ability in anything, it can be a profession. - Participant D

Four out of seven interviewees further define the word "professional" as working

in the field for which one received his or her credentials. Two of the four subjects added

the caveat that one must also be contributing to that field:

> I think it could really just be, to me, it's when you are actually working in your field.
> You're doing something that you want to do in your field; that you're actually
> making contributions to the field. You're growing, you're mentoring, and you're
> helping other people grow. -Participant C

> There's another level of professionalism that isn't quite as tangible. In that aspect,
> it is working within your preferred area of study and interest and your desired career
> but also taking the time to give back in other ways such as serving on boards,
> serving on committees, doing a lot of committee work. That's also a part of being a
> professional. At the same time, it means that your level of understanding about your
> career is that it is a career that you can advance, achieve more and do more to serve
> the needs of advancing the profession itself. That's when it becomes more than just
> a job that you go to from 9-5. This is something that you are devoting your life's
> work to doing and to becoming. -Participant G

A few participants also link contributing to one's profession to job satisfaction as a

determinant of one's professional identity:

> "I really think the whole identity part is when it is something that you want to do,
> something that you choose to do and something that you enjoy doing. I just see so
> many people I think who are in this field maybe by default. They started out in the
> field or…it's not necessarily for them but it might be all they actually know what
> to do or how to do. But I think that you get your true professional identity when
> you do grow into the librarian you want to be or you had dreams to be or you had
> aspired to be. It's all about goal setting and reaching those goals and like I said
> making contributions to the profession." - Participant C

"I think of a professional as someone who pretty much...They have a profession they enjoy doing. They probably have an identity or when people meet them, they feel confident that this person cares about they're trying to accomplish and definitely put a lot of time into it." -Participant E

Prior to entering the profession, three participants express preconceived notions of librarianship in negative terms, contradicting how they view the profession since joining it. One of the library administrators says that he expected the work to be very boring but was willing to adapt to it. Another participant who works in public service thought that librarians were generally unwelcoming based on his grade school experiences. The third participant, also in public service, primarily used to associate librarian professional identity with the "little old lady with her hair in a bun" stereotype. However, those participants' perspectives on librarian professional identity shifted as they gained experience in the profession. As summarized in **Table 2.1**, there are a variety of necessary professional identity traits that interviewees felt librarians actually embody, or at the very least should embody, whether speaking of themselves or in general.

General Professional Identity Traits of Librarians		
Skills	**Attitudes**	**Values**
Analytical	Caring	Instruction
Communication	Empathetic	Leadership
Interpersonal	Energetic	Literacy
Problem-solving	Flexible	Mentorship
Research	Helpful	Professional development
Technical	Resourceful	Public service

Table 2.1

Participants either directly or indirectly characterize their own professional identity traits in terms of what skills, attitudes and values have made them successful, including their technical knowledge and teaching abilities:

> I was very I guess tech savvy at the time with that old technology now but at the time it was cutting edge technology. There was no internet or anything so the concept of online searching was just at its infancy and so I had adopted that and had started teaching that as part of a curriculum at the school. - Participant A

> I provide technical training. I teach classes. I provide assistance with workforce development questions, those sorts of things. And that's really like why, that's how I see myself professionally and that's how I describe myself to others just in terms of librarianship. -Participant E

They also are very confident, comfortable and self-assured in their professional identities:

> But as far as me with my professional identity, if I set my heart to doing something, I'm gonna do it. So once I decided I was gonna be a librarian, I set my own goals for myself, my own personal and professional goals. A lot of times they're all so meshed so much you can't tell where one ends and the other one begins but if I put my mind to something [then] I'm gonna complete it. I'm just gonna complete it. I just think I was just gonna be who I am professionally because it's something I just want to do. -Participant C

Constructing a Professional Identity

A diverse array of inputs have influenced the construction of the professional identities of the study's black male librarians. Some of these inputs include experiences from their childhood and adolescence, early adulthood and recent existence. These inputs either motivated them to enter the field of librarianship or have supported them as they continue in the field.

EARLY EXPOSURE. A total of five of the seven black male librarians interviewed indicate that their early exposure to libraries in their youth or early adulthood is one of the major contributing factors that motivated them to become librarians. One black male librarian credits his mother, who is a librarian, with encouraging him to enter the field.

Another references his parents being school teachers as important in terms of him gaining an appreciation for books and learning. A third describes passing a significant amount of time in his grade school library since he grew up with a single mom. He spent so much time there that one librarian decided to allow him to help her select books, giving him collection development experience. Two black male librarians recount their early experiences working in the library. One worked part-time in a public library in high school that made him feel like he had a "grown-up job," unlike his friends who worked in fast food. The other participant reports visiting and working in a variety of academic libraries while in library school, from the health sciences library to one for law; all of which soon led him to discover his passion for being behind a reference desk.

