

EXAMINING CHARACTERISTICS, MOTIVATIONS, AND CAREER GOALS OF
BLACK STUDENTS WHO ATTEND HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND LAW
SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

RACHEL UPTON: Examining Characteristics, Motivations, and Career Goals of Black Students Who Attend Historically Black Colleges and Law Schools
(Under the direction of A. T. Panter)

The present study uses aggregate analyses and a national sample of incoming Black law students to examine characteristics, motivations, and career goals of students who matriculate into law school from an undergraduate historically Black college or university (HBCU) versus an undergraduate traditionally White institution (TWI), and those students who attend a historically Black law school (HBLS) versus a traditionally White law school (TWLS). Students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI pursued a law degree to help influence their community, and reported fewer experiences of discrimination during their undergraduate years. Students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS experienced more discrimination during the law admissions process, and were less likely to pursue a law degree to work for social justice. Study implications provide an increased understanding of professional motivations of Black students and can be useful to HBCU and HBLS admissions officers in designing programs for outreach and academic support.

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Examining Characteristics, Motivations, and Career Goals of Black Students Attending Historically Black Colleges and Law School

An emerging literature addresses the historical development of HBCUs and the characteristics of students who attend these institutions (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2007; Allen, 1992; Allen & Jewell, 2002; Allen, Gasman, Baez, & Viernes Turner, 2008; Astin & Cross, 1981; Baskerville, Berger & Smith, 2008; Evans & Evans, 2002; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Fryer & Greenstone, 2007; Greer, 2008; Kim, 2002; Palmer, 2008; Sissoko & Shiau, 2005). As of now, no studies have examined the attributes of Black professionals who attend an undergraduate HBCU or a historically Black law school.

Using a national sample of incoming Black law students and aggregate analysis models (Hancock & Mueller, 2006; Muthén & Satorra, 1995) to account for dependencies of students within institutions, this investigation examines four questions: (a) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who matriculate into law school from a historically Black college or university (HBCU) versus a traditionally White institution (TWI)? (b) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who attend a historically Black law school (HBLS) versus a traditionally White law school (TWLS)? (c) What factors and career goals motivate students who matriculate from a HBCU as compared to a TWI to go to law school? (d) And what factors and career goals motivate students who attend a HBLS as compared to a TWLS to go to law school? Student psychological self-evaluations are also considered as predictors of undergraduate and law school enrollment. Psychological self-evaluations are measured using the following four

domains: ethnic identity development, experiences with and expectations about discrimination, peer and intergroup relations, and academic performance.

The first study aim is to examine student- and school-level characteristics associated with Blacks who matriculate into law school. We are interested in examining whether certain student- and school-level characteristics are associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. For instance, do differences exist in the number of law schools to which students are admitted when comparing students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus students who matriculate into law school from a TWI? We are also interested in examining whether certain student and school-level characteristics are associated with attending a HBLS versus a TWLS. For example, do differences exist in family household income or the number of law schools to which students are admitted when comparing students who attend a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS? Characteristics of students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, and of students who attend a HBLS versus a TWLS that were established as study correlates include: a student's age, whether a student was born in the U.S., gender, students' family household income, the diversity of locations across the U.S. where students applied to law school, student LSAT scores, the number of law schools applied to, the number of law schools to which students were accepted, the number of students who received undergraduate student aid, the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid, the racial diversity index (RDI) of an institution, the selectivity of an institution, school tuition, and school size.

The second study aim is to examine professional motivating factors and career goals of Black students (e.g., students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, and students who attend a HBLS versus a TWLS). For instance, is matriculating into

law school from a HBCU as opposed to a TWI associated with wanting to work for social justice? Are students who attend from a HBLs versus a TWLS more likely to want to help influence their community? Factors and career goals that motivate students to go to law school that were established as study correlates include: attending law school to work for justice for all people, attending law school for the potential to help influence the community, and acquiring a law-related job that allows students to receive professional training and to become an expert in their field.

Examining characteristics, motivations, and career goals of Black professionals who matriculate into law school (e.g., students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, and students who attend a HBLs versus a TWLS) is important for several reasons. First, numerous researchers have investigated Blacks who matriculate into a HBCU (Berger & Milem, 2000; Cokley, 2000; Fleming, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Wilson, 1994), yet no studies to date have examined Black professionals who matriculate into a historically Black law school. Extending researchers' knowledge of the characteristics of Blacks who matriculate into law school from HBCUs, and of Blacks who attend HBLs is important because HBCUs and HBLs have played a unique, historical role in the social stratification structure of the Black community.

Approximately 50% of all Black professional lawyers and 80% of Black judges in the U.S. are graduates from HBCUs and HBLs (Fryer & Greenstone, 2007). Moreover, nearly 18% of Blacks attending U.S. colleges and universities graduate from HBCUs, and roughly 28% of all Blacks who apply to law school are HBCU graduates (Ehrenberg, 1997).

Second, prior research has found that HBCUs and HBLs have lower attrition rates (Allen, 1992; Fleming, 1984), lower tuition costs than traditionally White institutions

(Freeman, 2005), and HBCUs and HBLSSs prepare students for nontraditional careers in social service occupations (Wenglinsky, 1996, p. 93). HBCUs and HBLSSs also integrate community service into their mission statements and view their campuses as an extension of the Black community (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). In spite of the purported benefits of attending HBCUs and HBLSSs, the future of these institutions remains uncertain (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2007). The *U.S. v. Fordice* 1992 Supreme Court decided that state legislatures must provide “educational justification” for the subsistence of HBCUs and HBLSSs or to integrate them fully (Fryer & Greenstone, 2007, p. 1). This decision has contributed to continual pressure to receive state and federal funds needed to keep HBCUs and HBLSSs in operation. Therefore, examining the characteristics, motivations, and career goals of HBCU and HBLSS students is important because the potential eradication of historically Black institutions could deny students the opportunity to receive a unique educational experience that focuses on community activism and social service.

Third, differentiating the attributes of Black professionals (e.g., students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI and students who attend a HBLSS versus a TWLS) who enter into law school is useful to HBCU and HBLSS admissions and academic officers who are seeking ways to increase their enrollments and attract top Black matriculates (Freeman & Thomas, 2002). During the 20 years following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court* decision, Blacks participated in a second “Great Migration” such that by 1975, three-quarters of all Blacks in college were attending traditionally White institutions (Allen & Jewell, 2002, p. 249). Prior research has found that one of the main reasons that Blacks attend HBCUs (and HBLSSs) is financial need (Freeman, 2005; Gurin & Epps, 1975; McDonough, 2004; Nettles, 1998; Tobolowsky, Outcalt, &

McDonough, 2005), yet the current economic recession has caused enrollments at HBCUs and HBLSSs to fall because a higher proportion of Blacks and other disadvantaged students are having difficulty applying for and receiving student loans (Dewan, 2009). Researchers have also found that Blacks are more likely to attend a traditionally White institution as opposed to a HBCU or a HBLS because of governmental initiatives such as affirmative action (Palmer, 2008), and because students at historically Black institutions are often perceived to be less prepared academically (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2007; Freeman, 2005; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Sinha, 2006; Smothers, 1994).

Finally, examining the characteristics of Blacks who enter into law school is important because of the under representation of Blacks and Black HBCU students in U.S. law schools (*Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 2001; Johnson, 2007). In 2008 the acceptance rate for all Blacks who applied to law school was nearly 52%, whereas the acceptance rate for Black HBCU graduates was around 38%. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (2002) identified the use of LSAT scores in admissions decisions as the main reason for this discrepancy. When comparing minority students who entered into law school with lower LSAT scores to minority students who entered into law school with LSAT scores that were comparable to White students, Wightman (1997) found no significant differences in graduation and bar passage rates of minorities who would not have been accepted into law school if admissions policies were based solely on LSAT scores or undergraduate GPA. Thus, examining Blacks who successfully matriculate into law school is useful when attempting to explain how Black undergraduates and Black HBCU students, in particular, can increase their chances of getting into law school.

