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# Racial Socialization and African American Students' Academic Motivation and Self-Efficacy and Likelihood Attending Graduate School

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*Walden University*

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Judith A. Parker

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University  
2016

Abstract

Racial Socialization and African American Students' Academic Motivation and Self-

Efficacy and Likelihood Attending Graduate School

by

Judith Parker

MS, Walden University, 2010

BA, California State University, Sacramento, 1985

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Counseling Psychology

Walden University

January 2017

## Abstract

Enrollment by African American students in U.S. colleges and universities has increased since 2009, but graduation and retention remains low for this group. Within the African American community, education is considered a central aspect of social empowerment; however, the effect of discrimination, bias, and stereotyping are key when considering achievement indices within a cultural framework. The coping mechanisms that African Americans have developed to combat discrimination, bias, and stereotype threat may contribute to poor performance in college. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between racial socialization and African American students' academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and likelihood of attending graduate school. Drawing from self-determination theory, it was hypothesized that the variables have a positive relationship. A quantitative survey design was used. One hundred-three African American undergraduate students were recruited via convenience sampling to participate in an online survey. Results from a multiple regression analyses indicated no significant relationship between the variables. The findings from this study are not consistent with previous findings that indicate racial socialization has an impact on African Americans' academic performance and motivations, implying the need for future research to include multiple variables that might impact outcomes such as family functioning, access to educational resources, or peer association. Greater numbers of African Americans enrolled in undergraduate programs may, in turn, increase the pool of participants eligible to attend graduate programs. Future research can help parents, researchers, and practitioners better understand the diverse and unique needs of African American youths.

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my family, friends and colleagues.

They extended continual support and patience throughout this process.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Hedy Dexter, who provided support, encouragement, patience and guidance during this process. I would also like to extend my thanks to my committee member, Dr. Brandon Cosley, for his support and guidance. You have both helped to develop my skills as a researcher.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### Introduction

The educational achievement gap facing African Americans is one of the most prevalent problems in the United States (Scott, Taylor, & Palmer, 2013). After passage of the “No Child Left Behind Act” of 2002, U.S. states faced increased pressure to address the educational achievement gap in public school systems (Gardiner, Canfield-Davis, & Anderson, 2009). Efforts have been made to address the achievement gap primarily within the elementary, middle school, and high school environments; however, addressing the achievement gap of African Americans is also important within the higher educational domain, specifically graduate education (Rowley & Wright, 2011).

African Americans’ experience in school environments is particularly challenging given the history of structural racism and racial stereotyping within the U.S. educational system. *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) legalized segregation in schools as long as “separate but equal” standards were adhered to regarding African American and Caucasian universities and institutions (State Department of Education, 1935). The inferior quality of African American law schools set a precedent for *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), overturning the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ‘separate but equal’ doctrine in public schools (Lavergne, 2010).

Although these landmark cases ended segregation for African American’s in U.S schools generally, access to higher education has still been challenging given persistent bias and discrimination (Gaylord-Harden & Cunningham, 2009). There have been numerous initiatives proposed (e.g., affirmative action) in the 1980s to address the continued underrepresentation of African Americans in higher education (Veilig,

Reddick, Hamilton,& Dietz, 2011). For this study the importance of these issues lies in the historical struggles African Americans face, past and present, regarding bias, discrimination and stereotyping within the educational system, specifically higher education. Failing to understand the reactive coping responses that bias and discrimination create can lead to an inaccurate analysis of this population (Forsyth & Carter, 2012). Within the African American community education is considered a central aspect of social empowerment; however, the effect of certain factors such as discrimination, bias, and stereotyping are key factors when considering achievement indices within a cultural framework (Masse, Perez,& Posselt, 2010).

Research suggests that African American students are negatively impacted by factors of discrimination, bias and stereotyping (Johnson-Bailey, Valentine, Cervero & Bowles, 2009). The need for African American students to perform well in an academic setting can be coupled with feeling that they must disprove or invalidate unflattering assumptions about their race (Barker, 2011). African American students may spend twice the amount of time on assignments in order to challenge stereotyping. This can lead African American students to feel a sense of cultural alienation and isolation in collegiate settings and can influence their judgment and perceptions about themselves (Barker, 2011). This can also affect achievement and motivation, and can result in low-self-efficacy beliefs (Gay, 2004). Studies indicate that these experiences relate to the academic achievement outcomes for African American students, specifically within higher educational domains (Sanchez et al., 2011).

Given the racial and economic inequalities that are reflected in the American educational system, it is important to consider how African American families can help to



promote academic success of their children. Research suggests that racial socialization can be used by parents to help their children adapt to the challenges within the school context. Racial socialization is defined as the process whereby parental messages are conveyed to children about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding culture, race, and bias (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Helping to develop skills needed to cope with race-based challenges they will likely face, racial socialization can provide African American children with awareness that can create positive outcomes throughout their educational journey (Friend, Hunter, & Fletcher, 2011). Understanding the way racial socialization influences African American students' academic self-efficacy and academic motivation, and in turn affects their academic performance and pursuit of graduate education, is an important socially-significant insight.

This study will help parents gain a better understanding of the causes of achievement gaps for African Americans. Gay (2004) posits that African American students can feel a sense of isolation and alienation because a college campus climate is often not inclusive of their cultural experiences. Felder, Stevenson, and Gasman (2014) contends this can cause African American students to question their own abilities and worth, creating feelings of being undervalued or unrecognized. Racial socialization can help parents' foster positive attitudes, and perceptions, of the college experience. Racial socialization can also help youths to develop cognitive competence creating the ability to solve problems and make decisions (Felder, Stevenson,& Gasman, 2014). Equity in academic attainment is an important social change concept for this population. The future economic status of African Americans in America relates to their ability to achieve academically (Ridley & Wales, 2014). The following sections will present the

background, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, theoretical foundation, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope, limitations, and significance of the study.

### **Background**

Although supportive parenting is a universal concept, African American parents must also deal with the challenges of rearing their children within a context of racial bias. There has been a shift in the approach to the educational achievement gap experienced by African Americans (Barbarin & Jean-Baptiste, 2013). Researchers argue that cultural factors may have a significant influence on how well this population performs within school environments as opposed to comparing traditional achievement indices such as test scores with their Caucasian counterparts (Evans et al., 2012). Scholars theorize that ecological, cultural, and family processes may explain the academic outcomes of African American youths. Examination of African American students' school, home, and neighborhoods has been explored in order to identify successful adaptation and coping strategies (Evans et al., 2012); however, the devaluing of minorities within American society creates the necessity for African American parents to incorporate race and bias into the socialization efforts with their children.

Interpretation of racial socialization messages can vary across African American families. They can be indirect, direct, verbal, nonverbal, covert, or overt (Wang & Huguley, 2012). Racial socialization is defined as the process whereby parents convey messages that prepare youths to deal with bias, and is termed preparation for bias. Racial socialization also identifies the way parents convey messages about cultural pride and heritage which is termed cultural socialization (Wang & Huguley, 2012). There is

research that documents inconsistencies in how effective racial socialization is in mitigating experiences of stereotyping, bias, and discrimination; however, the research supports the importance of examining the context in which racial socialization messages are conveyed (Elmore & Gaylord-Harden, 2013). Examination of how youths interpret messages, as well as the level of parent-child relationships that encompass warmth, support, and acceptance, is important (Elmore & Gaylord-Harden, 2013).

Researchers emphasize that specific pressures faced by the African American population, such as racism and stereotype threat, can undermine success in academic environments (Johnson-Ahorlu, 2013). Stereotype threat is explained as anxiety experienced when there is fear of fulfilling or being associated with a specific stereotype (Johnson-Ahorlu, 2013). Research indicates that stereotype threat has the power to impair academic performance through lower test performance, disengagement in classrooms, non-participation in study groups, and reluctance to seek academic support (Johnson-Ahorlu, 2013). Therefore, a supportive environment that promotes racial socializing, based on traditions and cultural legacies of successes and competence, can help to develop a mindset that encompasses motivation to achieve academically (Neblett, Chavous, Nguyen, & Sellers, 2009).

Kim and Hargrove (2013) explain that students' interpretations of the school environment, such as experiences of racial microaggressions, can impede their academic self-efficacy and motivation. Racial microaggressions are ambiguous forms of racism, whereby thoughts, feelings, and experiences of people of color are subtly snubbed or negated. Additionally, Johnson-Ahorlu (2013) contends that stereotyping and stereotype

threat are factors that can significantly contribute to barriers that create low retention and degree completion for African American students.

Support exhibited by parents in the form of transmitting racial socialization messages (cultural socialization and preparation for bias) has been shown to help mitigate the experiences of bias, discrimination, and stereotyping (Seaton, Yip, Morgan-Lopez, & Sellers, 2012). Harper (2012) suggests coping mechanisms that are applied by some African American students are psychologically framed within a “prove them wrong” concept in response to negative stereotyping. This response is exhibited by fostering strong relationships with faculty and mentors as well as maintaining strong familial ties. Being racially socialized to understand the inequality and bias associated with the African American experience has positive outcomes in academic achievement and is considered a positive coping mechanism (Cooper & McLoyd, 2011). Supportive parenting in the form of racial socialization helps to model pro-social behaviors to youths such as better engagement with peers, feelings of acceptance, and development of secure attachments.

Racial socialization has also been shown to promote adaptive psychological outcomes such as high academic self-efficacy and motivation (Cooper & McLoyd, 2011). Academic motivation encompasses (a) intrinsic motivation (e.g., engaging in tasks that are of interest, but have no reward); (b) extrinsic motivation (e.g., engaging in tasks because of rewards or potential outcomes, because of parental requests), and (c) amotivation (e.g., possessing a lack of interest in, or valuing school); (Clinkenbeard, 2012). Intrinsic motivation is considered to be the most self-determined form of motivation. In order to be intrinsically motivated, individuals must maintain a level of confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to achieve goals (Brophy, 2010). Academic

self-efficacy is defined as one's anticipated success in performing study-related activities within an academic environment (Hejazi, Shahraray, Farsinejad, & Asgary, 2009).

Possessing high academic self-efficacy beliefs can help students to approach scholastic demands as challenging obstacles to overcome. Research suggests that individuals who lack belief in their own abilities are at risk for dropping out of college (Jungert & Rosander, 2010). Research also indicates that academic self-efficacy can be influenced by socioeconomic status (Aguayo, Herman, Ojeda & Flores, 2011). Lack of educational resources, as well as time spent away from studying in order to work to fund educational pursuits, can lower academic self-efficacy. African American students' academic motivation and self-efficacy can be affected by external experiences of bias, discrimination and stereotyping, and can possibly create obstacles that prevent development of more intrinsic motivation (Jungert & Rosander, 2010).

Understanding the way that African Americans academic self-efficacy and academic motivation are influenced by racial socialization messages is important. Additionally, the influence of socioeconomic status (SES) on African Americans' academic self-efficacy is also important. Research indicates that racial socialization messages may be linked to academic engagement and development that can affect grade school, middle, and high school academic performance (Daire, LaMothe, & Fuller, 2007). A gap in the literature indicates that these concepts have largely not been researched as they apply to African Americans achievement of graduate education.

### **Problem Statement**

There is a significant underrepresentation of African Americans within the graduate-level educational domain (Maree, 2011). Therefore, it is important to

continually explore solutions for the ongoing struggle for equity in education. Studies indicate that racial socialization messages can serve as buffers against racial disparity (Evans et al., 2012). Racially socializing youths about group affiliation, social inequality, and racial pride can help youths to develop identities that facilitate a sense of empowerment, confidence, pride, academic achievement, and most importantly positive academic self-efficacy and motivation (Neblett, White, Ford, & Philip, 2008). It is possible that students' academic behavior may become less regulated by external conditions such as racial barriers (i.e., extrinsic motivation), and become more focused on achievement and goal-directed behavior (i.e., intrinsic motivation), through racial socialization messages received (Gaylord-Harden, Burrow, & Cunningham, 2012). There is limited research on how racial socialization may relate to African American undergraduates who are pursuing graduate-level education. Additional research is needed to build upon the existing literature to help understand if there is a relationship between racial socialization, using cultural socialization and preparation for bias as variables, and the academic-self-efficacy and academic motivation to achieve graduate education for African American students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This will be a quantitative study design to assess whether there is a linear relationship between cultural socialization and preparation for bias (independent variables) of African Americans and the academic motivation (dependent variable), academic self-efficacy (dependent variable) and likelihood to attend graduate school (dependent variable). The moderating relation between SES (moderating variable) and academic self-efficacy will also be explored.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

R1. Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy?

*H<sub>0</sub>1*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H<sub>a</sub>1*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.

R2. Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation?

*H<sub>0</sub>2*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

*H<sub>a</sub>2*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

R3. Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school?

*H<sub>0</sub>3*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

*H<sub>a</sub>3*: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

R4. Does SES moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

*H<sub>0</sub>4*: SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H<sub>a4</sub>*: SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

R5: Does SES moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

*H<sub>05</sub>*: SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H<sub>a5</sub>*: SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American student's academic self-efficacy.

A multiple regression analysis will indicate if there is a significant predictive linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and if SES moderates the relationship between the independent variables and academic self-efficacy. In these analyses, the dependent variables are (a) academic self-efficacy, (b) academic motivation, and (c) likelihood to attend graduate school. The independent variables are cultural socialization and preparation for bias, and SES will be the moderator variable. If the alpha level in the multiple regression analyses is below .05, then the model is a significantly better predictor than the mean of the dependent variable.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Self-determination theory was developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). The theory explains that individuals maintain a need for growth in their lives. Basic needs such as competence, relatedness and autonomy are important for human growth potential, and can influence motivation generating specific behavior regulated by internal or external forces. Individuals' behavior can be influenced by self-determined behavior or controlled behavior. Self-determined behavior is explained as behavior perceived to be internal,



whereas, controlled behavior is perceived as external. The theory describes motivation deriving from three components which are extrinsic motivation (e.g., being influenced by external forces such as reward or punishment), intrinsic motivation (e.g., being influenced by internal beliefs, values and interests) and amotivation (e.g., having no motivation to perform an activity). Research indicates that higher levels of intrinsic motivation can produce positive academic achievement outcomes for students. Self-determination theory is important to this study because it will address negative external influences on African Americans motivation. For instance, Ciani, Sheldon, Hilpert, and Easter (2011) states that negative external factors such as stereotype threat and bias can undermine African American students' intrinsic motivation. Self-determination can also be influenced by social and cultural factors that may positively or negatively influence individual initiative, performance, and motivation. Understanding the way racial socialization helps to regulate external factors such as bias, discrimination, and stereotyping can advance our understanding of how African American students develop intrinsic motivation, confidence, relatedness, and autonomy. Additionally, this theory helps to explain the relationship between racial socialization and the academic motivation and academic self-efficacy of African American students and their likelihood to attend graduate school. Chapter 2 will provide a more detailed analysis of the self-determination theory and how it relates to this research.