MENTORSHIP. Mentorship also has played a strong motivating but also supportive role in the careers of the interviewees. All seven subjects indicate mentorship as a significant influence that has helped build their professional identities. Participant C describes how his early exposure to libraries had been tainted by the unwelcoming librarians at his junior high and high schools. Yet, an experience shadowing a library director changed his perspective on the profession completely while he was a sophomore in college:

> "I'll just say that if anyone had told me that I would of been a librarian, I would have told them they're lost their mind! But I was a sophomore working a summer job...I wanted to be an educator but I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do and I met someone who was a director of a public library. He had me to shadow him for a few days at his library and just shadowing him for about three days had convinced me that librarianship was field that I would want to give a try... when he showed me exactly like the public library was like running a small business...I really found that interesting."- Participant C

Participant C is also one of five participants who credits their respective supervisors and library directors with supporting them in their professional development, whether that be through obtaining the credentials such as the Master's degree or publishing or applying for certain job roles such as tenure-track positions:

> ...He promoted me, he opened up an opportunity for me to get a faculty-level position and with faculty being on tenure-track, you have to do the research, you have to do your publications, you have to do your service and [that] just threw me to just a higher height and opened up so many doors. -Participant C

> ...She was the person who hired me. And she became my boss but at the same time she became a mentor. She's very active in building up the careers and the potential careers of not just people who come to the library in a job specific role, but for people who she knows that they can give back to the profession in a particular way. She'll take them under her wing and say that this one area that you really need to focus on if you want to continue in this profession. - Participant G

Faculty at professional schools are also mentioned as great mentors or as individuals who suggested for the interviewee to consider library school. In addition to his previous supervisors, Participant F includes the faculty of his library school in a list of mentors that aided him with mapping out his library career before it began:

> I think basically people who wanted to get to know me, wanted to get to know my values, and my goals and then helped me. Either one-on-one counseling or suggestions or ideas or networking as far as introducing me to people who could help me to further what I want to accomplish as far as goals. Things like that. - Participant F

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. All of the black male librarians interviewed count professional organizations as heavily impacting the construction of their professional identities. Participants' note that they are current or past members in ALA, the Black Caucus of ALA, the Special Libraries Association (SLA), state professional organizations such as NCLA and specialized subject library associations. Primarily, they value

professional organizations for providing professional development opportunities such as serving on boards or committee work in addition to comradery with other librarians, especially those that are black or black males themselves. They also enjoy the mutual exchange of information. Participant G is very proud of his involvement in his respective organizations and considers participating in them to be very important in regards to understanding one's professional purpose in a larger context and constructing one's own professional identity:

> We can find ourselves trapped in our own institutions, our own library, our own place where we are, where we work. That's basically the long and short of it. We just feel that we're wedded to a particular spot. However, there's such a larger area within librarianship that is not within the boundaries, within the particular buildings in which we work. And that's the connection that can be made with librarians from all over the city, all over the state, all over the country, all over the world that we just don't get if you're just nose down at your desk from 9-5 every day. So building those professional identities and professional relationships is one thing that keeps me, that keeps me going but it also keeps my mind expanded so it's, I know that there's just more than this institution. - Participant G

Likewise, Participant E has been locally and nationally recognized for his service in the profession. In conjunction with the mentorship he received from faculty at his library school and supervisors at previous jobs, he cites affiliation with these organizations as defining keys to his success, especially in comparison to others who for whatever reason have not taken part in the same opportunities:

> It really made a big difference. I think when I talked to other colleagues who did not do that I can tell that there is a difference....I'm a life member of [professional organization]...I've been to all their national conferences and true, most of the people you think of them as colleagues but now they're my friends...I can look back and there are a lot of things, a lot of hurdles that I probably didn't have to jump because I had some good people around me to help me so it made a difference in my career. I know that. - Participant F

Race, Gender and Professional Identity

The intersection of race, gender and professional identity for black male librarians becomes visible through their discussions with the researcher about social identity, their awareness of their minority status, challenges to their professional identity and the importance of their race and gender to the profession.

SOCIAL IDENTITY. The majority of participants define identity as one's own self-concept. They all recognize that their social identities are strongly tied to their race and gender due to the inherent visibility of these characteristics and how this visibility impacts their environment:

> I look at it as two parts: there's one that is perception of who a person or an individual is and then there's also how does that person see themselves. I guess like the example that I would use is just me being an African-American male in a white woman dominated field is that there are certain perceptions about me in general. And then there's also what I've experienced in my time, which I'm sure we'll touch on, in the eight years I've been a librarian. So I'm always aware of who I am when I walk into a room. I'm always aware of what I carry with me when I walk in a room and I guess those things make up identity in some way. -Participant D

> Identity means being true to oneself, whatever that self may be. It also means to be able to serve consciously while being aware of one's surroundings and one's own conditions. So, in a broader sense, I know that I am a black male but I am also a black male within a profession that is largely occupied by people who are not black nor specifically male. - Participant G

They acknowledge the shared cultural heritage that they have with other blacks as informing their social identity, which was bolstered by certain societal contexts. For instance, all interviewees grew up during or immediately after the African-American Civil Rights Movement that occurred in the United States from 1954-68. This historical shift in society determined some of their early social experiences and how they related to black culture:

> I was actually a child of desegregation the first three years of my life. Not my life, of my schooling were in an all black elementary school. So then I was that first year of the experiment of integration. So I had to go from being bused many miles to being able to go to a white school in my community…. So having grown up through that experience, you know middle and high school there was still a lot of racial issues going on…. Even though a lot of people look at me and say hey you sure you're 100% black but I was raised by my parents to always associate myself with African-American and black culture. And so with that being said, I guess my identity is from that perspective and so one thing that stood out. -Participant A

Although one participant was not born in the US but in another country within the Americas, he still has an awareness of the Civil Rights Movement. His definition of identity is shaped by some of the black scholars that influenced and were influenced by the Movement:

> I guess it's how or even, looking back to W.E.B. Du Bois and talking about the veil and having sort of a double identity. I guess your identity is how you perceive yourself... My thinking on identity has been informed by Stuart Hall, Du Bois and different people like that that I've read... - Participant B

> Participants show various levels of integration between their social and professional identities. Some interviewees access their social identities to assist them in their day-to-day work:

> …In this particular position dealing with the homeless and those who are on their last leg down and out, being able to empathize because a lot of them mostly are African-American…I'm more willing to address stuff that a Caucasian female might not. Now I got some staff upstairs they're dead on it. They don't fit this mold but a lot you know white women sometimes afraid to address African-American men and so they turn and look the other way… And I think my experience being an African-American has helped me tremendously in this position from that regard. So I guess you could say that the white administrators that hired me made a good decision or I like to think so. –Participant A

Others speak of how tightly intertwined their social identities and professional identity are:

I've always been male. I've always been African-American. So they're two things that just merged right into me being a professional. It's really hard to separate the two for me. – Participant C

Most of the time when people see me, of course they'll see that I'm black and that I'm male and identify as male. They don't see the librarian portion right away until we start talking about well what do you do for, what do you do for a living? What do you do during the day? That kind of thing. It's just showing yes I do exist in all three personas so taking all that together, yes I am all that but I am so much more than that. So it isn't solely, so I can't say that solely has the black identity, the male identity, the librarian identity; they all intersect. – Participant G

Two academic librarians express a preference for keeping their social identities and professional identity as separate as possible, insisting that their jobs are what they do but not who they are:

I guess it's just with my professional identity, it's just really my job. So I work here but once I leave...for me it was like it's what I do. I like aspects of it [like] helping people [and] helping students but once I leave, I'll be at a hip hop class. I'll do whatever. I'm done. It's not really me. – Participant B

I have a belief and people disagree with this. Some people, some of my colleagues, they are like you know I love my job and this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I'm not gonna ever be that type of person. I love my family. I love lots of things. My job is what I do. It's not who I am. And that's just my personal distinction. – Participant D

AWARENESS OF MINORITY STATUS. All interviewees profess a profound awareness of their dual minority status in the profession. This awareness is most immediately evident in their descriptions of being the only one like themselves---black and male---in a room:

When I first went into library science, I was a rarity. There were no black men hardly in my library science classes... When I took the job as the Media Coordinator for [institution], there were no other male librarians, children's librarians or school librarians. And then certainly no black male school librarians. So I've had that unique perspective that being unique, being that special person I guess you can say. So that influenced my identity I guess you can say. -Participant A

I was at a, at the management council meeting yesterday here... So it's all the library directors and all of the upper management and I was filling in for my boss….so there might have been thirty people at the meeting. I was the only black person. - Participant B

As a person of color, yes I do feel that I'm in the minority because with our faculty here, most of the fifteen years I've been here, I've been the only person of color. - Participant C

... I also know that…. There aren't a lot of black males in librarianship either so we're kind of seen as a minority.-Participant E

...Being in the profession as long as I have, being a male, I've always been very unique. Many times I might be the only male on the staff. Then, as far as being a black or African-American, many times I was the only one in the library---minority, black or African-American. -Participant F

There have been times when that has been true because librarianship has been, especially the last few years, overwhelmingly white and overwhelmingly made up of women. So, at times it can be challenging to be the only person in the room who doesn't really fit that demographic... -Participant G

Participants are often made even more aware of their minority status in the profession through their involuntary roles as either a race representative or spokesman within their respective institutions. One interviewee describes being asked his opinion or selected to participate on teams to fill a demographic hole:

You know there have been instances where I have been asked like my opinions of things and I think that they were trying to get from like a black male perspective. I've been selected to teams based on the fact that when you're looking for a diverse team then you might be asked to do something as a result of your reputation but [also] of the fact that you nicely fit in in a demographic sense. That's how me being a black male librarian might come into play. – Participant E

Another feels somewhat resentful of the weight or burden of representing a diverse population solely based on shared racial background:

I dislike, I've had experiences where I was expected to be a spokesman for African-Americans and the experience. And I'm kind of like that's impossible, you know. Or there was a Black History Month display that needs to get done [and] I kinda get looked at as the person: "Oh [nickname] will do it!" So there's been a lot of those experiences and, it's like I said, I understand that it comes from, it comes from a good place. I do understand that it comes from a good place but I also at the same time kind of push back in my way of saying that you know my response is my response. It's me answering for me. I'm not answering for a group of people. - Participant D

A third is overwhelmed by the responsibility because he feels that not only must he represent a race of people but also himself individually:

So just being the only one sometimes can be a little overwhelming but I feel in some ways that I was prepared for that because when I was in grade school, high school, and not necessarily college per say to an extent but there weren't very many at the time. So I knew that I had to, be able to, not just in that trope of being the only representative to the race or anything like that but I knew that I needed to more often than others represent myself in a way that people would remember me for the right reasons. – Participant G

Two academic librarians lament their minority status within the profession, exposing their mixed feelings over the lack of natural comradery and comfort that comes with having a shared social background:

It probably would be, maybe it would be probably good to have sort of more role models or just people to commiserate with sometimes…at least here I did have, when I started at [current institution] in management there were three of us…So it would be nice to have more people to connect with professionally but yeah there just really isn't, it probably would make me feel better about the profession. - Participant B

I've lived lots of places and people are nice for the most part and I feel that like there is, it's really nice when someone understands you without you having to explain where you're coming from or how you experience the world. I feel a lot of times that when you, just in basic conversations, not with everybody but some people you have to kind of explain what you meant by that or kind of unpack your thoughts completely to somebody. You know, it's nice to not have to do that sometimes and just make a comment and it not be taken some kind of way. It's just like, "oh yeah I understand where you're coming from" and it's just understood. And it's just a comfortable feeling.- Participant D

At the same time, they also recognize that the profession's demographic composition is

only a reflection of American society's struggle with racial equality:

> Well, I just know there's not much diversity in the profession or not a lot. But then
> in general too… It's just a symptom of society. It's very structured. I like living in
> the US but there are a lot of things that are kind of backwards. [Native country] has
> that same thing too. The higher up you go, the less of us you see so... It's part, part
> of it is, there's not very many, especially not many black males... So it's just, it's
> just the structure... hopefully things, I want things to get better but it is what it is…
> I guess I don't put it as much on the profession. –Participant B

> I work with people who are predominantly white females… and I'm always aware
> of different social dynamics. I can't really tell you fully of that maybe it's just part
> of being African-American in this country. But I'm always aware of those different
> dynamics when I'm having conversations. – Participant D

In some ways, professional organizations serve as a respite from the solitude of the

black male librarians' minority status within their own institutions. One academic librarian

acknowledges that conferences provide the opportunity to connect with other black males

while another voiced sincere joy over the seeming increase in their presence at conferences:

> When I used to go to SLA, I used to run into a lot more people because that was a
> much bigger organization and a much bigger conference. There's was more
> emphasis on diversity at SLA. I remember, I can't remember the name of the
> professor. He was E.J. Josey… he had an impact on SLA. There was a lot more
> there. The conference I go to now I don't really see, you know, see a lot of people
> but if I was at large conferences I would try to connect, probably connect more with
> people. – Participant B

> There are more now than I would have ever dreamed of because when I go to ALA
> and other conferences, it feels good to not be the only one in the room where you
> really have to search real hard to see another African-American male librarian. –
> Participant C

CHALLENGES TO PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY. The scarcity of black male librarians

within librarianship has meant that many of the interviewees face challenges to their

professional identity that are born out of the visibility of social identities. This visibility conflicts with others' preconceived notions about who librarians are generally thought to be (white females). The black male librarians interviewed report experiencing the following challenges:

(1) Subordinate staff demonstrating distrust in their leadership or outright contempt for their superior job role.

> [There is a] white male staff person who kind of challenges me frequently because he thinks that he's far more intelligent than I am… it's not blatant but I can tell there's some hidden racial things going on there where he thinks that maybe he should be in the position instead of me. – Participant A

> I know racism still exists in the South. I don't know if this is something people experience wherever they are but I can tell you I have definitely experienced it here even to the fact of when I was promoted to head of the department here. People who had been my colleagues began to treat me very differently when I became their supervisor, which really gave me the sense that it was ok as long as you were my peer but I'm definitely not gonna accept you as my supervisor. And I've been in this role almost two years now and I'm still experiencing some problems with some people that I have worked in this department with since 2005. –Participant C

(2) Patrons dismissing them at the reference desk as actual librarians or questioning their credentials.

> There would be challenges to, I think I experienced some challenges to my identity as a librarian. There would be the perception sometimes that I didn't have a professional degree. And you know, I've had some instances where people have walked in and said, "I need to talk to a librarian." And I'm like "I am a librarian." And they're like "Oh! I didn't realize that." – Participant E

> I have had that happen before where someone, they asked me where I went to school at one time. And I just, I told them. I was like I went to a top five school, I'm ok with that for my field of study…You know they'll ask you questions and they're not exactly sure they think you can answer. I've had people question me at the reference desk. I'm at the reference desk answering a question and all. They'll be like, "Can I speak to a librarian?" I'm like, "You are speaking to a librarian!" The answer isn't gonna change. I don't know in those situations if it was the answer they didn't like or whatever. - Participant D

(3) Professional or personal contacts emote surprise, confusion or amazement when an

interviewee reveals he is a librarian.

> Well I guess sometimes like when you tell someone you're a librarian, sometimes I always hear "oh I wasn't expecting" because I don't fit a lot of people's mold or whatever they think of as a librarian. – Participant B

> It's interesting when I venture out on to campus and I start talking to professors from other departments is where it usually gets interesting because... they kind of have their perceptions of libraries in the first place and…then it's also kind of like, "Wow there's a, there's also a black male in front of me right now." Sometimes I've had a few conversations with people where it may have been a challenge for them for whatever reason – Participant D

While not seen as a challenge by the participant who experienced it, patrons can also be

reluctant to work with a black male librarian on certain sensitive topics involving race

and/or gender:

> ...There may have been one or two patrons who probably thought that they wanted to work with someone who was a little bit older or they felt like their topic might be a little too sensitive. It might be a topic related to KKK or sexuality but I didn't see it as a challenge or anything. - Participant F

Interviewees accept these challenges to their professional identities with a proactive

kind of patience rather than with outrage or indignation. They focus on their immediate

tasks and purpose as librarians. They are persistent in their efforts to overcome

preconceived notions about them based solely on their visible social identities. In the end,

they often see that their good work speaks for itself and in many instances they provide a

learning opportunity for those who initially doubted their qualifications, talents and

abilities:

Well they sometimes come up with low expectations when they see that the person at the desk is an African-American, especially an African-American man, sometimes especially like professors or a successful business person. They may come up with low expectations of your ability to help them. So you have to take on that challenge and show them that "hey, I'm here for a reason." Usually, my experience is that they have all left enlightened I think. – Participant A

I'm just gonna be honest. It didn't really affect me because of my upbringing because my father just always taught me you go to work to work. …. So with me, I was just patient…But just in nature, those things don't seem to bother me very much because I try to get along with everybody but my main function or my main role is to come in to do the best job I can. And I've always been very customer-centered so it's always whoever my patrons are that's where my focus is and if some of my co-workers don't come onboard with me or really care for me or they pull back a little bit, I really have to let them have that space. They usually come around because I'm here to work and I just try to do the best that I can at work. – Participant C