Brief History and Background of HBCUs and HBLSSs

Most HBCUs and HBLs have existed since Reconstruction (1865-1877) and rely on state and federal funding. Evans and Evans (2002, p. 3) described the early stages of HBCUs and HBLs as follows: “when compared with other colleges and universities, HBCUs (and HBLs) were not designed to succeed. Rather, they were established as ‘holding institutions’ to appease Black students who would not matriculate into TWIs.” From the outset, HBCUs and HBLs have been under funded and overlooked (Palmer, 2008) with regard to the allotment of necessary resources such as funds for building construction, denial of state accreditation, and restricted curricular offerings. Prior to *Brown*, HBCUs and HBLs were the only institutions that provided educational access for Blacks and other Minorities (Allen & Jewell, 2002; Clotfelter, 2004). In the decades following *Brown* most Blacks of college age resided in the South where racial segregation and college admission barriers continued to make it difficult for Blacks to attend TWIs (e.g., *Hopwood v. Texas*, 1996; Gurin & Epps, 1975).

According to Fryer and Greenstone (2007), there are now 103 undergraduate HBCUs (53 private and 50 public institutions) in the U.S. that are responsible for approximately 22% of the bachelor’s degrees awarded to Blacks. HBCUs also represent approximately 3% of the institutions of higher education in the U.S, and nearly 2% of the total U.S. college enrollment (Sissoko & Shiau, 2005, p. 1).

When examining historically Black law schools (HBLs), the American Bar Association (Gieger, 2006) reports that out of approximately 184 total U.S. law schools there are currently six ABA approved historically Black law schools (HBLs), including: (1) Howard University School of Law; (2) Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University; (3) North Carolina Central University School of Law; (4) Southern University

Law Center at Southern University and A&M College; (5) David A. Clarke School of Law University of the District of Columbia; and (6) Florida A&M University School of Law. What is more, U.S. News (2008) reports that five of the six historically Black law schools (excluding Florida A&M University School of Law) in the nation are placed in the fourth tier (i.e., the fourth tier is the lowest tier in which a law school can be ranked).

Prior research mainly consists of studies of Black high school students planning to enter college, and of Blacks who attend HBCUs and TWIs. Several studies have also found the academic credentials of Black undergraduates attending HBCUs to be lower than that of Black undergraduates attending TWIs (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2007; Astin & Cross, 1981; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Fryer & Greenstone, 2007; Sinha, 2006).

Previous research has also found the LSAT scores of Black law school applicants from undergraduate HBCUs to be lower than that of other Black law school applicants. In spite of the fact that Wightman (1997) found no differences in graduation and bar passage rates of minorities who would not have been accepted into law school if admissions were based solely on LSAT scores, LSAT scores are used as the chief evaluator of student “fit” for law school admission, and lower LSAT scores present a serious obstacle for Black law school applicants, and for Black law school applicants from HBCUs in particular (Ehrenberg, 1997; Johnson, 2007). In 1999, the Law School Admissions Council found that Black HBCU graduates had higher GPAs yet slightly lower LSAT scores when compared to Blacks who graduated from TWIs.

Institutionally, prior research has found that one of the most important factors influencing Blacks to attend historically Black institutions is lower tuition costs, while Blacks generally attend traditionally White institutions for financial assistance (Freeman &

Thomas, 2002; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). HBCUs include an accommodating educational environment as an integral part of their mission, especially for financially disadvantaged and academically underprivileged ethnic Minority students (Allen, 1992; Allen & Jewell, 2002; Palmer, 2008). HBCUs have also been shown to integrate social service work and community activism into their curricula, which influences career preparation, the connection of theory to real-world problems, and the awareness of community problems (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000, p. 767). On the other hand, researchers have argued that one of the most salient differences between TWIs and HBCUs is school selectivity. TWIs have been found to be more selective in their admissions process, and they typically accept Black students with higher academic credentials when compared to HBCUs (Astin & Cross, 1981; Fryer & Greenstone, 2007).

Examining Student Psychological Self-Evaluations

Ethnic Identity Development

The development of a strong ethnic identity is an essential tool of success for Blacks in law school and other institutions of higher learning (Cokley, 2007; Phinney, 1996, Phinney & Tarver, 1988; Streitmatter, 1988). Like other young adults in higher education, Black students are expected to achieve a grounded sense of identity in spite of the prevalence of racial prejudice. Previous research has found that compared to TWIs, HBCUs offer more support in the development of Black undergraduate students' ethnic identity and allow for better psychosocial adjustment (Allen, 1992; Erikson, 1963; Erikson, 1968; Fleming, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Greer, 2008; Gurin & Epps, 1975; St. Louis & Liem, 2005; Zuschlag & Whitbourne, 1994).

Experiences with Discrimination

For the purposes of this study, experiences with discrimination are measured in terms of experiences of racial discrimination during one's undergraduate years, experiences of racial discrimination during the law school admissions process, everyday discrimination, and students' self-reports of perceived professional barriers due to race. Past research has found that compared to students who attend HBCUs, Black students at TWIs report more incidences of "everyday" racial discrimination or experiences of covert, unconscious racism that result in feelings of self-doubt, stereotype threat, long-lasting shame, depression, anger, a negative racial climate, and group isolation (Allen, 1992; Lett & Wright, 2003; Sears, 1988; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2001; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Sue et al., 2007).

Peer and Intergroup Relations

Prior research has found that compared to TWIs, HBCUs provide a supportive campus racial climate where Black undergraduates are less likely to suffer from marginalization and social anomie (Allen, 1991; Fleming, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen 1998). Lett and Wright (2003) found that HBCUs have a higher success rate of graduating Black students due to an environment of nurturance, affording Black students the opportunity to interact with like mentors and noted role models, providing merit-based financial aid, cultural events, and by offering an environment free of racial discrimination and harassment (p.7).

Academic Performance

Prior research provides a number of different findings related to the academic self-concept and the academic performance of Black undergraduates. Watson and Kuh (1996) found that Black students at TWIs exerted more effort to succeed, yet they made fewer academic gains compared to their White counterparts. Alternatively, Cokley (2000) and Kim

(2002) found no significant difference in the academic self-reports of Blacks attending HBCUs as opposed to TWIs.

The Present Study

In the present study we rely on the Educational Diversity Project (EDP), a national survey which includes a broad set of experiential and psychological characteristics to understand individual differences of law students upon entry to law school. Using the EDP survey, the present study seeks to examine four questions: (a) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who matriculate into law school from a historically Black college or university (HBCU) versus a traditionally White institution (TWI)? (b) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who attend a historically Black law school (HBLS) versus a traditionally White law school (TWLS)? (c) What factors and career goals motivate students who matriculate from a HBCU as compared to a TWI to go to law school? (d) And what factors and career goals motivate students who attend a HBLS as compared to a TWLS to go to law school? Student psychological self-evaluations are also considered as predictors in the analyses. Psychological self-evaluations are measured using the following four domains: ethnic identity development, experiences with and expectations about discrimination, peer and intergroup relations, and academic performance.

Hypotheses

- 1) In identifying student-level and school-level characteristics associated with students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, we hypothesize that lower undergraduate selectivity levels will be associated with higher odds of matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. We also

predict that lower undergraduate tuition costs will be associated with higher odds of matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI (Allen, 1992; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987).

- 2) Consistent with past research (Ehrenberg, 1997; Johnson, 2007), we hypothesize that Blacks who matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI will have lower LSAT scores.
- 3) We hypothesize that higher reported levels of ethnic identity will be associated with higher odds of students having graduated from a HBCU as compared to a TWI (Allen, 1992; Erikson, 1963; Erikson, 1968; Fleming, 1984; Freeman, 2005; Greer, 2008; Gurin & Epps, 1975; St. Louis & Liem, 2005; Zuschlag & Whitbourne, 1994).
- 4) We predict that Black students who matriculate from a HBCU may have been exposed to a lower level of racial discrimination during their years as an undergraduate when compared to students who matriculate from a TWI (Allen, 1991; Allen, 1992; Lett & Wright, 2003). Hence, we hypothesize that Black law students with lower levels of experienced discrimination will have higher odds of having matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI.
- 5) We predict that students with lower reported levels of positive college contact with students of different racial/ethnic groups will have higher odds of matriculating into law school from a predominantly Black HBCU versus a traditionally White undergraduate institution (Allen, 1991; Fleming, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen 1998; Lett & Wright, 2003). We also predict that higher reported levels of extracurricular group

activities related to one's race will be associated with higher odds of having attended a HBCU versus a TWI.