### **Nature of the Study**

African American undergraduate college students are the target population for this study. The sampling frame consists of African American undergraduate college students who are members of the National Black Student Union (NBSU), a national organization

of Black student unions from universities across the United States. The research questions aim to determine if there is a significant linear relationship between the independent variable (racial socialization) and the dependent variables (academic self-efficacy, academic motivation, and likelihood to attend graduate school). The quantitative research design is the only method by which these questions can be addressed in a statistically-significant manner. In this study, the two independent variables are cultural socialization and preparation for bias, which are both components of racial socialization, measured using the Racial Socialization Scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale (Bandura, 1989) and the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al., 1992) will be used to assess academic self-efficacy and academic motivation, respectively. The Value of Education Scale (Eccles et al., 1983) will be used to assess likelihood to attend graduate school. The Hollingshead Four-Factor Index (Hollingshead, 1975) will be used to measure the SES moderating variable. The raw scores will be used as the dependent variable in the multiple regression analysis, with cultural socialization and preparation for bias being the independent variables.

This study utilizes a quantitative survey design to assess whether preparation for bias and cultural socialization of African Americans are predictors of academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and likelihood to attend graduate school. Using the convenience sampling approach, individual members of the NBSU will be sent an e-mail requesting their voluntary participation in a study. The survey instrument will be created in the Survey Monkey online survey tool. A link to the online survey tool will be generated and sent to the NBSU in an email that they will distribute to their members.

Descriptive statistics will be performed on the demographics of the respondents, including gender, and age. Next, the internal reliability of the ASE, AMS-C, RSS, and VOE will be assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .7 or greater is acceptable (DeVallis 2003). Following this will be an assessment of the assumptions of the regression which include multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity.

### **Definitions**

*Academic motivation:* An individual's desire to learn and participate in learning-related activities, and the belief that school is important (Fan, Williams,& Wolters, 2012).

*Academic self-efficacy:* An individual's belief that they can successfully achieve at an academic level necessary to reach a specific academic goal (Uwah, McMahon,& Furlow, 2008).

*Amotivation:* An individual has no motivation to complete academic tasks (Stephan, Caudroit, Boiche,& Sarrazin, 2011).

*Cultural socialization:* Parental practices that teach African American children about their history and heritage (Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

*Extrinsic motivation:* The motivation is derived from an individual's anticipated external rewards in completing the task (Prat-Sala & Redford, 2010).

*Intrinsic motivation:* The motivation is derived from an individual's pleasure in performing the academic task and the sense of satisfaction in completing the task without receiving external rewards (Fan, Williams,& Wolters, 2012).

*Preparation for bias:* Parental practices that prepare African American children how to be cognizant of, and cope with discrimination (Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

*Racial identity*: An individual's self-concepts that relate to membership within a specific race (Thompson, Anderson, & Bakeman, 2000).

*Racial socialization*: Parental implicit and explicit messages that are conveyed to children about race in the face of adversity and racial bias (Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

### **Assumptions**

It is presumed that African American parents socialize their children in different ways, although collectively attempt to convey cultural aspects of what it means to be African American within the American culture (Hughes & Chen, 1997). To address this, the Racial Socialization Scale (RSS) (Hughes & Chen, 1997) will be used to assess the relationships of cultural socialization and preparation for bias as separate hypotheses. It is presumed that African American parents collectively attempt to promote positive emotional development as it relates to issues of racial discrimination and stereotype (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The significance of external factors that may affect the overall academic motivation and self-efficacy of African American students supports the presumption that racial socialization can help to mitigate negative experiences and promote pursuit of a graduate education.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study will confine itself to African American undergraduate students, ages 18 plus years old. The age of the participants is important in order to help determine how an older student population makes decisions about pursuing a graduate education. Students will be chosen from the National Black Student Union (NBSU), a national organization of Black student unions from universities across the United States. Choosing African American students from universities throughout the United States is

important because it helps to generalize the findings of the effects of parental racial socialization messages. Although Elmore and Gaylord-Harden (2013) report that racial socialization messages can be conveyed and interpreted by younger children, the sample will be generalizable only to undergraduate students. The intent is to gain knowledge of how college-age youths interpret their racial socialization experiences. Additionally, a wider scope of universities helps to broaden the concept of how academic motivation and self-efficacy can develop among this population.

### **Limitations**

Nonresponse bias could pose a threat to this study which can influence the results if a low return rate reduces the sample size. To overcome this threat, participants and non-participants will be sent a follow-up email to either participate or complete the survey. If respondents already completed the survey, they will be asked to ignore the email. Since we are not collecting email addresses; the NBSU will be responsible for emailing its members.

Participants may find some questions ambiguous since they will be completing the study on the Internet without the researcher being present to respond to questions. To mitigate this, participants will be given the contact information of the researcher to clarify any questions or concerns they have. Additionally, self-report instruments tend to raise concerns with social desirability. Participants will be told that all their responses will be anonymous with no threat of tracking the respondent of each survey.

One foreseen limitation of convenience sampling is that it may not be representative of the overall population (Fässler, Meissner, Schneider, & Linde, 2010). To mitigate the effect of the convenience sampling approach, statistical tests that rely on

population estimates such as means or proportions will not be used. Instead, tests using regressions coefficients, which are less subject to bias, will be used (Field, 2012).

### **Significance of the Study**

Research indicates that African American students' connections with African American role models are more successful in higher educational settings and can increase the level of academic success for this population (Pitts, 2009). In order to increase the number of African American faculty and administrators serving as role models within higher educational environments, it is first important to address factors that contribute to African American students' low retention and graduation rates (Sibulkin & Butler, 2011). Of particular interest to this study is the relationship among preparation for bias and cultural socialization, which are components of racial socialization, academic motivation and self-efficacy, and likelihood to attend graduate school (Gaylord-Harden, Elmore, & Oca, 2013). This study emphasizes the importance of racial socialization agendas that African American parents utilize in order to insure adaptive academic functioning of children as they progress to college-age. Preparing youths to interpret and cope with prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes from the external world can help them to deal with the social injustices they will likely encounter. Understanding the diverse and unique needs of African American youths is important for parents, researchers and practitioners in order to address the academic underachievement indices associated with this population.

There are significant historical social and cultural barriers that African Americans have experienced in attaining graduate education (Charleston, 2012). Although African Americans have made impressive progress through integration of educational institutions,

laws and statutes, there is extensive literature addressing the continued barriers that African American students encounter in their academic pursuits (Charleston, 2012). Therefore, it is extremely important to add to the literature that addresses equity in academic achievement for this population. Bringing about social change regarding graduate level pursuits for African Americans is important for their future economic status in America.

### **Summary**

The introduction of this study presented a conceptualization of the historical experiences of African American's experience of discrimination and bias related to achieving graduate education. Additionally, discussion of the current social and cultural challenges that are still in existence, despite the numerous initiatives developed that have addressed the underrepresentation of this population within higher education, was presented. The reactive coping mechanisms that African American youths exhibit in response to these issues could put them at risk for dropping out of college or not pursuing a graduate level education.

This quantitative study will address academic motivation and self-efficacy as two factors that can significantly influence how African American students cognitively process pursuit of a graduate degree. Both of these can be affected by experiences of discrimination, bias, and stereotype. African American students' perception of their own abilities can be undermined by these issues. Racial socialization messages transmitted by parents may relate to how African American students respond to these types of experiences. Being racially socialized to deal with inequality and racial disparity has been shown to have positive outcomes in academic achievement for this population.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a quantitative research design to assess if there is a relationship between racial socialization, using cultural socialization and preparation for bias as variables (independent variables), academic motivation (dependent variable), academic self-efficacy (dependent variable), the SES moderating variable, and likelihood of African Americans to attend graduate education (dependent variable). A multiple regression analysis will be utilized to indicate if there is a significant predictive linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-determination theory is used as the theoretical foundation for this study which will be addressed in more detail in the literature review. An on-line survey will be administered to students who are members of the NBSU. The population will be limited to African American undergraduate students' age 18 plus years. Chapter 2 presents the introduction to the literature review, relevance of the problem, major sections of the chapter, literature search strategy, an explanation of the self-determination theory, and the literature review related to key variables of racial socialization, academic self-efficacy and academic motivation.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

African Americans' educational achievement is measured as considerably lower than their Caucasian counterparts (Travis & Ausbrooks, 2012). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2013) report that in 2006, bachelor's degrees or higher were completed by 90% of Caucasians versus 81% for African Americans enrolled in higher educational institutions. Part of the African American experience, within American culture, is related to the effects of personal and institutional discrimination, bias, stereotyping, and the long-term effects of low social status (Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, & Jackson, 2009).

Negative stereotyping associated with one's race can significantly undermine scholastic performance (Reitzes & Jaret, 2007). Sherman et al. (2013) reported that factors such as stress, uncertain belonging, and stereotype threat that occur from being a member of a marginalized racial group can account for educational achievement gaps and motivation. Sherman et al. explained that identity threat can occur for students when their self-view is challenged by stereotype threat. Identity threat can result from factors such as discrimination, exclusion, marginalization, and underrepresentation based on minority status. Within a classroom setting a student who experiences identity threat may interpret or scrutinize an instructor's nonverbal behavior as evidence of bias rather than attend to issues related to the material being presented (Howard, 2011).

Woodcock, Hernandez, Estrada, and Schultz (2012) posited that stereotype threat, as well as classroom and testing performance, can have an impact on motivation and belief in one's own ability to achieve. Maintaining a sense of belonging, and belief in

one's skills, abilities, and resources, can affect the decision to remain within a specific domain such as college (Nadler & Clark, 2011). The experience of negative assumptions about one's innate ability to complete coursework can have an impact on the academic motivation and self-efficacy of African American students (Nadler & Clark, 2011).

Prejudice and stereotype threat also impact academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. Academic motivation is comprised of the following three components: (a) extrinsic motivation (e.g., being influenced by external forces such as reward or punishment), (b) intrinsic motivation (e.g., being influenced by internal beliefs, values and interests), and (c) amotivation (e.g., having no motivation to perform an activity). Pursuing a graduate degree could be influenced by one or all of these processes (Banerjee, Harrell, & Johnson, 2011). Academic self-efficacy is an individual's belief that he or she can successfully achieve (a) academic tasks at a specific level and (b) specific academic goals. Academic self-efficacy beliefs can influence the level of effort put forth when confronted with challenges (Byars-Winston, et al., 2010). Research indicates that academic self-efficacy can also be influenced by socioeconomic status (SES).

Racial socialization is the transmission of parental messages conveyed to children about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding culture (cultural socialization), stereotyping and bias (preparation for bias). Racial socialization has a significant impact on African Americans' level of functioning throughout the lifespan, especially as it pertains to academic performance and establishing and maintaining motivations and positive attitudes, as well as perceptions of the college experience (Murry et al., 2005; Smalls, 2009). Being racially socialized to understand the inequality associated with

being African American, and the importance of racial pride, have positive outcomes in academic achievement (Murry, Berkel, Brody, Miller, & Chen, 2009).

A gap in the literature indicates that these factors have been under-researched when applied to African Americans' achievement of graduate education. The purpose of this quantitative study is to build upon the existing literature that assesses if there is a predictive linear relationship between cultural socialization and preparation for bias (independent variables), academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, SES as a moderating variable (dependent variables), and African Americans' likelihood to attend graduate school (dependent variable).

### **Relevance of the Problem**

There has been a major change in the racial makeup of the U. S. population. The US Census Bureau (2010) predicts that over one-third of the population will be ethnic minority by the year 2050. Maton, Kohout, Wicherski, Leary, and Vinokurov (2006) discuss issues related to the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in graduate level training and education. The importance of these trends relates to the necessity of generating ethnically diverse, competent practitioners, educators, and researchers to meet the needs of a diverse student body within the graduate level educational domain. By increasing the number of African Americans enrolled in undergraduate programs, the presence of these students can affect the pool of participants eligible to attend graduate programs (Maton et al., 2006).

African American students have a strong desire to pursue graduate education; however, once transitioned into the educational domain, performance and retention plummet. Tuitt (2010) explained that invisibility is one of the psychological experiences

that African American students may face. Gay (2004) stated that upon entering the higher educational domain, African Americans do not feel the campus climate is inclusive of their cultural experiences, and hence feel a sense of isolation and alienation. Gay explained that academic success of African American students can depend upon validation and approval. People's perception of others can be affected by the appearance of stereotypical traits of a specific group (Livingston & Pearce 2009; Sanchez, Liu, Leathers, Goins, & Vilain, 2011). Sanchez et al. contended that this can cause inner conflict for African Americans by questioning their own abilities and worth, creating feelings of being undervalued or unrecognized.

Although African American student attendance in college has increased over the past decades, academic success remains low (Lemmens, Du Plessis, & Maree, 2011). This may be attributed to the way in which African American youths develop coping mechanisms to combat risk contributors such as discrimination, bias and stereotype threat (Cooper, Brown, Metzger, Clinton, & Guthrie, 2013). This study is relevant because it is important to understand how racial socialization has the potential to mitigate the effects of discrimination, bias, and stereotype threat. This literature review is a synthesis of articles on the relationships between racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias), academic self-efficacy, academic motivation and pursuit of a graduate education for African American students.