In general, all participants describe their current and past work environments as wholly pleasant and collegial in spite of the challenges that they otherwise have faced from the public or individual subordinates. Four participants say that they had never experienced discrimination professionally and believe that their dual minority status does not hinder in any way their potential for advancement:

I think every university I've worked at has really went out of their way to help the minorities, whether it's student, faculty or staff, to feel wanted and comfortable. I have been very fortunate. Now, I have had some work assignments where I may have been asked to supervise someone and it may have been related to the fact that that person was a minority and I was minority….but other than that I would say no. I've been very comfortable…if I was going up for reappointment, I got reappointment. If I was going for tenure, I got tenure. - Participant F

There are lots of opportunities out there for different areas of the field you may want to pursue. I'm just glad that I ended up in the field that I am because I feel my skill set was the primary motivator there. And I felt like those particular skills that I have as far as working in a technical field of librarianship where you're not really seen, that's been fine for me... if I wanted to move into reference or circulation or special collections then I don't feel that the opportunity to move in any those directions would be hindered by my race per se or the fact that I'm male. It's just

that the opportunities that are out there have been such that where my abilities and my work have been recognized and not just the fact that I happen to be black or that I happen to be male. -Participant G

Among these four, two of the participants, a public librarian and an academic librarian, recognize that while discrimination has been absent in their experience in librarianship, they know that their stories may not be representative of all black male librarians. For this reason, they were cautious in shading their experience as free of negative bias. They frequently describe themselves as fortunate in recognition that their experience could be significantly distinct:

> It's funny because like I've heard of others and you didn't really ask about others and I don't want to speculate too much on others. But I know that there are other black males probably not as fortunate as I. I just feel like from my own perspective, being with the library system that I've been a part of,…I felt like I've been given like free reign to do whatever it is that I like to do and whatever it is that not only helps my own interest but also facilitates the interest of the library. So that's a question that I almost feel kind of uncomfortable answering in a way because I know that my experiences aren't necessarily representative of all black male librarians.- Participant E

> You know, I've been where I am now going on 17 years. I feel like I've been very fortunate. Now I have had friends in college who have told me about some bad situations but me personally I have not, no I have not [experienced discrimination]. – Participant F

Another public librarian feels that he is protected by the absence of a good ol' boy network at his institution because the top administrators are also black:

> ...When it comes down to that race component, I think that kind of limits it to a certain extent because they know that if you go up…there's just not any good ol' boy network for them to turn to. I'll just put it that way. As in certain professions, many other professions there's the good ol' boy network. They can latch onto that, then other things start determining professional growth. But by having an African-American at the top level then there's not that good ol' boy network for them to tap into so I feel comfortable in that regard I guess... I've been blessed in that regard that I have not have had to go up against that. Even in the school system there was adequate representation of African-Americans in charge and so not really. I have not really experienced that. – Participant A

The remaining three of the interviewees are hesitant to claim with absolute certainty that difficult situations in their respective work environments were in fact solely due to racial discrimination. For instance, Participant C, an academic librarian with thirty years in the profession, described a multitude of scenarios in which he dealt with negative bias but was averse to immediately associating that bias with racial discrimination. He depicts being excluded by colleagues at various institutions and his response to the exclusion:

> When I first started, it was a very white female dominated profession... and it was just a combination of being feared and a combination of you don't belong here or we've never had a male; we've never had a black male before. I dealt with quite a few situations where I was just completely excluded from things. Sometimes with me that kind of challenge just makes me work even harder because if you want to get me motivated, tell me what I can't do especially if it's something I want to do… So when people were doing that sort of excluding me and you walk in the room and everybody stops talking all of a sudden or I even had one job and I'd walk into the break room and then everybody would suddenly end their breaks. I just decided that that was them. It had nothing to do with me and almost every one of those situations once they got to know me, all of that changed. -

When probed about the sum of the incidents of exclusion and challenges to his role as supervisor by white subordinates, he had difficulties dissecting the motivations behind the bias in terms of race and gender:

> …I don't play the race card often… a lot of times I think, and I don't know if some of it was being, by being African-American and male sometimes you don't know exactly which one it is. But like I say those times when I was in an all-female environment [were] the times when I felt a little excluded. I really don't know which was bothering them more because in both of those situations they were all white females so I don't know if it was because I was male or because I was African-American or a combination of the two… I do admit in the academic environment I have felt like it was more because of race because it wouldn't be of gender because we have, we have so many men here but I think that's just kind of, I don't even know if it is that.

He opts instead to link the bias to the presence of cliques in academia:

I really didn't expect in the academic world there would be so many little cliques here and there and so many little groups but there seems to be a lot of that. And because I guess I'm so self-assured in my identity that some of these groups I don't fit in because I just don't have the same common interest and I'm not the type of person that I try to fit in… So I do feel like in certain ways if you're not in certain groups you are treated a little bit differently and I think a lot of that, once again, I don't think that has any... that may not have anything to do with the race or gender. It just might have to do with I don't have those same interests.

Yet, by the time he finished his thoughts, he settles on the idea that the negative bias he has experienced has in fact been racial discrimination:

But I think a lot of that is because of race because I am an African-American male. I'm very proud of my African-American heritage and I don't try to assimilate in a way. I'm a good ol' southern country boy and that's who I am always gonna be. I carry that with me wherever I go and I proudly wear my southern blackness on my shoulder because that is my identity. That's who I am and a lot of people can't relate to that but that's ok with me because I'm not going to try to change who I am to appease other people.