- 6) In attempting to examine factors and career goals that motivate students who matriculate from a HBCU (as compared to a TWI) to go to law school, we expect that graduating from a HBCU (as compared to a TWI) will be positively associated with wanting to go to law school to help influence the community (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000; Wenglinsky, 1996). We also predict that matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI will be associated with having the potential to work for social justice.
- 7) Prior research has not examined characteristics, motivations, or career goals of Blacks who attend a HBLS versus a TWLS. Therefore, we do not make any hypotheses concerning HBLS students.

Method

Participants

Data for this investigation were drawn from the Educational Diversity Project (EDP), a national study of approximately 6,100 incoming law school students from 50 ABA-approved U.S. law schools. Analyses focus on students who identified as Black ($n = 589$), which consisted of roughly one-tenth (10%) of the total participants (i.e., other racial/ethnic groups included: White, Asian American, Mexican, Hispanic/Latino, Multiracial of Color, and Multiracial White). Over two-thirds of the Black EDP respondents ($n = 402$) were women, and the average annual family household income for Black participants fell between \$10,000 and \$49,999. When questioned about the various types of law students expected to practice during their first few years after graduating, the majority of law students stated that

they expect to practice corporate law ($n = 223$), criminal law ($n = 135$), family law ($n = 117$), litigation ($n = 107$), and public interest law ($n = 106$).

Law students attended 230 different undergraduate institutions and approximately 44 different law schools. In addition, five out of six historically Black law schools (HBLSSs) in the U.S. that were ABA-approved at the time of the study were included: Howard University School of Law, Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, North Carolina Central University School of Law, Southern University Law Center at Southern University and A&M College, and David A. Clarke School of Law University of the District of Columbia. As undergraduates, most Black EDP respondents (66.0%; $n = 389$) attended a TWI and approximately thirty percent (33.4%; $n = 195$) attended an HBCU. The majority of Black EDP respondents currently attended a HBLS (61.6%; $n = 363$) and nearly forty percent (38.4%; $n = 226$) currently attended a TWLS. Furthermore, 26.4% of the students ($n = 154$) attended a HBCU and then a HBLS, 7.0% ($n = 41$) attended a HBCU and then a TWLS, 35.10% ($n = 205$) attended a TWI and then a HBLS, and 31.50% ($n = 184$) attended a TWI and then a TWLS.

Measures

Outcome Variables

Two separate outcomes of interest were examined. The *first* outcome was a binary variable that measured whether students matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI (0 = TWI or 1 = HBCU). The *second* outcome was a binary variable that measured whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS (0 = TWLS or 1 = HBLS).

Student-Level Variables

Student Background. Student-level predictors included: age, gender (0 = *Male* or 1 = *Female*), family household income, where a student was born (0 = *outside of the United States* or 1 = *in the United States*), students' geographical diversity index (GDI; the diversity of locations across the U.S. where students applied to law school), whether a student graduated from a HBCU (0 = *attend undergraduate TWI* or 1 = *attend a HBCU*), and LSAC verified LSAT scores. Family household income was coded as: 1 (*family household annual income below \$10,000*); 2 (*family household annual income ranging from \$10,000 to \$49,999*); 3 (*family household annual income ranging from \$50,000 to \$99,999*); 4 (*family household annual income ranging from \$100,000 to \$149,999*); 5 (*family household annual income ranging from \$150,000 to \$199,999*); 6 (*family household annual income ranging from \$200,000 to \$299,999*); 7 (*family household annual income ranging from \$300,000 to \$399,999*); 8 (*family household annual income ranging from \$400,000 to \$499,999*); 9 (*family household annual income over \$500,000*).

Additional predictors related to the law school application process included: the number of law schools applied to, the number of historically Black law schools (HBLs) applied to, the number of law schools to which students were accepted, the number of students who received any undergraduate student aid (divided by 10,000 for scaling purposes), and the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid (divided by 10,000 for scaling purposes). Values for the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid ranged from none to 6,368 ($M = 1,761.66$, $SD = 1,420.30$). Values for the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid variable ranged from none to 3,961 ($M = 1,009.88$, $SD = 743.92$).

Factors Influencing Students to Attend Law School and Student Career Goals

Factors and career goals that motivate students to go to law school included three measures, rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*extremely important*). The first measure focused on *working for social justice* and was a single item: “How important was having the potential to work for justice for all people for a law-related job?” The second measure was a composite relating to *becoming an expert in law* and consisted of three items ($\alpha = .73$) taken from the EDP database: “How important was the expectation of receiving intellectual stimulation in your decision to go to law school,” “How important was the expectation of receiving professional training in your decision to go to law school,” and “How important was having the desire for varied work in your decision to go to law school?” The third measure focused on *community service* and consisted of a single item: “How important was having the potential to have influence in the community for a law-related job?”

Student Psychological Self-Evaluations

Ethnic Identity.

This domain consisted of items related to beliefs toward ethnic identity. *Ethnic identity* was assessed as a composite of three items that ($\alpha = .67$) rated on a four-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*): “How closely do you identify with other people who are of the same racial and ethnic descent as yourself,” “If you could choose, how much time would you like to spend with other people who are of your same racial and ethnic group,” and “How close do you feel, in your ideas and feelings about things, to other people of the same racial and ethnic descent as yourself?”

Discrimination Experiences and Expectations.

Everyday discrimination. Everyday discrimination was assessed using a short form of the Williams et al., 1997 scale, which asked about students' experiences with microaggressions such as daily racial assaults (e.g., treated with less respect than other people, treated as if you are not smart, treated as if you are dishonest, treated as if others are better than you are). Everyday discrimination was examined as a composite of four items ($\alpha = .88$), which were rated on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*almost everyday*).

Lifetime. The lifetime items were rated using a three-point ordinal scale ranging from 1 (*no*); 3 (*yes, a lot*) using two items: "Do you feel you have ever experienced discrimination or adverse treatment due to your race or ethnicity during your years as an undergraduate," and "Do you feel you have ever experienced discrimination or adverse treatment due to your race or ethnicity during the law school admission process?"

Professional barriers due to race. To assess expectations about future discrimination we examined a composite of six items ($\alpha = .94$) that included: "After graduating from law school, I expect that my race may limit my options for..." using a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*): invitations to interview for jobs, job offers, compensation packages for my job, the type and quality of job assignments I receive, productive interactions with law colleagues in my job setting, and timely promotions and professional advancement.

Peer and Intergroup Relations.

The peer and intergroup relations domain was assessed using three sub-areas: college contact, students' self-assessment of their ability to work cooperatively with others, and student reports of participating in extracurricular, race-related group activities.

College Contact. Beliefs related to college contact was assessed as a composite of three items ($\alpha = .80$), where each item was rated using a five-point ordinal scale: 1 = *lowest 10%*; 5 = *highest 10%*, included: “During your undergraduate years, how often did you have close friends from a different racial/ethnic group,” “During your undergraduate years, how often did you date someone from a different racial/ethnic group,” “During your undergraduate years, how often did you study with someone from a different racial ethnic group.”

Ability to Work Cooperatively. To measure student self-evaluations concerning their ability to work cooperatively with others, the following item was used, rated with a five-point ordinal scale: 1 = *lowest 10%*; 5 = *highest 10%*: “For the following trait, please rate how you expect to compare with your first year classmates at the law school you are attending: ability to work cooperatively.”