### **Major Sections of the Chapter**

This literature review begins with a comprehensive analysis of Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory and addresses the theory as the most appropriate framework for this study. Next, a discussion of this study's key variables is presented.

Racial socialization is conceptualized by seminal research indicating two dimensions that emerge consistently: cultural socialization and preparation for bias, and how these concepts relate to age. Next, a detailed discussion of academic self-efficacy is presented with additional focus on African Americans and academic self-efficacy, followed by academic self-efficacy and ethnic identity. Following the academic self-efficacy discussion, an analysis of academic motivation is presented followed by ethnic/racial identity. Each section presented in this literature review demonstrates the necessity of the proposed study in order to address gaps in the literature.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

The focus of the literature review developed from searching Walden University databases included Academic Search Complete, Psych INFO and Soc INDEX, Education Research Complete, and ERIC, with basic searches of African Americans or Blacks. Various search terms were utilized which included combinations of the following: racial socialization, discrimination, racism, ethnic and racial identity development and coping processes. A basic search of academics utilizing various search terms to include self-determination theory, academics, academic achievement, graduate education, higher education, academic self-efficacy, academic self-esteem, achievement and motivation, academic motivation, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, amotivation, as well as coping mechanisms and self-processes was conducted. A broad search of higher educational achievement was conducted utilizing various search terms including: college attendance, postsecondary education, secondary social support, peer influence, school acculturation, and parental support.

A significant portion of this literature review is drawn from peer-reviewed publications dating back five years. A small percentage of the research presented dates back 15 years as it is still significantly relevant to the discussion of African Americans' and academic self-efficacy and academic motivation to achieve graduate education, as well as these issues being relevant to the effects of racial socialization.

### **Self-Determination Theory**

Self-Determination theory, developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), provides a comprehensive view of motivation that accounts for regulation, energization, and cognitive social contexts. Self-determination theory explains that humans are oriented toward growth and competence, and that motivation for a specific behavior can be regulated by internal choice or external force. The two components of behavior described within this construct are self-determined behavior and controlled behavior. Self-determined behavior is explained as behavior perceived to be internal. Controlled behavior is perceived to be external.

Self-determination theory describes motivated behavior as deriving from three sources: extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, and amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Extrinsic motivation operates under the perception of external rewards or punishment one may receive when carrying out a specific task. The satisfaction may lie in the positive outcomes of the activity, rather than the enjoyment of performing it. Intrinsic motivation is performing tasks based on the level of interest and satisfaction one may derive from carrying out a specific activity. Amotivation is the lack of interest for carrying out a specific task and a perceived lack of personal control. Academic motivation is based on a continuum of self-determination; intrinsic motivation is

considered to be the most self-determined form of motivation, whereas amotivation is the least.

African American students' motivation can be affected by external experiences of bias and discrimination. Self-determination theory helps to explain how racial socialization can serve as a protective factor to circumvent negative external experiences by developing behavior that is more self-directed. For purposes of this study, it is important to understand the extrinsic, intrinsic, and amotivation of African American students' persistence to achieve a graduate-level education. This theory helps to shed light on how racial socialization messages may contribute to developing more intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory posits that attaining goals involves being able to satisfy basic psychological needs such as competence, relatedness, and autonomy while pursuing the valued outcomes. The following section provides a more detailed discussion of this concept.

### **Self-Determination Theory and Motivational Needs**

Self-determination theory claims motivation is increased when individuals strive to meet the basic needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Guiffreda, Gouveia, Wall, & Seward, 2008). Within an academic setting, specific types of motivation are enhanced depending on the situation. Higher levels of intrinsic motivation are exhibited if competence, relatedness, and autonomy are supported increasing academic performance. Extrinsic motivation increases in situations where individuals feel they are controlled by factors outside of themselves (Taylor, Leves, Gagnon, Kwan, & Koestner, 2012).

Competence is the tendency to approach challenges that may exceed one's current level of ability (Watson & Battistich, 2006). Mastery of tasks that are challenging can

help to develop confidence and self-esteem. Minimally supportive learning environments can deter intrinsic motivation (Shen, McCaughtry, Martin, & Fahlman, 2009). In order to be intrinsically motivated, individuals must maintain a level of confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to achieve goals (Brophy, 2010).

Relatedness translates to individuals being in an environment where support and cooperative collaboration among peers and teachers can take place. The promotion of learning environments where students feel accepted can help foster a foundation that supports their exploration of self-directed interests (Noddings, 2005). Autonomy relates to students having the ability to explore personal interests and passions. Being able to initiate and regulate one's goals and pursuits can help foster the ability to carry out goal-directed behavior autonomously (Assor, Kaplan, Kanat-Maymon, & Roth, 2005).

Ciani, Nettles, and Lima (2011) found that intrinsic motivation increases when rewards meet the need for autonomy. When they do not, intrinsic motivation can be undermined (Ciani et al., 2011). Extrinsic motivation can have a strong impact on student self-determination depending on how individuals regulate external factors that may influence decisions or behavior. The following section will provide a more detailed discussion of external behavioral regulation.

### **External Behavioral Regulation**

Gagne and Deci (2005) described a continuum of four types of extrinsic motivation that can vary according to the way individuals may internalize external behavioral regulation. External regulation is the least autonomous form of motivation, whereby one carries out a task only to obtain rewards or avoid punishment. Introjected regulation is managing external consequences based on the internal pressures that may



arise such as guilt or anxiety (e.g., a student performs a task because an instructor requires it and may not want to disobey because it will create guilty feelings). Identified regulation is more autonomous because some internalization exists. For instance, an individual performs well in school in order to become a future architect; although the behavior is externally driven, the motivation is identified with goal-directed behavior or self-interest.

Integrated regulation is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation. Integrated regulation takes place when an individual examines his or her decision-making and finds it to be congruent with their personal beliefs and values. For instance, attending a lecture for extra credit outside of the classroom may feel right and suitable as opposed to creating feelings of guilt for not attending (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Osborne and Jones (2011) posit that behavior can be regulated depending on factors that result in positive outcomes. If external motivation becomes more self-endorsed then it begins to be valued and meaningful. Intrinsic motivation can also be influenced by environmental factors, because behavior can be driven by trying to meet psychological needs that provide autonomy, competence, and connection to relationships (Osborne & Jones, 2011).

Leal, Miranda, and Carmo (2013) sampled 259 undergraduate students enrolled in an Accounting Sciences program at a public higher education institution to assess motivation in the program in light of the self-determination theory. Combined factors of extrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, intrinsic motivation, and external regulation were analyzed. Students mostly presented as intrinsically motivated in a highly autonomous manner through indications that personal benefits from their activities, and

enjoyment in performing them, were evident. The results also indicated that combined factors of extrinsic motivation by external regulation can be higher for those students who are in the later years of their program than for students who are in their freshman year.

Leal et al. (2013) contends that the importance of achieving goals towards the end of the program is based on obtaining a diploma and getting a high-paying job. They showed that students' motivation can be regulated by external environmental factors as well as internal processes, especially for students who are in the senior year of their program. The proposed study aims to utilize a convenience sample of undergraduates in order to gain a clearer view of externally-regulated motivations for this population, specifically as it relates to attending graduate school. The Leal et al. findings were limited because only accounting degree programs were included. In order to extend the research, this study will utilize a sample of students enrolled in various degree programs.

In another qualitative study conducted by Tucker and Winsor (2013), four pre-dental and pre-pharmacy undergraduate African American students enrolled in a 4-year university were recruited to determine the influence of students' motivation and career persistence; a self-determinist theoretical approach encompassing intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables was used. Tucker and Winsor found there was a strong impact on extrinsic motivators such as verbal rewards from advisors, family, and mentors. While all participants exhibited intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation had a stronger impact on career persistence. They supported seminal research that indicated certain levels of external regulation can coexist with elevated intrinsic motivation. The authors contended that the cognitive process of self-determination is varied rather than linear. Tucker and

Winsor stressed that the inclusion of more fluid levels of the motivation continuum, such as the four types of extrinsic motivation discussed in the previous section, allowed for various (low, medium or high) levels of external regulation to overlap with intrinsic motivation.

Tucker and Winsor (2013) stressed that the experiences of students show intrinsic motivation is not undermined when intangible rewards, such as verbal phrase and support received from the social environment (e.g., parents and teachers), are present. Tucker and Winsor's study was limited in its generalizability as it was a qualitative study consisting only of four participants from one institution. The proposed study will utilize a quantitative approach where a sample of 100+ respondents will be recruited. Tucker and Winsor's findings helped to broaden the ongoing discussion of career persistence and student motivation as they relate to extrinsic behavioral regulation. The findings also helped to support the importance of the psychological impact of extrinsic motivation on students' persistence.

### **Conclusion**

Self-determination theory is important to this study because it addresses negative external influences on African Americans' motivation. For instance, Ciani, Sheldon, Hilpert, and Easter (2011) state that intrinsic motivation can be undermined by negative external factors such as stereotype threat and bias, thereby undermining African American student's intrinsic motivation. Stereotype threat suggests that individuals are vulnerable to underperforming if their referent group is viewed as intellectually inferior (Wout, Shih, Jackson, & Sellers, 2009). Minority students are fully aware of these perceptions and as a result are cognizant of the pressures to perform, and not to confirm,

the negative stereotype about their group. This can create anxiety which can impair student performance and cause subsequent disengagement from the academic domain to which they seek inclusion (Smith & Hopkins, 2004). Trumbull and Rothstein-Fisch (2011) posit that social and cultural factors such as stereotype threat, bias, and discrimination can facilitate or undermine individuals' sense of initiative, well-being, and quality of performance. They contend further, that motivation can vary according to culture, and what accounts for extrinsic motivation including the way it is used, can be culturally relevant.

To date, there is very little research on how racial socialization impacts academic motivation and academic self-efficacy in African Americans' pursuit of graduate education. In order to address these questions, self-determination theory will help to gain a better understanding of how racial socialization may help to regulate negative external factors such as stereotype threat and bias. If being racially socialized can create protection against negative external factors, then students may be able to focus on developing confidence, relatedness, and autonomy; racial socialization may also help students develop intrinsic motivation. Self-determination theory is relevant for purposes of this study based on the various extraneous factors that can contribute to African American students' academic motivation.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Variables**

#### **Racial Socialization**

The independent variable of racial socialization is the process of parental messages being conveyed to children about attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding culture, race, and bias. Seminal researchers indicate there are two prominent dimensions

of racial socialization practices that emerge consistently: (a) preparation for bias, e.g., how children encounter and respond to racial bias; and (b) cultural socialization, e.g., messages about ethnic pride and heritage (Neblett, Chavous, Nguyen, & Sellers, 2009; Robbins et al., 2007).

Neblett, Rivas-Drake, and Umana-Taylor (2012) posit that racial socialization is associated with positive outcomes in academic achievement. Racial socialization may serve as a buffer to circumvent experiences of discrimination within a school context. The proposed study hypothesizes that there is a relationship between the dimensions of racial socialization (e.g., preparation for bias and cultural socialization) and the desire of African Americans to pursue higher education. The following is a more detailed discussion of the effect of racial socialization, using factors of preparation for bias, and cultural socialization. Additionally, age -- as it pertains to parental transmission of racial socialization messages -- is discussed.

**Preparation for Bias and Cultural Socialization.** Preparation for bias is an element of racial socialization that remains unclear in the literature as to how it may affect youths' coping strategies. Wang and Huguley (2012) conducted a correlational analysis of 630 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade African American adolescents to ascertain how parental racial socialization such as cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages influences academic development and experiences of discrimination in school environments. Cultural socialization was a positive predictor of (a) aspirations to academic success and (b) the ability to combat discrimination experiences. Preparation for bias had less of an effect on educational outcomes. However, findings also supported preparation for bias as effective if employed in a manner that is engaging and supportive.

The authors stressed that context is very important; for instance, to prevent internalizing feelings of negative self-worth, it is more effective to help children understand how to buffer the effects of bias as opposed to generating feelings of anger and hate toward the offender (Wang & Huguley, 2012).

In another study conducted by Harris-Britt, Valrie, Kurtz-Costes, and Rowley (2007), 128 eighth grade African American students were assessed to determine how racial socialization messages, conceptualized as preparation for bias and racial pride (i.e., cultural socialization such as being proud of one's heritage), moderated the relationship between discrimination and self-esteem. The authors' intent was to explore how discrimination is experienced by this population. Harris-Britt et al. aimed to explore the type of racial socialization messages that could possibly mediate the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and self-esteem. Results of the study indicate that messages related to cultural history and racial pride mediated the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and self-esteem and that the relationship was linear.

Additionally, adolescents' perception of racial discrimination was directly related to lower self-esteem when minimally exposed to preparation for bias messages; however, the findings also support that consistently conveying preparation for bias messages creates a negative relationship between perceived discrimination and self-esteem. The authors purport that an overemphasis on prejudice and discrimination may be maladaptive. This may lead to adolescents feeling helpless and lacking control and result in lower self-esteem (Harris-Britt et al., 2007).

Harris-Britt et al. reported the study was limited because the participants were drawn from middle schools where African Americans are the majority. Therefore, the

results may not be representative of students from environments where they are the minority. However, the current randomly sampled African American undergraduate students will be from universities where demographics suggest greater diversity. There may or may not be majority African American populations. A more representative sample (a) helps to gain a better understanding of how cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages will be interpreted by students who are in all types of cultural environments and (b) make the findings more generalizable.

Frequent messages that convey concerns about being devalued (e.g., preparation for bias) due to discrimination practices may result in adolescents focusing more on racism, which can ultimately impact their level of self-esteem (Mandara, Gaylord-Harden, Richards, & Ragsdale, 2009). Frequently communicating issues about discrimination to adolescents can also possibly lead to internalizing negative self-worth. It can also impact their academic outcomes based on feelings of inadequacy and diminished control over one's environment (Rowles & Duan, 2010). However, preparing children to deal with discrimination and bias within American society is one of the factors that African American parents must face. It is important to assist African American youths in developing coping mechanisms to mitigate discriminatory experiences (Cooper & Smalls, 2010).

