

Public Abstract

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Relationship Attitudes

The look of Black marriages and families has changed over the past five decades. Specifically, almost three-fourths of marriages are ending in divorce or indefinite separation, 39% of Black marriages are single-parent headed, twice as many Black people are unmarried as compared to whites, and Blacks are remarrying at lower rates (Lawson & Thompson, 1994; Patterson, 1998; US Census Bureau, 2000). In trying to address the marital and familial issues that Black couples are facing, the helping profession is lacking cultural consideration. These lacks of consideration of cultural factors that may impact relationship dynamics are being overlooked and we may be missing important information that could be vital in addressing their issues. There is no known relationship assessment that uses an Afrocentric approach (placing African and African American values at the core of examination) and thus, the purpose of this study was to develop and validate the Whitlow Measure of Afrocentric Relationship Attitudes. Statistical analyses (confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis) determined that the participants consider three main areas as important in African relationship success: (a) a focus on African American community involvement, for the purposes of elevating the Black community, (b) a focus on relationship equality and family advancement, and (c) a reliance on a higher power within the relationship. This scale can be useful among research, practice, and social activism endeavors.