Extracurricular, Race-Related Group Activities. Questions pertaining to extracurricular courses related to an individual’s race or ethnicity were examined using a composite of three items ($\alpha = .76$), rated using a five-point ordinal scale: 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*), were: “During your undergraduate years, how often did you discuss racial issues,” “During your undergraduate years, how often did you take an ethnic studies course,” and “During your undergraduate years, how often did you attend racial/cultural awareness programs?”

Academic Performance.

The academic performance domain measured Black law school students’ judgment of their academic skills relative to that of other students, as well as undergraduate GPA. Respondents indicated their agreement for the following two items, using a scale ranging

from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*): “For the following trait, please rate how you expect to compare with your first year classmates at the law school you are attending: academic ability,” “During my first year of law school, I expect to have to work many more hours than my classmates to keep up with the demands of law school.” The third measure of academic performance was an individual’s undergraduate grade point average. This average, on a scale from 0 to 4.2, was obtained from Law School Admission Council records and was verified by the students’ degree-awarding undergraduate institution (not self-reported).

School-Level Attributes: Undergraduate, Law School

Several institutional variables were assessed for the students’ undergraduate institution and their law school. These variables include: an institutional racial diversity index (RDI), school selectivity, school tuition cost (e.g., undergraduate school tuition cost was calculated for out-of- state tuition for full-time students divided by 10,000), and school size (e.g., the total number of students attending an institution divided by 10,000). The sector of the institution and the school size were obtained from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Database System (IPEDS) and American Bar Association (ABA) databases.

The RDI (Blau, 1977) was defined as one minus the sum of p^2 or the squared proportions of the ethnic groups represented in a law school’s student body:

$$RDI = 1 - \sum p^2 \quad (1)$$

School selectivity was created by calculating the number of law school applicants accepted at each law school, divided by the total number of students who applied at each law school.

Values for the selectivity variable for law schools ranged from .12 to .46 ($M = .24$, $SD = .06$).

Values for the selectivity variable for undergraduate institutions ranged from .10 to .99 ($M = .60$, $SD = .19$).

Results

Data Analytic Approach

Multilevel logistic regression models were initially proposed to examine the four study questions: (a) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who matriculate into law school from a historically Black college or university (HBCU) versus a traditionally White institution (TWI)? (b) What student- and school-level characteristics are associated with students who attend a historically Black law school (HBLS) versus a traditionally White law school (TWLS)? (c) What factors and career goals motivate students who matriculate from a HBCU as compared to a TWI to go to law school? (d) And what factors and career goals motivate students who attend a HBLS as compared to a TWLS to go to law school? Because multilevel diagnostics revealed the normality assumption was not met for undergraduate-level and law school-level random effects, design-based aggregate analyses (Hancock & Mueller, 2006; Muthén & Satorra, 1995) were examined as an alternate means of accounting for dependencies of students nested within undergraduate and law school institutions. The aggregate analyses used maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR) and the “Type=Complex” option.

Eight aggregate analyses were examined to answer each of the research questions using an alpha level of .05. Analyses for the eight aggregate models were performed using Mplus 5.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2007). HBCUs and HBLSs were over-sampled. Each of the eight statistical analyses applied sampling weights that were developed to adjust for different probabilities of selection (De Vaus, 2002) for students who attended a HBCU and for students who attended a HBLS.

For each model there were two separate outcomes of interest. The *first* outcome was a binary variable that measured whether students matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. The *second* outcome was a binary variable that measured whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS. For the purposes of reporting odds ratios for each of the eight analyses, the group reflecting students who attend a TWI, and the group reflecting students who attend a TWLS were used as references.

Models Tested

Student-level and school-level predictors were: age, gender, family household income, where a student was born, student GDI or the diversity of locations across the U.S. where students applied to law school, whether a student graduated from a HBCU (e.g., excluded when examining the outcome of whether a student matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI), LSAC verified LSAT scores, the racial diversity index of an institution (RDI), school selectivity, school tuition cost, and school size were used in each of the eight models.

Application and admissions predictors (e.g., the number of law schools students applied to, the number of HBLSs students applied to, and the number of law schools to which students were admitted) and student aid predictors (e.g., the number of students who received any undergraduate student aid and the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid) were included only in the second and third models.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1 presents means and standard deviations of student application variables. Results from Table 1 indicate that compared to students who matriculated into law school from a TWI ($M = 6.06$, $SD = 6.31$), on average, students who matriculated into law school

from a HBCU had fewer law schools to which they were admitted ($M = 5.31$, $SD = 5.86$). On average, HBLs students ($M = 5.28$, $SD = 6.29$) also had fewer law schools to which they were admitted when compared to TWLS students ($M = 6.60$, $SD = 5.86$).

The average undergraduate GPA for HBCU students ($M = 3.20$, $SD = .45$) was slightly higher than the average undergraduate GPA of TWI students ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .45$). HBLs students ($M = 3.19$, $SD = .44$) also had slightly higher average GPAs when compared to TWLS students ($M = 3.11$, $SD = .46$). In addition, results from Table 1 indicate that the average LSAT score for students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU ($M = 147.36$, $SD = 6.22$) was slightly lower than the average LSAT score of students who matriculated into law school from a TWI ($M = 149.29$, $SD = 5.78$). The average LSAT score for students who attended a HBLs ($M = 147.23$, $SD = 5.67$) was also slightly lower than it was for students who attended a TWLS ($M = 150.93$, $SD = 5.80$). The national LSAT average is currently 152 for Whites and approximately 141 for Blacks (Sekhon, 2004). Thus, it appears that students who attended HBCUs and HBLs had higher average GPAs than students who attended TWIs and TWLSs, while students from HBCUs and HBLs had slightly lower average LSAT scores when compared to students from TWIs and TWLSs.

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of institutional variables (e.g., school racial diversity index, school selectivity, school size, and school cost). Results from Table 2 show that while HBCUs were less racially diverse than TWIs ($M = .50$, $SD = .17$) or that HBCUs had a lower average RDI ($M = .18$, $SD = .14$), HBLs ($M = .51$, $SD = .14$) were more racially diverse when compared to TWLSs ($M = .33$, $SD = .11$). HBCUs and HBLs also had lower average tuition costs when compared to TWIs and TWLSs.

Correlations among HBCU attendance, HBLS attendance, and the major psychological variables appear in Table 3. Results from Table 3 reveal that a strong, negative correlation exists between matriculating into law school from a HBCU and reporting positive peer and intergroup relations with individuals of different racial/ethnic backgrounds during one's undergraduate years, $r(577) = -.52, p < .001$. Attending a HBCU versus a TWI was negatively correlated with reports of experiencing racial discrimination during one's undergraduate years, $r(584) = -.28, p < .001$. This fact suggests that compared to TWI students, HBCU students experience fewer incidences of racial discrimination. Moreover, having attended a HBCU versus a TWI was not found to be correlated with reporting experiences of discrimination during the law school admissions process, $r(584) = .06, p > .05$.

When examining the outcome of whether students matriculated into a HBLS versus a TWLS, results indicated that attending a HBLS (versus a TWLS) was positively correlated with having graduated from a HBCU (versus a TWI), $r(584) = .25, p < .001$. In other words, students who attended a HBCU (versus a TWI) were more likely to matriculate into a HBLS (versus a TWLS). A weak, positive correlation was found between having attended a HBLS versus a TWLS and reporting experiences of discrimination during the law school admissions process, $r(584) = .12, p < .01$. Moreover, having attended a HBLS versus a TWLS was negatively correlated with reports of having positive peer and intergroup relations with individuals of a different racial/ethnic background during one's undergraduate years, $r(582) = -.21, p < .001$.

Findings Related to Each Research Question

Table 4 summarizes findings related to models that were tested to predict whether a student attended an HBCU and whether a student attended an HBLS. The table presents the regression coefficients for each effect, standard errors, as well as the odds ratio.

Question 1: Student-Level and School-Level Characteristics Associated with Having Attended a HBCU Versus a TWI

The first model measured *only student-level and school-level characteristics* associated with students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. For the outcome of whether students matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable.