Cooper and Smalls (2010) reported that conveying preparation for bias messages can be effective if they are conveyed in a manner that promotes self-worth and development of close parental relationships. This study intends to assess how African American college students have interpreted messages related to preparation for bias and cultural socialization in order to gain additional knowledge of their effectiveness.

Because findings show that the two dimensions of racial socialization lead to different consequences, this study will assess cultural socialization and preparation for bias as separate questions each with two hypotheses.

In order for children to function within and outside an educational setting, it is thought that parents must teach their children to negotiate experiences of bias and discrimination effectively (Hughes et al., 2006). It is important to build upon the existing literature in order to assess factors of preparation for bias and cultural socialization to determine how these racial socialization messages are interpreted by students and their motivation to achieve graduate level education. Understanding how these messages are internalized throughout the lifespan by this population helps to further elucidate subsequent negative or positive academic outcomes.

An additional important component of transmitting racial socialization messages is consideration of the age of the child. The following section will discuss how racial socialization influences youths at various age levels.

**Age and Racial Socialization.** Racial socialization messages transmitted through parents can be internalized by youths in different ways depending on their reactive coping mechanisms, self-processes, age, and context. For instance, Elmore and Gaylord-Harden (2013) conducted a study of 150 parents of children in 4th through 8th grade (mean age 11 years) enrolled in a family support agency. The study was designed to help identify protective family factors of African American youth in under-resourced communities such as the integrative role of racial socialization and supportive parenting styles (e.g., warmth, sensitivity, playfulness and acceptance). Correlational analysis was used to test the moderating role of supporting parenting styles and racial socialization



messages on internal (e.g., depression, anxiety) and external behaviors (e.g. delinquency). Elmore and Gaylord-Harden found that the effect of racial socialization on internal and external behavior for this population was unclear but that supportive parenting styles were associated with lower levels of negative outcomes.

Additionally, they suggested that the age of the child may influence the type of messages conveyed. Older children are more likely to receive messages related to racial bias based on parents believing that younger children may not be able to cognitively process the experiences of racial bias. Children (11 years and under) who receive more messages related to racial pride (e.g., cultural socialization) may develop a heightened awareness, but are not prepared to respond to experiences related to discrimination. In order to help understand African American students' lack of motivation to engage in graduate level education, further research with undergraduates (18+ years) will be used in the this study. An older sample of students may be better able to process their experiences more fully which helps to assess whether there is a relationship between racial socialization and motivation to pursue graduate education.

A limitation of the study indicated that it may have been more effective to report youths' responses to parental racial socialization efforts in order to provide more accuracy, rather than obtaining responses from parents. It was thought that parents' responses may reflect their own perceptions of ideal racial socialization efforts rather than their actual efforts (Elmore & Gaylord-Harden, 2013). This study will solicit responses directly from students, as opposed to retrieving responses from parents, in order to achieve more accuracy.

The implications of racial socialization indicate that experiences, attitudes, and beliefs can change over time. The process is not stable and can change from adolescence to adulthood depending on (a) how messages are conveyed and interpreted, and (b) at what point during development these communications occur (Woods & Kurtz-Costes, 2007). These findings have the potential to add to the literature by helping to understand the potential for racial socialization to (a) mitigate the effects of stigmatization, stereotype threat, bias, and discrimination as well as (b) make graduate-level achievement more likely by increasing academic self-efficacy and academic motivation. It would be important in raising the awareness of parents and educators when considering the lack of academic success (e.g., retention and graduation) among African American students as compared to their Caucasian counterparts.

### **Academic Self-Efficacy**

The dependent variable of academic self-efficacy is defined as an individual's anticipated success, and his or her current capabilities, to perform academic study-related activities in order to achieve academic goals (Bandura, 1977; Jungert & Rosander, 2010). Academic self-efficacy beliefs can influence motivations and decisions in the face of difficulties, as well as affect specific causes of successes and failures and perceptions of environmental challenges (Bandura, 1977). Jungert and Rosander posited that students who possess high academic self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to view scholastic demands as a challenge and recognize them as obstacles to overcome as opposed to being avoided. The following provides a general discussion of (a) academic self-efficacy, (b) academic self-efficacy and African Americans, and (c) academic self-efficacy and ethnic identity.

There is a positive relationship between academic achievement and academic self-efficacy beliefs. Beliefs can affect and influence effort, persistence, and goal-setting processes (Hejazi, Shahraray, Farsinejad, & Asgary, 2009; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). Students who lack belief in their own ability to complete tasks will likely be less motivated and considered at-risk for dropping out of college (Fenollar, Roman, & Cuestas, 2007). High academic self-efficacy beliefs have been shown to predict occupational and career trajectories across various domains and age levels beyond the more traditional predictors of standardized achievement and cognitive abilities (Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Berbino, & Barbaranelli, 2010).

Bassi, Steca, Fave, and Caprara (2007) assessed perceived academic self-efficacy associated with academic pursuits and academic aspirations using 130 secondary-school adolescents (grouped as high or low self-efficacy). Students with high self-efficacy beliefs felt more capable of managing academic activities across three grade levels. Bassi et al. also reported higher grades and teacher evaluations and aspirations to pursue higher education. Students who exhibited low academic self-efficacy spent less time doing homework and preparing for exams. Low academic self-efficacy students had less confidence in managing academic activities, instead choosing to engage in activities such as eating or grooming themselves. Bassi et al. stated that these findings support the important correlation between academic self-efficacy beliefs and performance. Factors that can affect academic self-efficacy can be attributed to motivation, social and cultural values, beliefs, personal control, task value (reasons individuals possess for engaging in a particular task), interest, and quality of experience. If students receive repeated negative feedback on grades and classroom assignments, or experience

environmental contributors such as bias or stereotyping, perceived academic competence can be affected and contribute to low self-efficacy beliefs (Gaylon, Blondin, Yaw, Nalls, & Williams, 2012). Academic self-efficacy beliefs can increase or decrease depending on the context of the academic domain and perception of a given situation. For instance, setbacks or failures may affect individuals with low academic self-efficacy adversely, making it more difficult to recover their sense of academic self-efficacy (Friedel, Cortina, Turner, & Midgley, 2010).

Of particular importance to this study is the development of academic self-efficacy in African American students. Harris and Wood (2013) support the importance of understanding academic self-efficacy that may explain the differences in college retention between African American and Caucasian students.

**Academic Self-Efficacy and African Americans.** Peer association and school climate can affect beliefs about academic competence (Fife, Bond, & Byars-Winston, 2011). Edman and Brazil (2008) suggest that a positive campus climate is one of the important components for African American students attending universities. Edman and Brazil also state that negative perceptions of campus climate can contribute to low rates of academic success. It is important for students to feel a sense of belonging and community which can contribute to attitudes and behaviors.

Issues related to perceptions of prejudice, stereotype threat, discrimination, racial conflict, and marginalizations are prevalent concerns for African American students within university environments. Daire, LaMothe, and Fuller (2007) suggests these concepts may be attributed to perceptions of external problems related to limited opportunities and institutional barriers and can result in low self-efficacy. An alternate

hypothesis posed by Schweinle and Mims (2009) is that it is possible African Americans' maintain high academic self-efficacy in the face of issues such as discrimination and stereotype threat, based on shared racial heritage that can create a group identity that helps to maintain optimism and positive self-regard even in the face of disadvantages. Schweinle and Mims researched 243 mathematics students, and the effects of racial environmental factors such as stereotype threat on academic self-efficacy in mathematic classrooms. Schweinle and Mims found that African American students who feel part of a group maintain a sense of worth and resilience, and these factors are positively correlated to high self-efficacy beliefs in classrooms of predominately White students as well as classrooms of predominately Black students.

Stereotype threat was not a significant factor in the findings (Schweinle & Mims, 2009). Schweinle and Mims contend that identity with a group supports fortitude and resilience in spite of perceived stereotype threat or discrimination. However, the authors purport that although SES was not a variable used to conduct this study, prior research has shown that low-SES African American students' perception of failure after test-taking is greater, but this does not hold true for low-SES White students; additionally, middle-SES students of both races have indicated perceived success. A limitation of this study lies in whether SES could possibly be a factor that should be considered when hypothesizing that academic self-efficacy is high for African American students who identify with their group. It is plausible that academic self-efficacy across race is moderated by SES. To accommodate this finding this study will evaluate whether SES moderates the relationship between preparation for bias and cultural socialization and African American student's academic self-efficacy.

Schweinle and Mims' (2009) research is significant to this study because it indicates that African American students may benefit from cultural socialization messages about their heritage. Students may develop a stronger sense of belonging, autonomy and academic self-efficacy by understanding their shared heritage and feeling part of a group. It is possible that if African American students are racially socialized to understand their cultural history, and issues associated with being a minority within American society, they may be able to develop high self-efficacy beliefs. Perceptions of their own ability to achieve may be significantly influenced as well as their ability to deal with stereotypes about their culture.

DeFreitas (2012) examined African American first year college students and the relationship between self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and academic achievement. DeFreitas suggests that African American students who have negative outcome expectations (e.g., doubts about achieving a degree) have higher grades, and higher self-efficacy compared with African American students whose outcome expectations are positive. Negative outcome expectations are adaptive for African Americans' due to preparation for bias that is transmitted to African American youths from parents (DeFreitas 2012; Lee & Ahn, 2013). DeFreitas suggested it is plausible that encouragement and preparation for stereotyping and bias conveyed through racial socialization messages (i.e., preparation for bias and cultural socialization) may serve as a buffer; this preparation may prove useful in (a) instilling motivation and self-efficacy, and (b) rebelling against stereotypical notions throughout the lifespan. More importantly, DeFreitas states that racial socialization information was not collected to conduct this study. The author reports that it may have been useful to understand the positive

influence of racial socialization on outcome expectations. The proposed study aims to build on the existing literature by using the Racial Socialization Measure to identify whether it impacts African Americans' academic self-efficacy.

Okech and Harrington (2002) conducted a correlational study of 120 African American college students to assess the relationship among ethnic identity, self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy. Ethnic identity and self-esteem were highly correlated, but did not have an effect on academic performance. Okech and Harrington also found a significant relationship between ethnic identity and academic self-efficacy. Their findings suggest that African Americans may detach from the school setting in order to maintain their level of self-esteem and possible failure; however, in order to improve the academic performance of this population, strategies to improve academic self-efficacy would be most effective.

**Academic Self-Efficacy and Ethnic Identity.** Racial socialization messages transmitted by parents can influence the ethnic identity of African American students (Dotterer, McHale, & Crouter 2009). A primary focus for this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between racial socialization and academic self-efficacy among individuals receiving messages that are culturally relevant. If there is a relationship between ethnic identity and academic self-efficacy as discussed in the aforementioned section, then it is possible that racial socialization could help to improve academic self-efficacy as well. For instance, Shin (2011) conducted a study of 88 African American elementary school-age children to examine the relationships between Africentric values, racial/ethnic identity, neighborhood satisfaction and academic self-efficacy beliefs. The study indicates that Africentric values are the strongest predictor of

academic self-efficacy beliefs. Africentric values are principles that correspond to unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, purpose and faith. Shin found that students who identified with an Africentric worldview had a stronger connection to their families, community, and culture. The students had more confidence in their abilities to succeed and overcome academic challenges. One of the components of racial socialization, defined as cultural socialization, contains elements of Africentric concepts such as emphasis on cultural pride, spirituality, and reliance on extended kin networks. It is possible that racial socialization messages that convey cultural socialization messages may have a lasting effect on African American students as they transition to higher education.

Shin (2011) points out that one of the limitations of his study was that the research was gathered at magnet schools, which can potentially reach students living outside of the immediate neighborhood. This likely led to results which limited the generalizability of the findings. The proposed study intends to add to the literature by determining if there is a relationship between racial socialization and academic self-efficacy of African American students by recruiting participants from a university setting. Therefore, it is expected that students will come from various geographic locations. Deficits such as neighborhood circumstances will not be a consideration for this study.

It is reported that higher levels of academic success are associated with the level of self-efficacy displayed when attending college (Cokley, McClain, Jones, & Johnson, 2011). According to Bembenutty (2010), academic self-efficacy develops as a function of the goals of the classroom structure in conjunction with personal goal orientation and can persist across grade levels. Elias and MacDonald (2007) found that past performance



and mastery in high school (GPA) impact performance in college. Elias and MacDonald contend that past performance is a strong predictor of academic self-efficacy beliefs. Students exhibiting high academic self-efficacy and mastery of courses in elementary, middle and high school will likely show more persistence academically while attending college.

According to Joe and Davis (2009), children demonstrate more persistence in goal mastery, as well as put forth more effort to complete difficult tasks, if they receive high levels of support and encouragement from parents and teachers. Social support of this sort may be particularly salient when parenting African American youths if racial socialization messages are consistently conveyed. This may also apply as individual's transition through the lifespan and attempt to engage in higher educational pursuits such as graduate-level education.

### **Academic Motivation**

The dependent variable of academic motivation is considered one of the key factors for students' academic development and is strongly correlated to academic self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) defined motivation in three broad categories described as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated engage in tasks that are of interest to them, and have no apparent reward except for the enjoyment that is obtained by performing the task. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated engage in tasks because of the reward, or a specific outcome such as recognition or the task being prescribed by others. Amotivation is defined as possessing a lack of interest within a specific domain such as academics and that school

is not valued. The following is an explanation of the correlates of the three types of academic motivation followed by (a) social support, and (b) racial identity.

Mizuno, Tanaka, Fukuda, Imai-Matsumura, and Watanabe (2011) report that intrinsic motivation has been shown to result in positive academic outcomes such as better performance, quality of learning, and increased persistence and effort. These constructs are based on intrinsically motivated individuals being inherently motivated in the absence of external incentives. Intrinsic motivation comes from the concept of attribution (attribution of success can vary based on locus of control), and the focus on negative effects of rewards. This notion argues that individuals' perception of their behavior can be altered based on rewards possibly decreasing intrinsic motivation by discounting their own internal causes (e.g., skill, ability) (Clinkenbeard, 2012). However, Cameron, Pierce, Banko, and Gear (2005) purport that it is possible that intrinsic motivation can be increased by rewards for meeting normative standards on activities. Perceived competence is mediated by the effects of rewards based on meeting a standard of performance. They also posit that based on a social-cognitive perspective, rewards that are given for achievement can result in high personal standards which can lead to task involvement, positive performance, and increased self-efficacy (Cameron et al., 2005).