Two of the other participants, also academic librarians, pinpoint to the conspicuousness of diversity initiatives in universities in the United States during their recruitment as instances in which they experienced bias. They do not assert with clarity whether they deemed this bias as a positive or negative:

I found the States to be [more sensitive to diversity], maybe because there's a bit of pressure put on people to have some sort of diversity because…I've never had an interview in the US like the one that I had at, and it wasn't in an academic library, but that one at [special library] the brokerage arm of [financial institution], where someone said to me in the interview "Oh we're surprised you're black. We thought you were Italian because of your last name." You just don't say that in an interview. No one has ever said that here. The interview experience has been pretty good here I guess. –Participant B

I don't know if it's discrimination nor do I know if I could say something with complete 100% assuredness either. I know that in some ways being a black male and being a librarian, it sounds so horrible when I say this, it's, it does give some institutions a way to check a box. They kind of get the two for one. – Participant D

Some of the black male librarians interviewed say that their race and gender has

been valuable to them in the hiring process. Participant C and Participant E proclaim that

institutional emphasis on diversity has privileged them in some ways:

> …When I was a school librarian, I worked, well my area of specialty has always been children and young adult literature so I never had a desire but work in an elementary or middle school…So when I applied for jobs I will be honest, I got a lot of interviews and some of the principals would come right out and say your grades look good and your experience looks good but knowing that you're a male was one of the things that we really wanted to have because we wanted children to have this male experience being in elementary school. Then a lot of times when they found out I was a male of color, they were even more excited. Like I say, most of the times I think it was a real plus. –Participant C

> I think that being a black male has the potential to have its advantages with organizations who really tend to focus on diversity and you know folks who are really interested in elevating different races and sort of kicking the door of societal expectations. I used to often hear quite a bit that as a black male in librarianship I can get very far but I still kind of believe that. – Participant E

Bias has played a role in the opportunities for advancement for a number of participants.

Participant A and E, two public librarians, and Participant D, an academic librarian, have

differing opinions on whether this role has been positive or negative. The former see their

race and gender as beneficial, and the latter sees his as a potential professional hindrance:

> If I were just a white man, that's not anything new to the profession. They're used to having male directors, white male directors, white male managers and so forth. If I were just an African-American, they're used to seeing African-American females in libraries because, of course librarianship is a female-dominated profession... So, with that being the case, I think it's equally that I'm a male and I'm African-American. – Participant A

> I actually think that both being a black and a male can help in a profession where black males are sort of lacking. I've seen it at least with my particular organization, and granted, I've only worked for one organization during what I consider to be my

professional career but I've seen where it definitely, where being a black male has paid for me. – Participant E

I rarely see any of them [African-Americans in academic institutions] getting to the administration level. They may be a department head but I've never seen anybody at a predominately white institution, a person of color be the director of the library. I think that's, that to me is like, there's sort of a glass ceiling there of some sort. Not moving up. – Participant D

Beyond race and gender, participants are also confident that their other personal traits, be it skills or experience, have also garnered them preference in the profession:

…I come up with program ideas for special music programming events and it's all been very well-supported. So I would like to think that that has not been a factor the fact that I am kind of unique but I think that it probably has been because they don't question my ability to pull it off I guess you can say because they know I have a track record for one thing. So even that notwithstanding, I think they realize that I have that passion I guess and I'm gonna make it successful. – Participant A

I got in because I have lots of experience and I've worked in engineering libraries. So when I applied for jobs, not a lot of people applied for jobs and not a lot of people have the background that I have so that helps me out because not a lot of people that go to library school focus on engineering and business. So I have two of those so it's easier for me job wise and stuff that way. – Participant B

IMPORTANCE OF RACE AND GENDER. As shown in **Table 3.1**, 71% of participants report that their race and gender equally influence their professional identity while two participants were evenly split between race and gender. They find high value in these social identities and their minority status in the profession, especially in terms of how they can leverage it through outreach, change public perceptions of the field and advocacy for librarians in general.

Which is more influential to your professional identity?	
Response	# of Participants
Race	1
Gender	1
Both Equally	5

Table 3.1

Two of the five participants who see both their race and gender as equally influential to their professional identities indicate that these social identities allow them to create or contribute to outreach efforts in throughout their career. Participant A depicts himself as an activist for African-American youth during his time as a school librarian who started initiatives to help them at school:

> Well my director, the coordinator for all the school librarians, she was very proud of the fact that she had hired me and I was doing such a great job. And I started doing programs targeting disadvantaged youth. I moved out of the realm of just being a school librarian and I kind of became a kind of activist for African-American youth, underprivileged and at risk, so I designed this program to kind of encourage them to work hard in school.

Participant C currently acts as a mentor for students of color, especially male students, at his institution:

> I think the combination of the two has just really been great because a lot of time, and still here on campus, there are a lot things and groups that come on campus and visit the library. There are fields or areas that I'm not involved in but they want to have this Africa-American male librarian because if I am speaking to group of Latino students, especially to a group of African-American students, they really want people to see that they do want people of color here in the library. There's a big push on our campus for mentorship for African-American males so I do a lot of research sessions and things just for that African-American male mentor group. So those are the times when I feel like my race and gender a lot of times do go hand-in-hand. A lot of times they just really enjoy seeing that there are people of color on campus and especially in libraries.