We hypothesized that students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI would have lower LSAT scores. We also hypothesized that lower undergraduate selectivity and lower undergraduate tuition costs would be associated with higher odds of matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. Findings for the first model only supported one of the three hypotheses. Students' LSAT scores were not associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. In addition, undergraduate selectivity was not associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. Results did indicate that students who attended a HBCU (versus a TWI) had increased odds of paying lower undergraduate tuition costs ($B = -1.62, p < .01$). Written another way, this finding suggests that students who attended a TWI (versus a HBCU) were over five times as likely to pay higher tuition costs (odds ratio=5.03).

Other results included the fact that students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to attend undergraduate institutions with fewer enrolled students ($B = -1.77, p < .01$), and students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to attend an undergraduate institution that was less racially diverse or had a lower RDI ($B = -13.31, p < .01$).

The second model examined *student application and admissions variables* (e.g., the number of law schools students applied to, the number of HBLSS students applied to, and the number of law schools to which students were admitted) associated with students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. When examining whether students attended a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable for the second model. Similarly, when examining whether students attended a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. We did not make any predictions concerning factors related to student applications and admissions variables (i.e., the number of law schools students applied to, the number of HBLSS students applied to, and the number of law schools to which students are admitted), and results suggested that none of the application and admissions variables were associated with graduating from a HBCU versus a TWI.

The third model examined *financial predictors* (e.g., the number of students who received any undergraduate student aid and the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid) associated with students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. Undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable for the third model. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering

identification variable. Results showed that students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to receive undergraduate student loans ($B = 5.50, p < .01$, odds ratio = 243.27). On the other hand, students who attended a TWI versus a HBCU were much more likely to receive financial aid or undergraduate financial assistance ($B = 5.09, p < .01$, odds ratio = 166.67).

The fourth model examined predictors related to the *ethnic identity domain* (e.g., ethnic identity development). When examining the outcome of whether students matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. In addition, when examining ethnic identity development, we hypothesized that higher self-reports of ethnic identity would be associated with increased odds of students having graduated from a HBCU as compared to a TWI. Results from the fourth model supported our hypothesis. Students who graduated from a HBCU as opposed to a TWI reported higher levels of ethnic identity development ($B = .33, p < .05$, odds ratio = 1.39).

The fifth model examined predictors related to the *experiences and expectations of discrimination* domain (e.g., everyday discrimination, lifetime racial discrimination, professional barriers due to race). When examining the fifth model, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. We hypothesized that Blacks who matriculated from a HBCU may have been exposed to a lower level of racial discrimination during their years as undergraduates when compared to Blacks who matriculated from a TWI. Results from the

fifth model were consistent with our hypothesis. Blacks who matriculated into law school from a TWI were over 2 times as likely as Blacks who matriculated into law school from a HBCU to report that they experienced racial discrimination or adverse treatment during their years as undergraduates ($B = .81, p < .05$, odds ratio = 2.25). In addition, Blacks who matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to expect limited job offers and other professional barriers as a result of their race ($B = .11, p < .05$, odds ratio = 1.12).

The sixth model examined predictors related to the *peer and intergroup relations domain* (e.g., college contact with peers, extracurricular group activities around race, and ability to work cooperatively). When examining the outcome of whether students matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLI versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. We used prior research findings (Allen, 1991; Fleming, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen 1998; Lett & Wright, 2003) to hypothesize that students with lower reported levels of college contact with students from different racial/ethnic groups would have higher odds of matriculating into law school from a predominantly Black HBCU versus a traditionally White undergraduate institution (TWI). We also hypothesized that students with higher reported levels of extracurricular group activities related to one's race would have higher odds of matriculating into law school from an undergraduate HBCU versus an undergraduate TWI. Our hypotheses were supported. Findings for the sixth model revealed that Black students who matriculated into law school from a TWI versus a HBCU were more likely to report having contact with students from

different racial/ethnic groups during their years as undergraduates ($B = .96, p < .01$, odds ratio = 2.63). Results also indicated that students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to report that they engaged in extracurricular group activities related to their race ($B = .45, p < .01$, odds ratio = 1.56). Furthermore, compared to TWI students, students who attended HBCUs were over three times more likely to endorse the belief that they had the ability to work cooperatively with others ($B = 1.16, p < .01$, odds ratio = 3.17).

The seventh population average model examined predictors related to the *academic performance domain* (e.g., expected work hours relative to peers, self-rated academic ability, and undergraduate grade-point average). When examining the outcome of whether students matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. Findings for the seventh model indicated that none of the academic performance predictors were associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI.

Question 2: Student-Level and School-Level Characteristics Associated with Attending a HBLS Versus a TWLS.

When measuring student-level and school-level characteristics associated with students who matriculate into a HBLS versus a TWLS, the first aggregate model measured only *student-level and school-level characteristics* associated with students who matriculated into law school from a HBLS versus a TWLS. Results for the first model indicated that when compared to TWLS students, HBLS students paid lower law school tuition costs ($B = -5.92, p < .05$). Males were over three times as likely to attend a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS ($B =$

1.31, $p < .01$, odds ratio = 3.69), or put another way, females were less likely to attend a HBLS as compared to a TWLS. Students who came from a HBCU were over five times as likely to attend a HBLS versus a TWLS ($B = 1.71$, $p < .001$, odds ratio = 5.50), and students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS went to institutions with larger student bodies ($B = 60.38$, $p < .05$).

A marginally significant result revealed that students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS had higher family household incomes ($B = .50$, $p < .10$, odds ratio = 1.64). Students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS also had a higher geographical diversity index or GDI, meaning that when applying to law school, HBLS students applied to a much more diverse or extensive set of locations across the U.S. when compared to TWLS students ($B = 2.64$, $p < .001$, odds ratio = 13.99).

The second model examined *student application and admissions variables* (e.g., the number of law schools students applied to, the number of HBLSs students applied to, and the number of law schools to which students were admitted) associated with students who matriculate into law school from a HBLS versus a TWLS. Law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable. Results revealed that compared to TWLS students, students who attended a HBLS were more likely to apply to a historically Black law school ($B = 3.89$, $p < .01$, odds ratio = 49.07). Conversely, HBLS students were admitted to fewer law schools when compared to TWLS students ($B = -.84$, $p < .01$).

The third model examined *financial predictors* (e.g., the number of students who received any undergraduate student aid and the number of students who received undergraduate student loan aid) associated with students who matriculate into law school

from a HBLS versus a TWLS. None of the financial predictors were associated with attending a HBLS versus a TWLS.

The fourth model examined predictors related to the *ethnic identity domain* (e.g., ethnic identity development). Law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable for this model. Results indicated that ethnic identity was not associated with attending a HBLS versus a TWLS.

The fifth model examined predictors related to the *experiences with discrimination domain* (e.g., everyday discrimination, lifetime racial discrimination, professional barriers due to race). Findings indicated that students who attended a HBLS were nearly three times more likely to report experiences of discrimination during the law school admissions process when compared to students who attended a TWLS ($B = 1.05, p < .01$, odds ratio = 2.86).

The sixth model examined predictors related to the *peer and intergroup relations domain* (e.g., college contact with peers, extracurricular group activities around race, and ability to work cooperatively). Law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable for this model. Students who attended a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS reported that they engaged in fewer extracurricular group activities related to their race during their years as undergraduates ($B = -.27, p < .01$). Students who attended a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS also reported that they believed they had the ability to work more cooperatively with others in law school ($B = .56, p < .01$, odds ratio = 1.75).

The seventh model examined predictors related to the *academic performance domain*. None of the academic performance predictors were found to be statistically significant.

Question 3: Factors and Career Goals That Motivate Students Who Matriculate from a HBCU Versus a TWI.