Alternately, Rowell and Hong (2013) explained that although extrinsic motivation is based on achieving rewards or avoiding punishments, it is also possible for extrinsically motivated individuals to internalize their motivations if their personal beliefs, values, perceptions, and goal directed behavior are a part of being socially oriented to achieve academically (e.g., parental influence through racial socialization)

even if academics are not inherently enjoyable activities. Rowell and Hong purport that students can progress from being entirely extrinsically motivated to being gradually intrinsically motivated by behaviors becoming less regulated by external conditions over time which can include perceived negative experiences related to bias and racial conflict. It is possible that externally-driven behavior, such as anticipation of rewards, can help strengthen intrinsic motivation for some students. Rewards can also help in developing competence, autonomy and relatedness.

Domene, Socholotiuk, and Woitowicz (2011) explain that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can co-occur for individuals. In their research, 380 undergraduate students were studied, using ANOVA statistical method, in order to discern whether career aspirations were linked to students' sense of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for their specific program of study, particularly Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) careers. Their hypothesis supported an understanding that students with high STM career outcome expectations were more highly motivated on dimensions of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation than their peers with low career outcome expectations in other fields of study. There was an indication that the students placed importance on careers that were fulfilling (intrinsic) and reflect their passion, as well as following careers where they were encouraged by parents to fulfill ambitions that are relevant for students. Domene et al. reported that these youths are motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically as opposed to purely intrinsically. This concept could possibly be based on the type of career pursuit and desired outcome (extrinsic). Students' desired outcomes can direct behavior whereby expectations can become more attached to intrinsic core beliefs. Extrinsically motivated individuals can potentially become more intrinsically motivated

if behavior becomes less regulated by negative external conditions such as bias and discrimination. Racially socializing youths to combat these risks can influence motivation. The desire to achieve academically can eventually be driven by intrinsic core beliefs that are strengthened by racial socialization messages.

Although some researchers indicate that being intrinsically motivated is a stronger indicator of persistence and academic achievement, it seems clear that extrinsic motivators can also have a strong influence on students' academic motivation such as parental encouragement and input as well as career pursuits. One of the limitations of Domene et al.'s study was that 89% of the participants were completing bachelors' degrees which may make it less applicable to students in other types of post-secondary programs such as trade certification programs. The proposed study's intent is to research only undergraduate students, and aims to extend the research by recruiting a sample that comprises academic programs of random fields, as opposed to only STM careers, which may make the findings more generalizable.

McCarron and Inkelas (2006) posited that social support is a critical factor to coping within an academic domain such as college. Of particular interest to this study is the possibility that social support received from parents, such as racial socialization messages, could have a significant impact on extrinsic or intrinsic motivation to achieve a graduate education.

**Social Support.** According to Legault, Green-Demers, and Pelletier (2006), lack of social support including families, teachers, and peers, can diminish academic motivation. Social support can include social assets, resources, advice, approval, comfort, or assistance. Hardaway and McLoyd (2009) stated that receiving social support versus

perception of social support is significant, because perception of social support holds a higher value for students. Reduced perception of social support correlates to lower levels of academic motivation. McCarron and Inkelas (2006) purported that first-generation college students can possibly be unsuccessful in attaining their educational aspirations, and be more likely to leave a 4-year institution than non-first-generation students based on perceptions of social support.

Van Etten, Pressley, McInerney, and Liem (2008) conducted a qualitative study of 91 college senior undergraduates to ascertain students' perspectives on what comprises academic motivation. Results were defined in two categories of external and internal factors. Internal factors involved past successes and failures, social class, and expectations about themselves. External factors consisted of course assignment characteristics, exams/assessments, rewards, feedback from family members, peers, and instructors, as well as the college environment. Of particular importance was the students' report that family members can enhance or undermine their academic motivation by conveying unrealistic demands and expectations, but they can also provide a level of support and encouragement. Van Etten et al. also found that in regards to peers support and encouragement to study, open-minded approaches to listening and communicating can be motivating. Expectations to meet specific goals were important considerations as well. This study indicates that strong social support has an influence on external factors that affect extrinsic motivation and can enhance academic motivation to achieve at the college level.

It is plausible that African American students may benefit from strong social support to include parents (e.g. racial socialization messages), teachers, and peers based

on the additional external factors experienced such as stereotyping and bias. A limitation to the Van Etten et al. study was that it relied on interview data rather than ethnographic and statistical observations. This will be a quantitative study to research the cultural phenomena of African American undergraduate students. A quantitative study will help to add to the empirical data related to the social phenomena of racial socialization and its relationship to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to pursue graduate education.

In another study conducted by Young, Johnson, Hawthorne, and Pugh (2011) 93 undergraduate students ( $n=31$  European Americans,  $n=31$  African Americans,  $n=31$  Hispanic Americans) were assessed to evaluate how perceived social support, SES and generation of college experience within families impact academic motivation to achieve. None of the factors were significant in predicting intrinsic or extrinsic motivation for European or Hispanic Americans. Young et al. found significant correlations among all three factors accounting for most of the variance in extrinsic motivation for African American students. These findings may be relevant to this study by indicating that extrinsic motivation is a strong predictor of African Americans' persistence and achievement in higher level education. The results also indicated significant correlations between perceived social support and both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. If African Americans are significantly affected by external factors, then it is possible that the deleterious effects of racial barriers such as bias and discrimination tend to affect this population more so than other cultures. It is also possible that social support received from parents, such as racial socialization messages, could have a significant impact on extrinsic or intrinsic motivation to achieve a graduate education.

A limitation to this study was that additional factors that can contribute to motivation and achievement are important considerations for African Americans. SES and family generation with college experience are only a part of what may influence motivation for this population. However, it is plausible that intrinsic motivation may be influenced by extrinsic motivators such as racial socialization messages. Students may begin to merge these concepts with their personal beliefs and educational values. Given the external factor of social support was shown to be significant in the Young et al. (2011) study, perception of racial socialization messages from parents may have a significant effect on motivation. The proposed study aims to add to the literature by determining how parental racial socialization messages are subjectively perceived by African American students.

Ethnic/racial identity is the way individuals identify and bind to a specific racial group based on their perception of belonging. Identity formation develops as a function of the common beliefs, norms, attitudes and behaviors of one's purported ethnic group (Street et al., 2012). Research suggests that additional emphasis should be placed on ethnic/racial identity when considering African Americans and what influences their academic motivation; however, research also suggests that racial identity can be separate from academic motivation development (Street et al., 2012).

**Racial Identity.** The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) is a model of racial identity development used to define racial identity development for African Americans. Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, and Lewis (2006) describes this model as a process that African Americans may use that places significance on how they define themselves.

This model is comprised of four dimensions: Racial centrality and racial regard are relevant as they relate to how racial discrimination may impact the psychological well-being of African Americans. Private and public regard are the two dimensions that constitute racial regard. Racial centrality is the way individuals may define themselves in relation to their race. Racial regard is the way individuals may judge or evaluate their own race. Private regard refers to the negative or positive feelings that can emerge about membership in one's race. Public regard refers to the positive or negative way in which individuals may feel others view their race (Sellers & Shelton, 2003).

Seminal longitudinal studies of African American adolescents and young adults and their experiences with discrimination report that individuals who experience race as a central part of their identity may experience less race-related stress associated with racial discrimination (Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003). Byrd and Chavous's (2011) assessed 359 11<sup>th</sup> grade African American students possession of higher centrality and positive regard possibly contributing to experiencing a more positive sense of belonging and intrinsic motivation to achieve academically. Students who possess higher racial centrality and private regard do experience positive effects of intrinsic motivation but only in environments where they perceive their race as being valued.

The concept of having higher racial centrality and private regard did not hold true for increased motivation for students in environments characterized by racial exclusion, inequity, and tension among peers. Byrd and Chavous (2011) contend it is possible that examination of students' motivation within the school environment is separate from their racial identity and educational values. They also posited that school belonging, which



creates a feeling of group connectedness, is important to intrinsic motivation which is linked to students wanting to attend school for more personal and meaningful reasons (Byrd & Chavous, 2011). High centrality and positive regard are concepts that relate to establishing racial identity. Although Byrd and Chavous suggest that racial identity concepts such as high centrality and positive regard can possibly help buffer the effects of discrimination and bias, it may be possible that forming a racial identity is separate from values African American students develop about the purposes of education (Byrd & Chavous, 2011).

Domain identification is relevant to the concept of racial identity as discussed by Woodcock, Hernandez, Estrada, and Schultz (2012). The authors contend stereotype threat theory proposes domain identification is significant for students who are considered part of a stereotyped group such as African Americans. Students may not only worry about underperforming, but they may also worry about confirming the stereotype. Because their performance is a key part of their self-identity, underperforming can create a poor self-concept. Some youths may value the purposes of education but distance themselves from the domain in order to maintain their self-identity.

There is existing research that indicates racial identity and racial socialization are correlated (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Bennett, 2006). The proposed study aims to explore intrinsic and extrinsic motivation separate from racial identity. This helps to determine whether racial socialization messages influence academic motivation by strengthening intrinsic motivation to pursue graduate education despite racial exclusion and inequality. If students are prepared at an early age to deal with bias, stereotype threat and discrimination within an academic environment, they could possibly persist as they

transition to the higher educational domain. Students may be able to develop stronger educational values by understanding their own cultural socialization processes.

Additionally, preparation may help students to feel more of a group connection and sense of belonging within an academic environment which can help to merge academic beliefs and motivation.

### **Conclusion**

Lack of social support from families, teachers, and peers, can contribute to the motivation of African American students (Taylor & Graham, 2007). Of particular importance to the proposed study is findings that indicate stress, uncertain belonging, stereotype threat, discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization are factors that can significantly impact the academic motivation of African American students (Sherman et al., 2013; Thomas, Caldwell, Faison, & Jackson, 2009; Nadler & Clark, 2011). If belief in one's ability to achieve is undermined by producing self-fulfilling prophecies that confirm stereotypical notions about one's racial group, academic disengagement can possibly occur and affect academic motivation and self-efficacy to pursue a graduate education. This study aims to assess how racial socialization may mitigate these factors.

Smalls, White, Chavous, and Sellers (2007) describes how the recognition of historical barriers, through racial socialization messages, can influence externally motivated students to be more successful academically even if intrinsic motivation regarding school is negatively affected by marginalization. Smalls et al. contends that extrinsic motivational factors such as valuing occupational success, financial stability, and giving back to one's family, and community can be important because it may

integrate with intrinsic motivation by becoming a part of one's personal values and expression of identity.

There is extensive research on racial socialization and its relationship to the academic achievement and persistence of African American students; however, there is limited research on how racial socialization may impact students' motivation to achieve, specifically at the graduate level. The proposed study will examine the relationship between racial socialization and the academic motivation to achieve a graduate level education for African American students'.

### **Summary**

The self-determination theory helps to explain internal and external motivations that can be regulated based on intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation. It describes human motivation to fulfill basic needs that include competence, relatedness, and autonomy, and that increased motivation will happen if these needs are met (Campbell et al., 2012).

Academic self-efficacy beliefs can influence motivations and decisions affecting specific causes of successes or failures related to environmental challenges associated with academic achievement (Rodgers & Summers, 2008). This literature review focuses on how these concepts relate within an academic domain for African American students, specifically graduate school.

Researchers of racial socialization indicates that it is one of the most important components of parenting African American youths. Socializing youths to be cognizant of issues related to racial discrimination, group identity, racial pride, and equality are important concepts to consider about the meaning of being a part of American society (Thomas et al., 2009). The importance of racial socialization, and how it affects the well-

being and adjustment of youths as it relates to academic performance, is an equally salient factor (Byrd & Chavous, 2009). Racial socialization may have an impact on the academic self-efficacy of African American youths and may specifically relate to achievement and academic motivation within the school context (Whaley & Noel, 2012).

Stereotype threat can have a deleterious effect on achievement for this population (Fischer, 2010). Disidentification can occur whereby students place less importance on their performance by losing motivation in academic pursuits. Factors related to parental racial socialization can act as a buffer against bias and stereotype threat by strengthening students' academic motivation and academic self-efficacy possibly throughout their lifespan (Bennett, 2006). A review of the literature emphasizes that African American students have a strong desire to pursue graduate education; however, once transitioned into this domain their academic performance declines. Integrating into the social and academic structure of a collegiate environment can also be difficult for this population (Tauriac & Liem, 2012). Salient factors that can mitigate these issues are students developing persistence, competency, relatedness, and autonomy, as well as developing higher levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Williams & Bryan, 2013). The research literature reveals that the relationship between racial socialization, academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and achievement have been studied with K-12, African American youths. A gap in the literature indicates that there is limited research on the relationship between racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias), academic self-efficacy, and motivation to pursue graduate level education.

Findings from this study will add to the literature by helping to understand the way in which African American undergraduate students perceive racial socialization

messages that have been transmitted by parents in early developmental years. How this population transitions from adolescence to adulthood with behaviors that manifest as adaptive, or maladaptive, to the academic collegiate experience will also be revealed. Finally, the findings will help to understand how African American youths' perception of racial socialization messages relates to academic self-efficacy and the motivation to achieve a graduate level degree.

### **Conclusion**

Liem, Martin, Porter, and Colmar (2012) explain sociocultural factors are linked to beliefs and values that influence academic motivation and self-efficacy. The review of current literature on academic motivation and self-efficacy reveals research that has measured these variables independently stratified by age, race, gender, and education level (Areepattamannil, 2012; Habibi, Tahmasian, & Ferrer-Wreder, 2014; Hartmann, Widner, & Carrick, 2013; Rodriguez, Castillo, & Gandara, 2013). Extensive research exists on how racial socialization can impact domains such as social, cognitive, educational, and interpersonal abilities of African Americans (Burt, Simons & Gibbons, 2012; Howard, Rose & Barbarin, 2013). There is limited research on how racial socialization can influence African American's academic motivation and self-efficacy, specifically at the graduate level.