A few participants mention that the visibility of their social identities enable them to contribute to changes in the public perception of the field. Their presence means that the profession can accurately reflect the diversity of the communities that they serve and society as whole. Thus, as suggested by Participant E, being serviced by or encountering a black male librarian would no longer be a surprise or shock but rather a normal interaction and, as Participant G highlights, could inspire other males of color to join the profession:

> A great deal from my perspective in public libraries, a great deal of the males that I see on a daily basis are black males and it's great for them to see similar faces…I share this with you to tell you that I was bowling against someone one time who couldn't believe that I was a librarian and their exact quote to me was that "I've never seen men like me working in libraries!" I thought that that was a profound statement because it said a lot about what his perception of what librarians are meant to be. I definitely think that our profession could benefit from the experiences that black males bring to librarianship. – Participant E

> One aspect that just cannot be understated is the value of having librarians of color and librarians who can bring those kinds of institutions...well, rather, bring to institutions they're own background and sense of diversity because the country is changing and the populations that libraries serve are changing…It's important for us to be represented by the people who we come to us for research needs and to get answers. Most people would feel more comfortable seeing a person who looks like them helping them with a particular research need…So, that ties back in with the representation aspect because those students who see me doing what I do as a librarian would be encouraged to go back and find their own career and their own interest of study and let that build their own professional identity in wherever they work. – Participant G

The one interviewee that cites his gender as being more influential talks about being able to voice his opinions and concerns from the male perspective, especially when it came to advocating for higher pay. He admonishes institutions for not offering a salary in line with the required credentials and skill set of the profession and expresses a belief that this

is mainly due to it being female-dominated. He proclaims that male librarians have the

opportunity to continue pushing for higher pay for all librarians:

> I think being male plays a bigger part quite honestly, especially when it comes to voicing opinions and trying to make sure that we're heard or sometimes different concerns overall from a male perspective.…I think one of the biggest concerns…It's really about money. With this being a woman dominated field… I've actually heard an administrator say "Well they're women, they're married"…Well that's irrelevant as far as I'm concerned because we have the degree, you say it's a terminal degree, you say it's a requirement of the job. I was like, "but you're paying us these rock-bottom rates." So that's where I think, I think my male colleagues have been more outspoken about getting that money, trying to get more money across the board for everybody. -Participant D

DISCUSSION

This research primarily seeks to fill the knowledge gap in LIS literature on black male librarians in general and, secondarily, the influence of race and gender on their professional identities. Career literature has defined professional identity, theorized about how it is constructed and provided some insight into its importance in the professional lives of minorities. Yet, even in LIS research that specifically focuses on the professional lives of black male librarians, the literature has still fallen short of specifically investigating the intersectionality of race, gender and professional identity, especially in terms of the how race and gender contribute to the construction of black male librarians' professional identities.

As postulated in Schein's career development perspective theory, society and culture had an influence on the interaction between participants and their employing organizations over time (1978). Study participants had come to understand their social identities in terms of their race and gender very early on in their lives and are constantly reminded of their place in the world, even in their professional life, based on these social identities. Echoing the results of Ball's study (1992), there is a constant tension between some of the black male librarians' *ascribed statuses*---primarily their race and secondarily their gender---and their *achieved statuses*--the professional credentials that they have earned, they highly value and was often the demarcating line between professional and paraprofessional in librarianship. These challenges to their professional identities are born

out of their visibly unique status in the profession as dual minorities, of which all study participants profess a profound awareness. In response to these challenges, participants indicate practicing various impression management strategies in order to correct perceptions of them and in some ways counteract stereotypes, particularly about their competence, similar to that of the subjects in 'Doyin Atewologun & Singh's (2010) study.

There is nuance in the way that their awareness of their minority status affects how integrated their social and professional identities are. The two participants, Participant B and Participant D, who portray their feelings about the profession as conflicted due to their noticeable minority status also report the least amount of integration of their social and professional identities. In contrast, Participant E and Participant F are the two participants who most evidently displayed high identity integration and seemed the most satisfied with the profession. These results seem to reflect the identity integration theory outlined by *Sacharin et al* (2004) in terms of the conflict between identities when the identities vary in importance to the individual. For Participant B and Participant D, their social identities appear more significant to them than their professional ones.

In addition to the interviewees' social identities, the combination of early exposure to libraries, mentorship and professional organization membership also have had a significant impact on the construction of their professional identities. These components first inspired and then continue to sustain and to empower them to build successful careers, ultimately helping to determine their concept of appropriate and ideal professional skills, attitudes and values to acquire. The lack of mirror role models (other black male librarians) does not impede their ability to construct their professional identities, possibly due to family influences, the mentorship that they received early in their careers, and their

participation in professional organizations. However, there is a longing among the majority of participants for more similar faces among their colleagues. It is not clear as to whether they experience redefinition (Slay & Smith 2011) or adaptation (Ibarra 1999) in defining their own occupational rhetorics. They did envision or create a repertoire of possible selves (Slay & Smith 2011), which was informed by their undergraduate education and personal institutional preferences, despite the majority of interviewees not pursuing their ideal self-concepts of themselves as librarians after receiving their degree for a variety of reasons.

In the United States, the prevalent racism and the socio-political shift that occurred due to the Civil Rights Movement of the twentieth century has encouraged more emphasis on institutional diversity in the twenty-first. Librarianship has not been immune to this societal context. This emphasis, or enthusiasm for expanding the amount of underrepresented populations in the profession, has led to the participating black male librarians perceiving of their value in librarianship as very high due to the conspicuous recruitment effort of various institutions that are seeking to diversify their ranks. Although one participant believes there is a glass ceiling for Black male librarians, participants' have generally been awarded preference in their job search and advancement due to the rarity of the presence of their social identities in librarianship. In turn, the participating black male librarians' weigh their professional identities very heavily on how proactive and engaged in the field they are and in their work at their respective institutions through mentorship, outreach and even activism, with many often tapping into the unique perspectives that their race and/or gender has afforded them.