When examining career goals and motivations that influence students who matriculate into law school from a HBCU as compared to a TWI, the eighth model examined factors that motivate students to go to law school (e.g., work for social justice, have the potential to help influence the community, and a composite score with items related to becoming an expert in law). For the outcome of whether students matriculate into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI, undergraduate institution was used as the clustering identification variable. When examining the outcome of whether students attend a HBLS versus a TWLS, law school institution was used as the clustering identification variable.

We hypothesized that graduating from a HBCU versus a TWI would be positively associated with wanting to go to law school to work for social justice and to help influence the community (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000; Wenglinsky, 1996). Results from the eighth model indicated that students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI were more likely to endorse the belief that having the potential to help influence their community was an important factor for a law-related job ($B = .99, p < .01$, odds ratio = 2.68). On the other hand, a marginally significant finding revealed that students who graduated from a HBCU versus a TWI were less likely to endorse the belief that working for social justice was an important factor for a law-related job ($B = -.65, p < .10$).

Question 4: Factors and Career Goals That Motivate Students Who Matriculate from a HBLS Versus a TWLS.

Results from the eighth model suggested that students who attended a HBLS were less likely than students who attended a TWLS to endorse the belief that working for social justice was an important factor for a law-related job ($B = -.57, p < .005$). A marginally significant finding indicated that students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS were more

likely to endorse the belief that becoming an expert in their field was an important factor for a law-related job ($B = .15, p < .01$, odds ratio = 1.16). Going to law school to help influence the community was not associated with matriculating into a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS.

Discussion

The first aim of this study is to examine whether certain student-level and school-level characteristics are associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI. The second aim of this study is to examine whether certain student-level and school-level characteristics are associated with attending a HBLS versus a TWLS. Implications of the results may provide further insight into the attributes of Blacks who attend historically Black colleges and law schools, and they could be useful to HBCU and HBLS admissions officers who are seeking ways to increase their enrollments, and promote students' retention and successful commencement.

Question 1: Student-Level and School-Level Characteristics Associated with Having Attended a HBCU Versus a TWI.

Results revealed that students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI tend to report higher levels of ethnic identity. This finding is important because the years spent in pursuit of higher education provide a critical period of growth for identity (e.g., ego identity) and psychosocial development (Erikson, 1963; St. Louis & Liem, 2005; Zuschlag & Whitbourne, 1994). Rucker and Gendrin (2003) found that unlike other young adults in higher education, identity formation for Blacks is dualistic in nature such that Black students experience a conflicting sense of "twoness" from being categorized as racial/ethnic minorities while also being classified as American. Moreover, St. Louis and Liem (2005) reported that the developmental process through which minority youth achieve an ethnic

identity is similar to that proposed for the formation of an ego identity, and that prior research has found a positive relationship between ethnic identity formation and psychosocial functioning for ethnic minorities (pp. 228-230).

In addition to reporting higher levels of ethnic identity development, students who attended a HBCU are more likely to report that they participated in extracurricular activities related to their race/ethnicity (e.g., discussed racial issues, took an ethnic studies course, attended racial/cultural awareness programs) during their years as undergraduates. Students who entered into law school from a HBCU versus a TWI also endorsed the belief that they have more confidence in their ability to work cooperatively with others. Another key result revealed that students who attended HBCUs reported fewer experiences of racial discrimination when compared to TWI students. As a whole, these results correspond with the findings of past researchers (Allen, 1991; Allen, 1992; Clayton-Pederson, & Allen 1998; Fleming, 1983; Fleming, 1984; Gurin & Epps, 1975; Lett & Wright, 2003; Sears, 1988) and they support the notion that compared to TWIs, HBCUs provide a campus environment that supports ethnic and cultural awareness without the deleterious effects of racial discrimination.

Findings that are potentially useful to HBCU and HBLS admissions officers and academic administrators include the fact that lower undergraduate tuition costs were associated with having attended a HBCU versus a TWI. The present study also found that students who attended a HBCU (versus a TWI) received more undergraduate student loans, whereas students who attended a TWI (versus a HBCU) received more undergraduate financial assistance. Altogether, these results are consistent with that of previous researchers who reported that Black students often attend TWIs for financial assistance (Freeman &

Thomas, 2002), and that lower tuition costs are one of the most important factors influencing Blacks to attend a HBCU (Allen, 1992; Freeman, 2005; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). Due to the recent economic crisis, students of all walks of life have had increased difficulty obtaining student loans (Dewan, 2009), and HBCU admissions officers and academic administrators could emphasize the fact that students who attend HBCUs can continue to receive student loans and a quality education at a lower price.

Matriculating into law school from a HBCU was found to be associated with attending an institution that is less racially diverse. This result can most likely be explained by the fact that, in general, HBCUs are predominantly Black institutions and the amount of racial diversity within these institutions would be expected to be lower than that of traditionally White institutions (e.g., TWIs). This fact is also notable because the *U.S. v. Fordice* 1992 Supreme Court decision found that state legislatures must provide educational justification for the continuation of HBCUs or to integrate them fully, yet results of the present study suggest that Black students are more likely to attend HBCUs that are not fully integrated.

We found no differences in undergraduate school selectivity for students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU as opposed to a TWI. Based on past research (Astin & Cross, 1981; Freeman & Thomas, 2002; Fryer & Greenstone, 2007) this result was different from what we expected. One possible explanation for this finding could be that the current study examines Black students who successfully matriculated into law school, while Blacks who applied to law school and were rejected or failed to matriculate for whatever reason were not assessed. If the present study analyzed Black law school applicants as well

as Black applicants who successfully matriculated into law school, then undergraduate school selectivity may have been lower for students who attended a HBCU versus a TWI.

In attempting to identify student-level and school-level characteristics associated with matriculating into law school, model results did not suggest that student LSAT scores were associated with matriculating into law school from a HCBU versus a TWI. These results are startling given that past researchers (Ehrenberg, 1997; Johnson, 2007; *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 2002) have found that Blacks who attend historically Black institutions (e.g., undergraduate HBCUs and HBLs) are more likely to have lower LSAT scores than Blacks who attend traditionally White institutions (e.g., undergraduate TWIs and TWLSs). Further analyses suggested that student LSAT scores were negatively associated with matriculating into a HBCU (versus a TWI), yet the effects of LSAT scores were no longer significant after controlling for undergraduate-level predictors such as school size, RDI, school tuition costs, and school selectivity. Therefore, future researchers might consider controlling for the effects of undergraduate and/or law school-level variables when examining LSAT scores for Blacks who apply to law school.

Question 2: Student-Level and School-Level Characteristics Associated with Attending a HBLs Versus a TWLS.

Key results include that students who matriculated into law school from a HBCU were more likely to attend a HBLs as opposed to a TWLS, and that females were more likely to attend a TWLS as opposed to a HBLs. The *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (2002) found that Black women make up 59.6% of the total Black enrollments at the top 50 law schools in the nation (Ross, 2003). What is more, Mickelson (2003) found that holding race and other socioeconomic factors constant, women tend to perform better in academia than

men, and compared to any other racial/ethnic groups, Black women have sustained the greatest advantages over Black men. Due to the fact that HBLs are currently seeking ways to increase their enrollments, it might be beneficial for HBL admissions officers and academic administrators to put forth an extended effort to recruit Black female students.

Lower law school tuition costs were found to be associated with attending a HBL versus a TWL. This fact suggests that in spite of the recent economic crisis and reduced HBCU and HBL endowments (Dewan, 2009), it would appear that historically Black institutions (e.g., HBCUs and HBLs) should try their best to continue providing lower tuition costs in order to attract a larger number of Black matriculates.

A finding that is potentially useful when attempting to explain how Black undergraduates and Black HBCU students, specifically, can increase their chances of getting into law school includes the fact that students who successfully matriculated into a HBL were more likely to apply to a HBL as opposed to a TWL. Written another way, students who successfully matriculated into a TWL were more likely to apply to a TWL as opposed to a HBL. Thus, if Black undergraduate students hope to enter into a HBL, results of the present study suggest that they should apply to more HBLs, and if Black undergraduate students hope to enter into a TWL, results of the present study suggest that they should apply to more TWLs.