The next chapter provides the methodology and design used to collect data related to racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias), academic motivation, and self-efficacy. Additionally, chapter 3 includes the research questions posed in chapter 1, the population of the study, instrumentation, and analysis methods, including measures of validity and reliability.

## Chapter 3: Methods

### **Introduction**

The African American educational achievement gap is one of the most prevalent problems in the United States (Scott, Taylor, & Palmer, 2013). Negative stereotypes associated with one's ethnic group can significantly undermine scholastic performance (Reitzes & Jaret, 2007). There are at least three major factors that are related to academic achievement: Academic motivation, academic self-efficacy and SES, and racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias).

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate whether there is a significant predictive linear relationship between racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias) of African Americans and the academic motivation and academic self-efficacy of African Americans to attend graduate school. This chapter is an explanation of the research design and rationale, followed by a description of the research population, sampling procedures, procedures for recruitment, and data collection. I reviewed the instruments used in the study in detail, along with data analysis procedures, threats to validity, and ethical concerns.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

In this study, the two independent variables are preparation for bias and cultural socialization, which are both components of racial socialization, and are measured using the Racial Socialization Scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The Hollingshead Four-Factor Index (Hollingshead, 1975) is used to measure the SES moderating variable. There are three dependent variables. They are academic self-efficacy, measured by the Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale (Bandura, 1989), academic motivation,

measured by the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al., 1992), and likelihood to attend graduate school, measured by the Value of Education Scale (Eccles, et al., 1983).

In this study I will utilize a quantitative survey design to assess whether preparation for bias and cultural socialization of African Americans are predictors of academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and likelihood to attend graduate school. The utilization of quantitative survey design is consistent with previous research studies that have advanced knowledge in this area including Hughes and Chen (1997), Mone, (1994), Vallerand et al., (1992), Vallerand et al., (1993), and Bandura (1989). All of these studies used the quantitative survey design to carry-out their studies. The survey will be posted online at SurveyMonkey.com. Ramo, Hall, and Prochaska (2011) note that online surveys have been shown to be valid and reliable tools for gathering research information. Quantitative research designs have three distinctive features, which include (a) no time dimension, (b) a reliance on existing differences rather than change following intervention; and, (c) groups are selected based on existing differences rather than random allocation (Hall, 2008). As the research questions aim to determine if the multiple regression indicates if there is a significant predictive linear relationship between cultural socialization (IV), preparation for bias (IV) and the academic self-efficacy (DV), the moderating variable of SES, academic motivation (DV), and intent to attend graduate school (DV). The quantitative research design yields an unbiased result in a statistically significant manner and is generalized to the larger population of African Americans as opposed to a qualitative research design that only describes patterns and themes exclusive to the participants.

Participants will be able to access the survey at any time during a specific time frame. For this research, the flexibility of using an online survey removes many of the challenges associated with face-to-face interviews such as interviewer bias, the cost of travel, and coordinating times and dates to meet. Cost control and stress management are other benefits of online surveys (Ramo et al., 2011). Many online surveys can be completed at minimal cost to a researcher.

Participants will have an additional degree of flexibility with their time in completing the survey. Allowing participants to complete the survey when it is most convenient to them has been shown to be effective at reducing participant stress (Cantrell & Lupinacci, 2007; Ramo et al., 2011). Online surveys allow participants an added level of privacy. It has been reported that participants share information more readily in an online survey format and are more truthful in their responses (Ramo et al., 2011).

### **Population**

African American college students will be the target population for this study. According to the U.S census (2008), the size of African American student population is 3.7 million, which is about 8.3% of the total 44.5 million African American population (either alone or in combination with other racial groups and ethnicities) and 1.2% of the total U.S population.

### **Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

The sample will be African Americans who are students at a university or college. Additionally, they will be members of the National Black Student Union (NBSU), a national organization of Black student unions from universities across the United States. A list of the 51 participant colleges/universities is in Appendix A. A sampling approach



used for this study will be a convenience approach. This is a sampling approach that is considered nonprobability in nature. With this approach, only respondents that are readily available are selected for the research project (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

G\*Power (Erdfelder, Faul, & Buchner, 1996) will be used to determine the sample size needed to obtain reliable results using a regression analysis. In the power analysis calculation, the following criteria will be used: alpha level = .05, beta level .80; and independent variable =1. The alpha and beta levels are commonly used in the social sciences when computing power (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The results of the power analysis indicated that the needed sample size is 55. Therefore, I will obtain a minimum of 100 participants.

### **Procedures for Recruitment**

To request participation in the study, an email will be sent to members of the NBSU. Contained in the email will be a study description and link to the SurveyMonkey survey page.

I anticipate that the period for collecting data will extend to two weeks or until the targeted minimum of 100 respondents is reached. After the survey is closed, I will post a message on the survey page thanking the person for his or her interest in participating in the study and indicate the study is no longer available.

### **Data Collection**

I will create the survey using a Microsoft Word document and then post it inside the Survey Monkey online survey tool. SurveyMonkey will then generate a link that will allow access to the survey. This link will be included in the email sent to the potential respondents. I obtained written consent from the NBSU to contact their members via

email (Appendix A). The director of NBSU will be responsible for sending the email to all NBSU members. The survey will remain open for 14 days or until 100 respondents complete the survey. Basic information about the study along with the approximate time to complete the study will be contained in the email. The first page of the survey includes an informed consent form that contains a description of confidentiality, the respondents' rights relating to participation, and how the study will be used. In an attempt to minimize social desirability, participants will not be told about the topic of the study (is there a relationship between racial socialization and academic efficacy and academic motivation), but instead will be given a more general description of the research project (i.e. the purpose of the study is to understand general beliefs about academic achievement). After completing the study, a message will be displayed thanking all respondents for their participation in the study. They will also be provided information on confidentiality and on how the study will be used. If respondents have any questions, an email address will also be provided after the completion of the study to provide respondents the opportunity to contact the researcher.

### **Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs**

Five scales will be used to measure the constructs utilized in this study. The Racial Socialization scale (RSS) (Hughes & Chen, 1997) will be used to measure preparation for bias and cultural socialization, which are components of racial socialization. The Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale (SESR) (Bandura, 1989) will be used to assess academic self-efficacy. The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al., 1992) will be used to measure academic motivation. The Value of Education Scale (VOE) (Eccles et. al., 1983) will used to measure intent to attend

graduate school, while the Hollingshead Four-Factor Index (Hollingshead, 1975) will be used to measure family socioeconomic status. The psychometric properties of the instruments along with a description are contained below.

### **Racial Socialization Scale**

The RSS (Appendix C) consists of a 14-item scale that measures two dimensions of racial socialization, Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias (Hughes & Chen, 1997). Item content was developed from stories obtained from focus groups with African American parents (Hughes & Dumont, 1993). The RSS was piloted, developed, and published in 1997 (Hughes & Chen). The scale questions are posted in the article; therefore, they are in the public domain. Construct validity of the racial socialization scale was examined using principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation (Hughes & Dumont, 1997). Results indicate that the first factor, cultural socialization, accounted for 46.8% of the variability, while the second factor, preparation for bias, accounted for 12.6% of the variability.

Items were scored on a 0 to 4 scale where respondents indicated the frequency of survey statements occurring (0 equals *never* and 5 equals *very often*). A question that corresponds to cultural socialization is “How often did your parent(s) read Black history books to you”? A question that corresponds to preparation for bias is “How often did your parent(s) talk to you about racism?” The alpha reliability measures for the two dimensions ranged from .68 to .91. Mean scores were calculated for each respondent on each of the dimensions. Mean scores were calculated for each of the two dimensions, computed from all the questions associated with each dimension.

As the study was developed with African American populations and has established validity and reliability relating to racial socialization, it is deemed appropriate to use as a valid instrument for assessing racial socialization among African Americans in the current study. Reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis was conducted as a means of testing the reliability and construct validity in this sample of adult children of African American parents.

### **Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale**

The SESR (Appendix D) is an 11-item scale that measures students' perceived capability to use a variety of self-regulated learning strategies in an academic setting (Bandura, 1989). The 11 items ask how confident the student is that they can successfully execute each of the 11 activities. A sample question is "Remember information presented in class and textbooks". Level of confidence was measured on a 5-point scale where 1 is not confident at all and 5 is complete confidence. In a validation study in 1992, among a multiracial sample of high school students, the alpha reliability score for the SESR was .87 for the 11-item scale (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). A second validation study was conducted by User and Pajares (2008) with students in grades 4 to 11, yielding reliability scores of .83.

There have been no published reliability results among the African American population for this instrument. Reliability scores will be calculated with this sample and compared to reliability scores from the initial study. However, the SESR has established reliability and validity as an academic self-efficacy measure, making it appropriate for use in this study. Additionally, this scale was and continues to be published in academic journals, and is in the public domain.

### **Academic Motivation Scale**

The AMS-C (Appendix E) is a 28-item scale that measures academic intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation using a 7-point scale where 1 *does not correspond at all* and 7 *corresponds exactly*, and was first piloted, developed and published in 1992 (Vallerand et al., 1992). There are seven subscales, of which three reflect intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to “know”, e.g. “because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things”, intrinsic motivation to “accomplish”, e.g., “For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments”, and intrinsic motivation to “experience stimulation”, e.g., “For the intense feelings I experience when I am communicating my own ideas to others”). Three subscales reflect extrinsic motivation (external regulation, e.g., “Because with only a high-school degree I would not find a high-paying job later on”, introjected regulation, e.g., “Because of the fact that when I succeed in college I feel important”, and identified regulation, “Because I think that a college education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen”). The final subscale covered amotivation (e.g., “Honestly, I don’t know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school”).

Alpha reliability coefficients for the seven subscales ranged from .70 to .86 in a study of an African American sample (Cokley et al., 2001). Construct validity in the African American sample was confirmed through significant correlations between the Academic Self-Concept Scale and the Academic Motivation Scale, including amotivation ( $r = -.47, p < .001$ ), intrinsic motivation ( $r = .39, p < .001$ ), and extrinsic motivation ( $r = .32, p < .001$ ); (Cokley et al., 2001).

Since the present study targets an African American population, and the AMS-C had been shown to be a valid and reliable measure among both African American and non-African populations, it is appropriate to use this scale as a valid measure of academic achievement in this study (Cokely et al., 2001; Vallerand et al., 1992; Vallerand et al., 1993). Additionally, this scale was and continues to be published in academic journals, and is in the public domain.

### **The Value of Education Scale**

The Value of Education Scale (VOE) is a 51-item scale (Appendix F) that measures aspects of intent to attend graduate school (Eccles et. al., 1983). It uses a 5-point scale where 1 is *strongly agree* and 5 is *strongly disagree*. Factor scores were calculated for each respondent by generating a mean score for each factor from the individual factor scores. There are four subscales based on *intrinsic interest*, *attainment*, *utility*, and *cost task value*. However, only 27-items were included utilizing three subscales. This is because in a study conducted by Battle and Wigfield (2001) to assess how well the VOE predicted likelihood to attend graduate school, only the first three factors, intrinsic interest, attainment, and utility were significant predictors of likelihood to attend graduate school, explaining 47.4% of the variability. Although the sample of the study was 216 undergraduate women, other characteristics of the sample population mirrored those of the current study, including various fields of undergraduate study, and status as an undergraduate student attending a university. The three subscales utilized in this study are *intrinsic interest* (measuring the degree of interest or enjoyment of the pursuit of graduate school, e.g., “I’m excited about the idea of going to graduate school”), *attainment* (measuring the extent to which individuals associate a sense of importance to

pursuing graduate education, e.g., “A graduate education is of great personal value to me”), and *utility* (measuring the degree to which individuals associate how useful a graduate education is toward the completion of life goals, e.g., “I want to get a graduate degree so that I can support myself”).

Chronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients for the three factor items were .96 for intrinsic value, .88 for attainment, and .80 for utility. The factors were derived from principal axis factoring approach, and accounted for 70% of the variance (Battle & Wigfield, 2001). As stated previously, validation of the VOE to predict likelihood to attend graduate school was confirmed by the significance of the multiple regression,  $F(3, 209) = 62.853$ ,  $p < .001$ , and a large effect size,  $R^2 = .474$ , based on Cohen’s guidelines (Cohen, 1988). Despite some differences in the validation sample and the current sample, there are more similarities than differences, and therefore it is appropriate to use this instrument with this population.

### **Hollingshead Four-Factor Index of Social Status**

The Hollingshead Four-Factor Index (Appendix G) is a measure of a family’s socioeconomic status. It is based on the education and occupation of each employed parent living at home. The education and occupation of homemakers, students and unemployed individuals are not included. Occupations are rated on a 9-point scale, scoring nine occupation categories from the 1970 United States Census. The nine categories are higher executives (score = 9), administrators (score = 8), small business owners (score = 7), technicians (score = 6), clerical and sales workers (score = 5), skilled manual workers (score = 4), semi-skilled workers (score = 3), unskilled workers (score = 2), and farm laborers/mental service workers (score = 1).

Education is rated on a 7-point scale based on the number of years of schooling, where 1 is less than 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 2 is 8 and 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 3 is 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 4 is high school graduate, 5 is partial college (at least 1 year), 6 is undergraduate degree, and 7 is a graduate degree. To calculate HI for a family, the occupation and education scores are weighted and summed. The occupation score is multiplied by 5, and the education score is multiplied by 3. For dual-income families, HI is calculated by averaging the scores for each earner. HI scores range from 8 to 66.

### **Data Analysis**

SPSS statistical software will be used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics will be performed on the demographics of the respondents, including gender, and age. Next, the internal reliability of the ASE, AMS-C, VOE, and RSS will be evaluated utilizing Cronbach's alpha. An acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .7 or greater (DeVallis 2003). An assessment of the assumptions of the regression which included normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity will follow.

The multiple linear regression will be conducted to evaluate the following research questions:

R1. Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy?