Ultimately, the results of this study could help improve the development of institutional diversity, recruitment, retention and outreach initiatives and policies by

employing LIS organizations and professional schools alike. As building blocks to further refining minority recruitment and retention programs, leaders of LIS institutions should give special attention to the emphasis placed by the research participants on early library exposure, mentorship and professional organization participation as motivators to join the field and support networks that sustain them in it. Furthermore, in terms of good internal human resource policy, it would be wise for the same institutional leaders to familiarize themselves with the challenges to professional identity expressed by research participants so that, at the very least, there is an articulated institutional awareness and sensitivity to these concerns and, at most, methods are developed to mitigate some of these challenges within institutional culture.

Lastly, LIS institutions could continue or begin to capitalize on the presence of minority employees who feel as compelled as the interviewees to engage in community outreach. More outreach could contribute to a more accurate public perception of the field beyond that of an "old white lady profession." Outreach can also spark interest among community minorities in LIS. Since early exposure and mentorship were contributing factors to the participants choosing librarianship as a career, it is plausible that the more interactions minorities have with librarians like themselves then the more likely that some of those minorities will be inspired to seek out a career in LIS for themselves. If that is the case, then the presence of these outreach-inspired minorities eventually would reduce the chance that a Black male librarian will continue to find that he is the only one in the room of various LIS institutions.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to describe how the dual minority status of black male librarians within librarianship, a field that is dominated by white females, influence the construction of their professional identities. The seven Black male librarians who participated in this qualitative descriptive study provided perspectives on how they came to learn of the profession, why they chose to pursue it, the challenges that they face as a result of their minority status in librarianship, how they overcome these challenges and why their presence in the profession is important. They reiterated many of the themes presented in Ball (1992) and Davis-Kendrick's (2009) studies in these particular areas but also in regards to the intersectionality of their race and gender and the construction of their professional identities.

The study was not able to examine the intersection of race, gender and sexuality although at least one participant expressed that his sexuality was also a factor in building his professional identity. Sexuality was outside the scope of this research. Since career literature is filled with theoretical frameworks on professional identity, additional research could test professional identity construction theory within field of librarianship generally or a target population such as Black male librarians. In order to produce more representative results, the study needs to be expanded to include a larger sample of Black male librarians within North Carolina or the United States.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Participant: _____

Date: _____

Age: _____
Job Role: _____
Type of Institution: _____
Years of Experience: _____
Undergraduate Major: _____

Introduction

I am a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill graduate student who is conducting a study on the professional identities of black male librarians for my Master's paper research. Prior to my arrival, you should have received a consent form for you to review the details of the study's purpose and procedures in full. It states that I will ask you ten questions related to your professional identity as a black male librarian and may have follow-up questions based on your responses. The entire interview will be recorded using a digital device and later transcribed. I do not foresee this process taking more than 30-45 minutes. If you agree to continue with this study, I will take your signed consent form and will proceed with the interview.

I. Building a Rapport

1. What initially attracted you to the field?

2. Once you decided to become a librarian, what type of librarian did you imagine that you would become?

II. Professional Identity

3. In order to get a sense of how you define professional identity, I would first like to know what does being a professional mean to you.

4. How do you define identity?

5. From your own experience, have there been any significant influences that have helped to build your identity as a librarian?

6. From your own experience, have there been significant challenges to your identity as a librarian?

III. Minority Status and Professional Identity

7. Do you perceive yourself as a minority in this field because of your race and/or gender?

8. Do you think that your race and/or gender influence your professional identity?

9. Is there one of these two identities, being black and being male, which you would say is more and/or less influential on your professional identity?

10. Have you experienced any type of discrimination in your professional life because of one or both of these two identities?

APPENDIX II: CODING SCHEME

Coding Scheme			
Concept	Theme	Definition	# of Participants
Professional identity	Credentials	Subject defines professional in terms of education or training.	5
	Job related to education	Subject defines professional in terms of working in the field for which a person has received a degree	4
	Job satisfaction	Subject defines professional in terms of enjoying the work	3
	Preconceived notions of librarianship	Subject details assumption he had about the profession before entering it	4
	Necessary professional identity traits	Subject lists specific personality traits, skills, behaviors, etc. that the profession requires	7
Professional identity influences	Early library exposure	Subject discusses experiences with libraries and librarians prior to entering the field	6
	Family influences	Subject discusses a family member's involvement with libraries	3
	Ideal concept of self as a librarian	Subject details the type of librarian he thought he would be or the type of institution that he would work at	7
	Recognition of society influences	Subject mentions society explicitly	5
	Related to undergraduate major	Subject mentions that he was seeking a way to use his undergraduate degree	6
	Referral to library science program	Subject says a library science program was suggested to him	2

Coding Scheme			
Concept	Theme	Definition	# of Participants
Professional identity influences (cont.)	Professional organizations	Subject discusses participation in professional organization and their signification	5
	Mentorship	Subject discusses individuals that supported him in the field	7
	Self-concept	Subject details or gives hints of how he views himself	7
	Disconnect between identities	Subject separates social and professional identities	2
	Interaction of Identities	Subject acknowledges intersection of professional and social identities	6
Race, gender and professional Identity	Awareness of minority status	Subject expresses that he feels like a minority in the profession	7
	Challenges to identity	Subject acknowledges and/or describes difficult or surprising situations due to either his professional and/or social identities	7
	Discrimination	Subject acknowledges and/or describes instances where his treatment is or not determined by his social identities	7
	Importance of minority status	Subject discusses the value of his social identities in his profession	5
	Race	Subject mentions race as informing his self-concept	5
	Gender	Subject mentions gender as informing his self-concept	6