Students who matriculated into a HBL also reported more experiences of racial discrimination during the law school admissions process as compared to TWL students. However, in spite of the fact that HBCU students were more likely to matriculate into a HBL, results from Table 3 indicate that having attended a HBCU was not correlated with students reporting experiences of discrimination during the law school admissions process.

One possible reason that HBLS students reported having more experiences of discrimination during the law school admissions process could be that students who matriculated into a HBLS versus a TWLS had a higher GDI or applied to a more widespread set of law schools across the U.S, yet unlike TWLS students, HBLS students were accepted into fewer law schools. A second potential explanation could be that LSAT scores often provide a significant barrier for Black students who hope to enter law school, and results from Table 1 suggest that in spite of the fact that LSAT scores were not found to be associated with attending a HBLS (versus a TWLS), students who attended HBLSs had lower average LSAT scores than students who attended TWLSs. Therefore, students who attended a HBLS versus a TWLS may have reported experiencing more discrimination during the law school admissions process because they were accepted into fewer law schools due to lower LSAT scores. Perhaps it might be beneficial for Black undergraduate and Black HBCU students alike to take additional steps to prepare for the LSAT, such as buying LSAT preparation materials and practice tests during their late sophomore or early junior year and taking preparatory LSAT classes in order to increase their chances of getting into law school.

Students who attended a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS were less likely to report that they engaged in extracurricular activities related to their race/ethnicity (e.g., discussed racial issues, took an ethnic studies course, attended racial/cultural awareness programs during one's undergraduate years). These results were unexpected given that students who attended a HBCU reported that they engaged in more extracurricular activities related to their race/ethnicity when compared to students who attended a TWI. Further analyses revealed that compared to students who matriculated into a HBLS from a TWI, students who matriculated into a HBLS from a HBCU were more likely to participate in extracurricular

activities related to their race/ethnicity. Similarly, when comparing students who matriculated into a TWLS from a TWI, students who matriculated into a TWLS from a HBCU were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities related to their race/ethnicity. Overall, these results indicate that regardless of whether law students attended a HBLs or a TWLS, students who matriculated into a law school from a TWI reported that they were less likely to engage in extracurricular activities related to their race/ ethnicity. Freeman and Thomas (2002) discussed three major influences for attending a HBCU as opposed to a TWI: (a) having a sense of familiarity with individuals who attend a HBCU (cultural affinity), (b) seeking one's roots, and (c) a lack of cultural awareness. Taken altogether, one possible explanation for these findings could be that Black students matriculate into HBLs because they want to engage in more extracurricular activities with students of the same racial/ethnic background in order to increase their level of cultural awareness.

Question 3: Factors and Career Goals That Motivate Students Who Matriculate from a HBCU Versus a TWI.

As stated, the second aim of this study was to examine factors and career goals that motivate Black students to go to law school. We were interested in examining whether certain factors and career goals motivate students who matriculate from a HBCU as compared to a TWI to go to law school. We were also interested in examining whether certain factors and career goals motivate students who attend a HBLs as compared to a TWLS. Results indicated that like the findings of past researchers, attending a HBCU versus a TWI was associated with wanting to help influence one's community, yet students who

attend HBCUs versus TWIs appear to be less likely to endorse the belief that they hope to use a law-related career to work for social justice.

Question 4: Factors and Career Goals That Motivate Students Who Matriculate from a HBLS Versus a TWLS.

Results indicated that students who attend a HBLS versus a TWLS are more likely to endorse the belief that becoming an expert in their field was an important factor for a law-related job. Attending a HBLS versus a TWLS was not associated with wanting to go to law school to help influence the community, and HBLS students were less likely than TWLS students to endorse the belief that they hope to use a law-related career to work for social justice. One possible explanation for this could be that HBCUs and HBLSs have been known to integrate communal service into their mission statements and their curricula, yet students who matriculate into HBCUs are less focused on working for social fairness or for large-scale justice as opposed to working together with the public and viewing their campus environments as an extension of the Black community. Similarly, students who attend a HBLS versus a TWLS could also be less interested in providing social justice as opposed to providing more interactive, community-based service.

Conclusion

A growing body of research addresses the growth and development of HBCUs, yet the present study is the first to use a nationally representative sample of incoming Black law students to examine factors associated with matriculating into law school from a HBCU as opposed to a TWI, as well as examining factors associated with entering a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS. This study investigated characteristics, motivations, and career goals of students attending historically Black institutions (e.g., HBCUs and HBLSs). Student psychological

self-evaluations were also considered in the domain of ethnic identity development, experiences with and expectations of discrimination, peer and intergroup relations, and academic performance.

Implications of results emphasize the importance of keeping HBCUs and HBLSSs in operation because they promote ethnic identity development and positive extracurricular, race-related group activities without the negative effects of discrimination. Unlike traditionally White institutions, HBCUs and HBLSSs also provide a unique educational experience that focuses on working together with the community and gaining hands-on experience.

Attending a HBCU or a HBLSS tends to promote students' confidence in their ability to work cooperatively with others in a professional setting. On the other hand, HBLSS students appear to be admitted to fewer law schools when compared to TWLS students. This fact suggests that further research should be conducted to examine factors that could aid in reducing the gap between the law school admissions rates of Black students who matriculate into a HBLSS as compared to the law school admissions rates Blacks who matriculate into a TWLS. Future research should also be conducted to reduce the more prevalent gap that exists in the law school admissions rates of Blacks and other minority students as compared to the law school admissions rates of White students (Johnson, 2007; Ehrenberg, 1997).

When attempting to facilitate opportunities for HBCU and HBLSS admissions officers to increase their enrollments, results suggested that Blacks who attend a HBLSS versus a TWLS are interested in a law-related career that gives them the potential to be intellectually, and to receive professional training. Compared to students who attended TWIs and TWLSs, students who attended HBCUs and HBLSSs paid lower tuition costs. Finally, when compared

to TWLS students, results suggest that students who matriculate into a historically Black law school (HBLS) are more likely to have attended a HBCU, and Black males are more likely to attend a HBLS as opposed to a TWLS.

Table 1

Student Application Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviations Split by Undergraduate and Law School Institution

| | HBCU | | TWI | | HBLS | | TWLS | |
|---|---------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD |
| Undergraduate Student Aid (dollars) | 1002.97 | 630.08 | 2152.07 | 1550.64 | 1616.53 | 1333.76 | 1996.66 | 1524.28 |
| Undergraduate Student Loans (dollars) | 768.81 | 567.89 | 1133.94 | 792.47 | 928.93 | 658.05 | 1140.98 | 850.48 |
| Number of Law School Applications | 5.31 | 5.86 | 6.06 | 6.31 | 5.28 | 6.29 | 6.60 | 5.86 |
| Number of Acceptances | 1.84 | 1.64 | 2.37 | 2.04 | 1.66 | 1.27 | 3.01 | 2.42 |
| Number of HBLS Applications | 1.27 | .88 | .97 | .95 | 1.58 | .78 | .36 | .62 |
| Geographic Diversity Index ^a | .51 | .31 | .51 | .30 | .51 | .31 | .50 | .29 |
| LSAT Scores | 147.36 | 6.22 | 149.29 | 5.78 | 147.23 | 5.67 | 150.93 | 5.80 |
| Undergraduate Grade Point Average | 3.20 | .45 | 3.13 | .45 | 3.19 | .44 | 3.11 | .46 |

Note. HBCU = Historically-Black Undergraduate College or University; TWI = Traditionally White Undergraduate College or University; HBLS = Historically Black Law School; TWLS = Traditionally White Law School.

Statistics obtained by calculating application characteristics for each individual and then averaging across the sample.

^a Geographic Diversity Index = zero means that a students' law school applications were to schools in one geographic region; unity means that the applications were submitted to schools across all regions.

^b Law School Selectivity calculated by dividing the number of admissions by the number of applications received.