$H_01$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.

$H_{a1}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.



R2: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation?

$H_{02}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

$H_{a2}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

R3: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school?

$H_{03}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

$H_{a3}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

R4: Does SES moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

$H_{04}$ : SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

$H_{a4}$ : SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

R5: Does SES moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

$H_{05}$ : SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H<sub>a5</sub>*: SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American student's academic self-efficacy.

The multiple regression will indicate if there is a significant predictive linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In these analyses, the dependent variables will be (a) academic self-efficacy, (b) academic motivation, and (c) likelihood to attend graduate school. The independent variables will be cultural socialization and preparation for bias, and SES will be the moderator variable. An F ratio will be computed for the multiple linear regression. If the significance value is below .05, then the model is a significantly better predictor than the mean of the dependent variable.

### **Threats to Validity and Reliability/Limitations**

The assumption is that although this study will have strengths, there is also a need to review the limitations of the study. One threat to this study is the nonresponse bias whereby participants may not complete or return the survey. This can influence the outcome of the results with a low rate of returning the surveys and a low sample size. To overcome this threat, participants and non-participants will be sent a follow-up e-mail to either participate or complete the survey. If respondents already completed the survey, they will be asked to ignore the e-mail since we are not collecting e-mail addresses and the NBSU will be responsible for e-mailing their members.

Another threat to this study is that the participants will be completing this study on the Internet without the researcher present to respond to questions. There is the possibility the participants may find some questions ambiguous. As a result, the participants will be given the contact information of the researcher to respond to any

questions or concerns. Bias issues are also of concern when conducting this study. Individuals may respond in a socially desirable manner. Social desirability can be a concern when individuals complete surveys. Participants will be informed that all their responses will be anonymous with no threat of tracking the respondent of each survey.

Convenience sampling will be used to obtain the needed participants. One foreseen limitation of convenience sampling is that it may not be representative of the overall population (Fässler, Meissner, Schneider, & Linde, 2010). To mitigate the effect of the convenience sampling approach, statistical tests that rely on population estimates such as means or proportions will not be used. Instead, tests using multiple regression coefficients, which are less subject to bias, will be used (Field, 2012).

### **Ethical Procedures**

Thus study will be conducted based upon permission granted and the ethical standards indicated by the Walden University (IRB). This will be to ensure the ethical protection of all participants in this research study. Respondents will be presented with the informed consent form at the beginning of the survey questionnaire. This will ensure they are aware that they are involved in a research study and have given their consent or permission to participate. There will be no deception or coercion involved in this research. Anonymity will be insured as there will be no personally identifiable information collected in the survey, nor will there be any collection of confidential information about the respondent. There will be no exposure to mental or physical risk. Finally, the respondents' decision to begin the study will be deemed as providing their agreement to the terms of the informed consent communicated online prior to beginning the survey.

Data will be stored securely online under the username and password protection of the researcher. Additionally, during data analysis, the researcher will use a computer that will be secured and not available to the public. After the completion of data collection the e-mail addresses will be deleted. However, the other information in the survey will be kept by the researcher indefinitely.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate whether preparation for bias and cultural socialization of African Americans are predictors of academic motivation and self-efficacy, and intent to attend graduate school. This chapter explained the research design and approach to the study.

This study utilizes a quantitative survey design to assess the relationship between racial socialization of African Americans and their academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. The independent variables are cultural socialization and preparation for bias, which is measured using the Racial Socialization Scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The moderator variable is SES, which is measured using the Hollingshead Four-Factor Index (Hollingshead, 1975). There are three dependent variables: Academic self-efficacy, measured by the Self Efficacy for Self-regulated Learning Scale (SESR), academic motivation, measured by the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand et al., 1992), and likelihood to attend graduate school, measured by the Value of Education Scale (Eccles, et al., 1983). The sampling frame will consist of African American undergraduate college students who are members of the National Black Student Union (NBSU), a national organization of Black student unions from universities across the United States. Members of the NBSU will be sent an e-mail requesting their voluntary

participation in the study. The multiple linear regression will be conducted to evaluate the research questions. The data will be collected anonymously, and no confidential information will be collected during the study. An in-depth analysis of the data follows in Chapter 4 based on raw data gathered from participants.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to evaluate whether there was a linear relationship between racial socialization (i.e., cultural socialization and preparation for bias) of African Americans and the academic motivation and academic self-efficacy of AA to attend graduate school. This study utilized a quantitative survey design to assess whether the independent variables preparation for bias and cultural socialization of African Americans are predictors of the dependent variables academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. The research questions and hypotheses are as follows:

R1: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy?

$H_{01}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.

$H_{a1}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy.

R2: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation?

$H_{02}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

$H_{a2}$ : Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' academic motivation.

R3: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school?

*H*<sub>03</sub>: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are not significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

*H*<sub>a3</sub>: Cultural socialization and preparation for bias are significant predictors of African American students' likelihood to attend graduate school.

R4: Does SES moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

*H*<sub>04</sub>: SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H*<sub>a4</sub>: SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

R5: Does SES moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and African American students' academic self-efficacy?

*H*<sub>05</sub>: SES does not moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American students' academic self-efficacy.

*H*<sub>a5</sub>: SES does moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and African American student's academic self-efficacy.

This chapter contains the results of the analyses, including a reporting of the sample descriptive statistics, followed by a Chronbach's alpha reliability analysis of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-C), the Value of Education Scale (VOE), the Racial Socialization Scale (RSS), and the Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale (SESR). Next, will be an assessment of the five research questions. Five linear regressions were conducted to answer each of the five research questions. The linear regressions were preceded by tests that evaluate if the assumptions of the multiple

regressions have been met. These include an examination of multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity (Field, 2012).

### **Data Collection**

The data collection period lasted for 90 days. The administrator of the National Black Student Union (NBSU) was responsible for sending out emails to members of the NBSU. The NBSU did not reveal how many emails were sent out. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate a response rate. There were, however, 103 respondents who completed the survey.

There were 103 African American respondents who completed the survey. The average age of the respondents was 37 years of age ( $SD = 13.68$ ). There were 88 females and 15 males in the study. Over half of respondents had household income of less than \$50,000 (52.4%) and were single (52.4%). Additionally, the majority of respondents were Sophomores and Seniors (54.3%) (see Table 1).



Table 1

*Demographics of Survey Participants*

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age			37.23	13.68
Gender				
Female	88	85.4		
Male	15	14.6		
Household Income				
Less than \$25,000	24	23.3		
\$25,000 - \$34,999	20	19.4		
\$35,000 - \$49,999	10	9.7		
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18	17.5		
\$75,000 - \$99,999	10	9.7		
\$100,000 - \$149,999	12	11.7		
\$150,000 or more	9	8.7		
Marital Status				
Married	27	26.2		
Cohabiting	6	5.8		
Single/Never married	54	52.4		
Separated	11	10.7		
Widowed	3	2.9		
Education Level	2			
Freshman	20	19.4		
Sophomore	27	26.2		
Junior	13	12.6		
Senior	43	41.7		

**Results**

Chronbach's alpha reliability analysis was conducted on the Value of Education Scale. The analysis produced a Chronbach's alpha of .897, which is above the minimum coefficient value of acceptable reliability, .7 (DeVellis, 2003). Results of the Chronbach's alpha analysis were .923 for the Preparation for Bias Subscale, and .869 for the Cultural Socialization Subscales of the Racial Socialization scale. Academic Self-Efficacy (alpha = .943) and Academic Motivation (alpha = .935) also demonstrated good

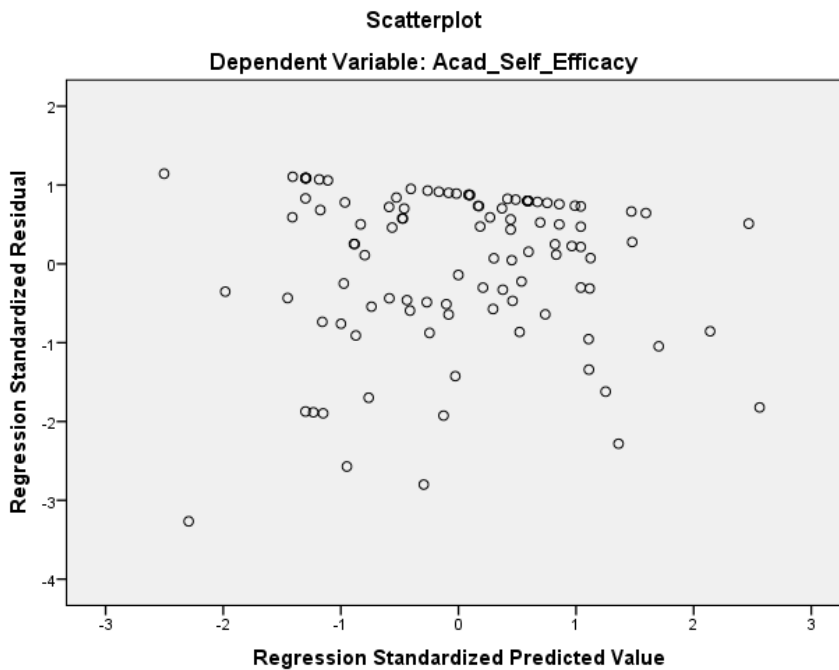
reliability. In summary, all psychometric instruments demonstrated good reliability with the target population of this study.

RQ1. Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of AA students' academic self-efficacy?

A multiple regression was conducted to determine if cultural socialization and preparation for bias were significant predictors of AA students' academic self-efficacy. The independent continuous variables in this model were cultural socialization and preparation for bias. The dependent variable was academic self-efficacy. Mean scores for cultural socialization ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ) ranged from 1 to 5, while mean scores for preparation for bias ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ) also ranged from 1 to 5. The scores for the dependent variable, academic self-efficacy ( $M = 4.37$ ,  $SD = .71$ ) ranged from 1.82 to 5.0.

Preliminary results were conducted to evaluate if the assumptions of the multiple regression were met. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that all three variables, preparation for bias ( $SW = .962$ ,  $p = .005$ ), cultural socialization ( $SW = .950$ ,  $p = .001$ ), and academic self-efficacy ( $SW = .837$ ,  $p < .001$ ), were not normally distributed. Additionally, the plot of the standardized residuals and the standardized predictive values demonstrate no violation in homoscedasticity or linearity. Figure 1 reveals that the plots are relatively random and evenly dispersed throughout the plot. This indicates that there was no violation in the assumption of linearity or homoscedasticity (Field, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). Even though the assumption of normality was violated, the regression is a robust test. Meaning, even with violations of normality the regression may yield reasonably accurate p values when the sample sizes are at least moderate, commonly

accepted as at least 30 participants (Field, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012; Wilcox, 2001).



*Figure 1:* Plot of the standardized residuals and standardized predicted values indicated that there was no violation in the assumption of linearity or homoscedasticity for Academic Self-efficacy.

Results of the multiple regression indicated that the model containing cultural socialization and preparation for bias was not a significant predictor of academic self-efficacy,  $F(2, 100) = 1.199, p = .306$ . As a result, the null hypotheses for both cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not rejected (see Tables 2, 3, and 4).

Table 2

*Model Summary Table – Regression of Academic Self-Efficacy on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
.153	.023	.004	.70596

Table 3

*ANOVA Table – Regression of Academic Self-Efficacy on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Regression	1.195	2	.598	1.199	.306
Residual	49.838	100	.498		
Total	51.033	102			

Table 4

*Coefficients Table – Regression of Academic Self-Efficacy on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

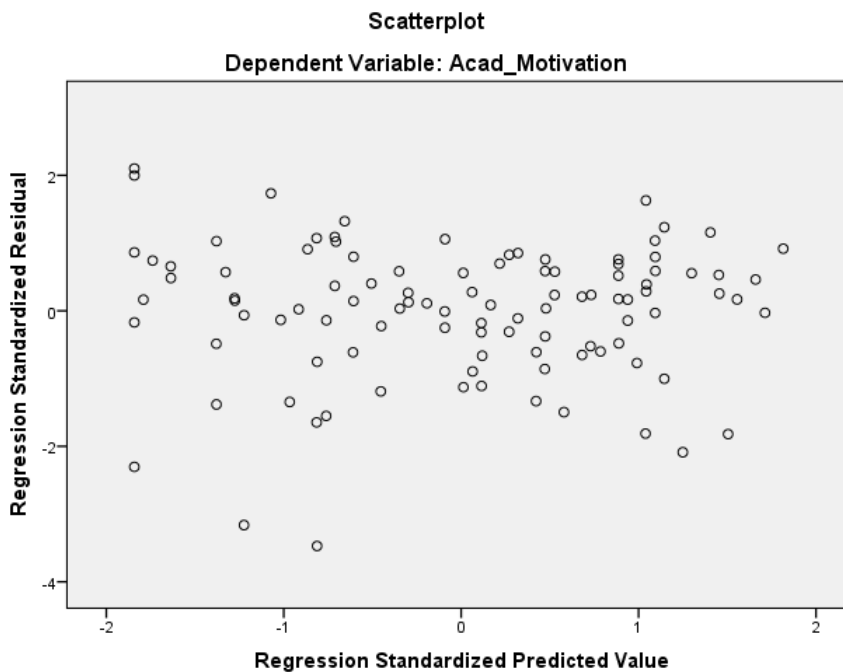
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>VIF</i>
(Constant)	4.168	.212		19.667	.000	
Cultural_Socialization	-.059	.076	-.098	-.781	.437	1.597
Bias_Preparation	.123	.080	.192	1.536	.128	1.597

RQ2: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of AA students' academic motivation?

To assess if cultural socialization and preparation for bias were significant predictors of academic motivation, a multiple regression was conducted. The

independent variables were cultural socialization and preparation for bias, while the dependent variable was academic motivation. Mean scores for the Academic Motivation scale ( $M = 5.13$ ,  $SD = .10$ ) ranged from 1.39 to 7.