Table 2

Institutional Statistics: Means and Standard Deviations Split by Undergraduate and Law School Institution

| | HBCU | | TWI | | HBLS | | TWLS | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|------|-----|------|-----|
| | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD |
| Racial Diversity Index ^a | .18 | .14 | .50 | .17 | .51 | .14 | .33 | .11 |
| Selectivity ^b | .61 | .17 | .59 | .20 | .21 | .03 | .29 | .08 |
| School Size ^c | 6.51 | 3.96 | 21.05 | 13.17 | .12 | .02 | .10 | .05 |
| School Tuition Cost ^d | 1.08 | .29 | 1.62 | .75 | .85 | .43 | 2.20 | .83 |

Note. HBCU = Historically-Black Undergraduate College or University; TWI = Traditionally White Undergraduate College or University; HBLS = Historically Black Law School; TWLS = Traditionally White Law School.

Statistics obtained by calculating application characteristics for each individual and then averaging across the sample. Standard deviations displayed in parentheses.

^a Racial Diversity Index = zero represents complete homogeneity; unity represents complete heterogeneity

^b Selectivity calculated by dividing the number of admissions by the number of applications received.

^c School size calculated as the total number of students at each institution divided by 10,000.

^d School tuition cost for HBCU/TWI institutions and for HBLS/TWLS institutions is calculated as the tuition for a first-time out-of-state resident divided by 10,000.

Table 3

Bivariate Correlations among HBCU, TWI, and Psychological Variables

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|----|----|----|----|
| 1. HBCU | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. HBL5 | .25** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Ethnic Identity Variables</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Ethnic Identity | .16** | .02 | -- | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Parent Racial Socialization | .15** | -.01 | .28** | -- | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Experiences with Discrimination</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Everyday Discrimination | -.08* | -.10* | .11** | .08 | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Discrimination During Undergraduate Years | -.28** | -.03 | -.00 | -.00 | .37** | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Discrimination During Law School Admissions Process | .06 | .12** | .01 | .09* | .22** | .17** | -- | | | | | | | |
| 8. Professional Barriers Due to Race | .00 | -.01 | .11** | -.03 | .35** | .16** | .26** | -- | | | | | | |
| <i>Peer and Intergroup Relations</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. College Contact | -.52** | -.21** | -.27** | -.10* | .01 | .15** | -.00 | -.10* | -- | | | | | |
| 10. Extracurricular Group Around Race/Ethnic Identity | .06 | -.06 | .31** | .33** | .17** | .20** | .16** | .17** | .02 | -- | | | | |
| 11. Ability to Work Cooperatively | .13** | .06 | .08 | .07 | .02 | .01 | .06 | -.04 | .09* | .15** | -- | | | |

Table 3 (Continued)

Bivariate Correlations among HBCU, TWI, and Psychological Variables

Table 3

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|----|
| <i>Academic Performance</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12. Expected Hours Relative to Peers | .05 | .02 | -.02 | .05 | .10* | .08 | .15** | .10* | .01 | .03 | .13** | -- | | |
| 13. Self-Rated Academic Ability | .12** | .00 | .08 | .07 | .02 | -.02 | .01 | -.03 | -.04 | .02 | .44** | -.03 | -- | |
| 14. College Grade Point Average | .08 | .08 | .05 | .10* | .03 | .01 | .03 | -.02 | -.05 | -.00 | .01 | .04 | -.03 | -- |

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, + $p < .10$

Table 4

Predicting HBCU and HBLS Enrollment as a Function of Student and Undergraduate School-Level Characteristics

| | Regression Coefficient | Standard Errors | Odds Ratio | Regression Coefficient | Standard Errors | Odds Ratio |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Model 1: Student-Level Variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Born in the U.S. | 1.10 | .71 | -- | .48 | .56 | -- |
| Geographic Diversity Index | .43 | 1.20 | -- | 2.64** | .73 | 13.99** |
| Family Household Income | .23 | .21 | -- | .50 ⁺ | .27 | 1.64 ⁺ |
| Age | .05 | .06 | -- | -.04 | .03 | -- |
| LSAT Scores | .00 | .04 | -- | .03 | .06 | -- |
| Attended a HBCU | -- | -- | -- | 1.71** | .38 | 5.50** |
| <i>School-Level Variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Racial Diversity Index | -13.31** | 3.86 | .00** | 4.73 | 4.04 | -- |
| School Selectivity | .39 | 1.90 | -- | -9.16 | 9.91 | -- |
| School Tuition Cost | -1.62** | .54 | .20** | -5.92* | 2.36 | .00* |
| School Size | -1.77** | .54 | .17** | 60.38* | 25.46 | -- |
| <i>Model 2: Application and Admissions</i> | | | | | | |
| Number of Law School Applications | -.03 | .05 | -- | .11 | .08 | -- |
| Number of Acceptances | -.00 | .17 | -- | -.84** | .18 | .43** |
| Number of HBLS Applications | -.01 | .35 | -- | 3.89** | 1.10 | 49.07** |
| <i>Model 3: Student Aid</i> | | | | | | |
| Undergraduate Student Aid | -5.09** | 1.96 | .01** | -.15 | .26 | -- |
| Undergraduate Student Loans | 5.49* | 2.35 | 243.27* | -.13 | .59 | -- |
| <i>Model 4: Ethnic Identity Variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Ethnic Identity | .33* | .15 | 1.39* | .06 | .16 | -- |

Table 4 (Continued)

Predicting HBCU and HBLS Enrollment as a Function of Student and Undergraduate School-Level Characteristics

| | Attended a HBCU | | | Attended a HBLS | | |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | Regression Coefficient | Standard Errors | Odds Ratio | Regression Coefficient | Standard Errors | Odds Ratio |
| <i>Model 5: Experiences with Discrimination</i> | | | | | | |
| Everyday Discrimination | -.10 | .09 | -- | .00 | .04 | -- |
| Lifetime Discrimination | -.81* | .41 | .45* | 1.05** | .40 | 2.86** |
| Professional Barriers Due to Race | .11* | .04 | 1.11* | -.00 | .04 | -- |
| <i>Model 6: Peer and Intergroup Relations</i> | | | | | | |
| College Contact | -.96** | .17 | .38** | -.11 | .07 | -- |
| Extracurricular Group Around Race/Ethnic Identity | .45** | .12 | 1.56** | -.27** | .08 | .77** |
| Ability to Work Cooperatively | 1.16** | .38 | .317** | .56** | .20 | 1.75** |
| <i>Model 7: Academic Performance</i> | | | | | | |
| Expected Hours Relative to Peers | -.06 | .20 | -- | .20 | .19 | -- |
| Self-Rated Academic Ability | -.24 | .26 | -- | -.14 | .16 | -- |
| College Grade Point Average | .73 | .65 | -- | .09 | .60 | -- |
| <i>Model 8: Reasons for Entering Law School</i> | | | | | | |
| To Work for Social Justice | -.65 ⁺ | .38 | .52 ⁺ | -.57** | .21 | .57** |
| To Help Influence the Community | .99** | .37 | 2.68** | .01 | .09 | -- |
| Become an Expert | -.05 | .09 | -- | .15 ⁺ | .09 | 1.16 ⁺ |

Note. HBCU = Attended a Historically Black Undergraduate Institution versus a Traditionally White Undergraduate Institution; HBLS = Attended a Historically Black Law School versus a Traditionally White Law School. -- denotes a non-significant or a non-applicable finding.

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, ⁺ $p < .10$

Response Scales for the Variables:

Parental Racial Socialization, College Contact, Extracurricular Group Around Race/Ethnic Identity = 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*)

Ethnic Identity = 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very*)

Everyday Discrimination = 1 (*never*) to 4 (*almost every day*)

Lifetime Discrimination = 0 (*no*) to 2 (*yes, a lot*)

Professional Barriers Due to Race, Expected Hours Relative to Peers = 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*)

Ability to Work Cooperatively, Self-Rated Academic Ability, Emotional Stability = 1 (*lowest 10%*) to 6 (*highest 10%*)

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