Tests of the assumptions of multiple regression indicated that the distribution of academic motivation scores was not normal ( $SW = .942$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The violation in normality of cultural socialization and preparation for bias were established in the previous analysis. Plots of the standardized residuals and standardized predicted values revealed no violation in linearity, as the pattern of plots was not curvilinear, nor homoscedasticity, as the scatter pattern was rectangular in shape. See figure 2.



*Figure 2:* Plot of the standardized residuals and standardized predicted values indicated that there was no violation in the assumption of linearity or homoscedasticity for Academic Motivation.

Results of the multiple regression indicated that the model containing cultural socialization and preparation for bias was not a significant predictor of academic motivation,  $F(2, 100) = 1.37, p = .260$ . As a result the null hypothesis was not rejected (see Tables 5, 6, and 7).

Table 5

*Model Summary Table – Regression of Academic Motivation on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
.163	.027	.007	1.03776

Table 6

*ANOVA Table – Regression of Academic Motivation on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Regression	2.941	2	1.471	1.366	.260
Residual	107.696	100	1.077		
Total	110.637	102			

Table 7

*Coefficients Table – Regression of Academic Motivation on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>VIF</i>
(Constant)	4.653	.312		14.936	.000	
Cultural_Socialization	.088	.111	.098	.788	.433	1.597
Bias_Preparation	.078	.117	.083	.668	.506	1.597

RQ3: Are cultural socialization and preparation for bias significant predictors of AA students' likelihood to attend graduate school?

A multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate if cultural socialization and preparation for bias were significant predictors of likelihood to attend graduate school. In this analysis, the independent variables were cultural socialization and preparation for bias, and the dependent variable was likelihood to attend graduate school. Mean scores for Likelihood to attend graduate ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = .64$ ) school ranged from 1.44 to 5, where high scores represented a higher likelihood to attend graduate school.

The Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that the scores for the likelihood to attend graduate school were not normally distributed. Additionally, the plots of the standardized predicted and residual values indicated no violation in linearity or homoscedasticity. See figure 3.

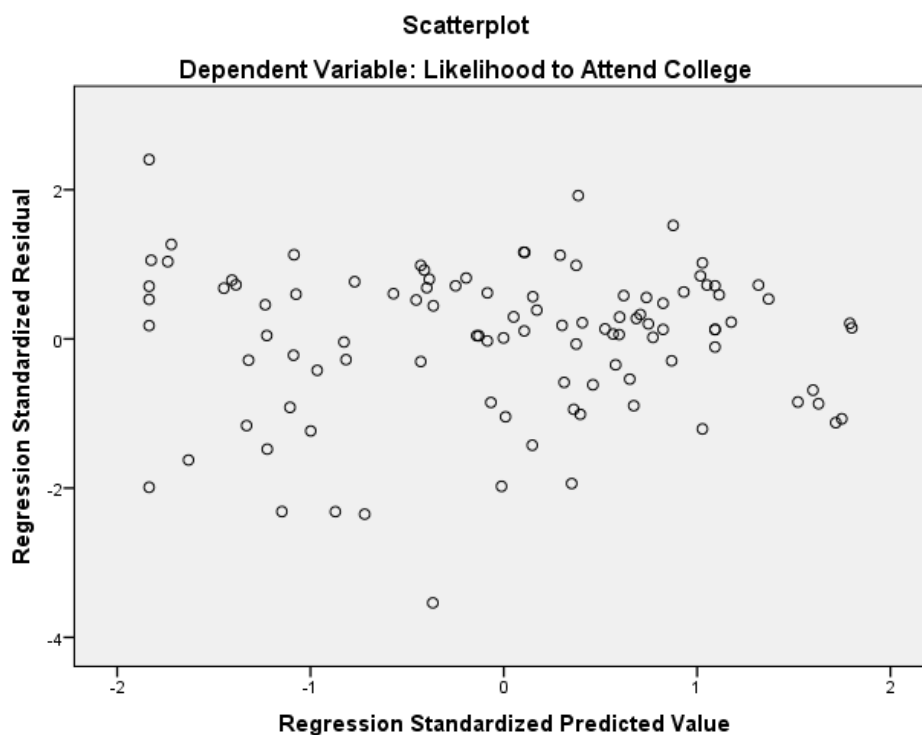


Figure 3: Plot of the standardized residuals and standardized predicted values indicated that there was no violation in the assumption of linearity or homoscedasticity for likelihood to attend graduate school.

Results indicated that the model was not a significant predictor of likelihood to attend graduate school,  $F(2, 100) = 2.42, p = .09$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected (see Tables 8, 9, and 10).

Table 8

*Model Summary Table – Regression of Likelihood to Attend Graduate School on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
.215 <sup>a</sup>	.046	.027	.63231

Table 9

*ANOVA Table – Regression of Likelihood to Attend Graduate School on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Model					
Regression	1.935	2	.968	2.420	.094
Residual	39.982	100	.400		
Total	41.918	102			

Table 10

*Coefficients Table – Regression of Likelihood to Attend Graduate School on Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>VIF</i>
(Constant)	3.353	.190		17.662	.000	



Cultural_Socialization	.007	.068	.013	.106	.916	1.597
Bias_Preparation	.120	.072	.207	1.674	.097	1.597

RQ4: Does SES moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and AA students' academic self-efficacy?

To evaluate if SES moderated the relationship between preparation for bias and academic self-efficacy, a stepwise regression analysis was conducted where the centered independent variables, preparation for bias and SES, were entered in the model in step 1, and the SES-preparation for bias interaction term was entered in step 2. High SES scores represent higher SES. If the interaction term is significant with a  $p$  value of less than .05, the SES moderates the relationship between preparation for bias and academic self-efficacy.

To determine if multicollinearity was present in this analysis, which included an interaction term, the Variable Inflation Factor (VIF) score was examined. If the VIF value is less than 10, then multicollinearity is not problematic (Field, 2012; Pallant, 2012). The VIF scores for this analysis were 1.04 for centered preparation for bias, 1.06 for SES centered, and 1.05 for the interaction term. Therefore, there was no multicollinearity.

Results indicated that the interaction term was not significant ( $beta = -.084, p = .410$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected (see Table 11).

Table 11

*Regression of Academic Self-Efficacy on Preparation for Bias, and the SES Preparation for Bias Interaction*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>P</i>
Constant	4.370	.070		<.001
Preparation for Bias Centered	.088	.065	.137	.175
SES Centered	-.005	.024	-.019	.849
Preparation for Bias_SES	.016	.020	.084	.410
$R^2$	.019			
$\Delta R^2$ (moderation effect)	.007			
<i>F</i>	.860			.464

RQ5: Does SES moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and AA students' academic self-efficacy?

A stepwise regression was conducted to evaluate if SES moderated the relationship between cultural socialization and academic self-efficacy. The centered independent variables, cultural socialization and SES, were entered in the model in step 1 and the SES-cultural socialization interaction term was entered in step 2.

To determine if multicollinearity was present in this analysis, which included an interaction term, the Variable Inflation Factor (VIF) score was examined. If the VIF value is less than 10, then multicollinearity is not problematic (Field, 2012; Pallant, 2012). The VIF score for this analysis was 1.00 for centered cultural socialization, 1.03 for centered SES, and 1.03 for the interaction term. Therefore, there was no multicollinearity.

The results indicated that the interaction term was not significant ( $beta = .083, p = .417$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected (see Table 12).

Table 12

*Regression of Academic Self-Efficacy on Cultural Socialization, and the SES Cultural Socialization Interaction*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>P</i>
Constant	4.374	.070		<.001
Cultural socialization Centered	.014	.061	.023	.822
SES Centered	-.009	.023	-.039	.702
Cultural Socialization-SES Interaction	.017	.021	.083	.417
$R^2$	.003			
$\Delta R^2$ (moderation effect)	.007			
<i>F</i>	.157			.855

### Summary

Results of the multiple regression indicated that the model containing cultural socialization and preparation for bias was not a significant predictor of academic self-efficacy,  $F(2, 100) = 1.199, p = .306$ , academic motivation,  $F(2, 100) = 1.37, p = .260$ , and likelihood to attend graduate school,  $F(2, 100) = 2.42, p = .09$ . Therefore, the null hypotheses for both cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not rejected. A stepwise regression was conducted to evaluate if SES moderated the relationship between preparation for bias and academic self-efficacy. Results indicated that the interaction term was not significant ( $beta = .084, p = .410$ ). Additionally, a stepwise regression was conducted to evaluate if SES moderated the relationship between cultural socialization and academic self-efficacy. The results indicated that the interaction term was not significant ( $beta = -.083, p = .417$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the research study, a summary of the findings, and interpretations. In addition, recommendations are made regarding what further actions should be taken and proposed future research is suggested.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether there was a linear relationship between racial socialization (cultural socialization and preparation for bias) of African Americans and their academic motivation and academic self-efficacy to attend graduate school. A quantitative survey design was used to assess whether the independent variables preparation for bias and cultural socialization of African Americans were predictors of the dependent variables academic motivation and academic self-efficacy. This chapter contains a summary of key findings, interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and a conclusion.

### **Summary of Key Findings**

Regarding the sample, there were 103 Black participants (88 females and 15 males). The average age of the respondents was 37 years of age. Most had household income of less than \$50,000, were single, and were college sophomores and seniors. In summary, findings from a multiple regression determined that cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy. As a result, the null hypotheses for both cultural socialization, and preparation for bias were not rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was rejected. Findings from a multiple regression determined that cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not significant predictors of academic motivation. As a result the null hypothesis was not rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

Findings from a multiple regression determined that cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not significant predictors of likelihood to attend graduate school.

Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

Findings from a stepwise regression determined that SES did not significantly moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and academic self-efficacy. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

Findings from a stepwise regression determined that SES did not significantly moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and academic self-efficacy. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and the alternate hypothesis was rejected.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

#### **Significance of Findings**

The findings that cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy, academic motivation, or likelihood to attend graduate school were not consistent with findings reviewed in chapter 2. For example, previous research suggests that racial socialization can be used by parents to help their children deal with the school environment (Cooper & McLoyd, 2011; Hughes & Johnson, 2001). It was found that helping students to develop skills to cope with race-based challenges provides African American children with an awareness needed to create positive educational outcomes (Friend et al., 2011; Neblett et al., 2009). Additionally, previous research suggests that supportive parental racial socialization helps to promote adaptive psychological outcomes such as high academic self-efficacy and motivation (Cooper & McLoyd, 2011).

The current study findings were also not consistent with claims by Cooper and Smalls (2010) that parental preparation for bias messages can be effective and claims by Hughes et al. (2006), that parents must teach their children to negotiate experiences of bias and discrimination effectively to help them deal with school experiences. However, as discussed in chapter 2, Wang and Huguley's (2012) study found preparation for bias unclear as to how it may influence academic development. The authors purport that preparation for bias must be employed in a manner that is supportive, and that context is very important in order to prevent feelings of negative self-worth. Being able to assist children in understanding how to utilize preparation for bias to buffer the effects of discrimination, as opposed to generating feelings of anger toward the offender, is important. It is possible that parental influences regarding preparation for bias were not positive experiences for the study participants and as a result the findings were not significant predictors of academic motivation and academic self-efficacy and likelihood to attend graduate school.

As noted by Harris-Britt et al. (2007) in chapter 2, perception of racial discrimination was directly related to lower self-esteem among a sample of adolescents when minimally exposed to preparation for bias messages. Additionally, Harris-Britt noted that their study was limited because the participants were drawn from middle schools where African Americans were the majority, and the results did not represent an environment where they were the minority. This study selected students from the NBSU which is representative of schools throughout the United States, and African American students may or may not have been the minority. A random selection of students from

specific geographic locations where African American students are the minority may have yielded different results.

As noted by Shin (2011), Africentric values predict academic self-efficacy beliefs, and these values are developed through family connections. Literature findings consistently support the link between parental support and positive student outcomes (Green-Demers & Pelletier, 2006; Joe & Davis, 2009; Van Etten et al., 2008).

Additionally, as noted by Schweinle and Mims' (2009), research indicates that African American students may benefit from cultural socialization messages about their heritage by developing a stronger sense of belonging, autonomy, and academic self-efficacy by understanding their shared heritage. However, findings from the current study did not support these conclusions. As noted in chapter 2, peer association and school climate can affect beliefs about academic competence (academic self-efficacy), and a positive climate is an important component of African American students attending universities (Fife, Bond, & Byars-Winston, 2011; Edman and Brazil, 2008). The NBSU is an organization that promotes African American's recruitment, retention, graduation, and professional development, such as attending graduate school; therefore, academic self-efficacy may be a component that is internalized among the members through efforts other than cultural socialization and preparation for bias.

The findings that SES did not significantly moderate the relationship between preparation for bias and academic self-efficacy, and did not significantly moderate the relationship between cultural socialization and academic self-efficacy, were not consistent with previous research claims. Research indicates that academic self-efficacy can be influenced by socioeconomic status (Aguayo, Herman, Ojeda & Flores, 2011).



However, findings from the current study did not support these conclusions. Hughes et al. (2006) noted that higher SES parents are more likely than lower SES parents to engage in cultural socialization and preparation for bias with their offspring. This study revealed 23.3% of parental household income was less than \$25,000 per annum, and 19.4% of parental household income was less than \$35,000 per annum which places these households in the low SES range. These statistics may have been significant to the results of this study. Hughes et al. indicates that further research is needed to understand why these differences exist.

### **Significance of Findings Related to Theoretical Framework**

Findings from the study were also not consistent with the self-determination theoretical framework. This theory posits that motivation for a specific behavior can be regulated by internal choice or external force. Self-determination theory describes motivated behavior as deriving from three sources: extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, and amotivation. Ciani et al. (2011) pointed out that negative external factors such as stereotype threat and bias can undermine African American students' intrinsic motivation. However, self-determination can be influenced by social and cultural factors that mitigate negative external factors. For this study, since none of the hypotheses was supported, findings were not consistent with the theoretical framework. Social and cultural factors did not mitigate the impact of environmental factors. However, self-determination theory claims higher levels of intrinsic motivation are exhibited if basic needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy are supported, thereby increasing academic performance (Guiffrida, Gouveia, Wall, & Seward, 2008).

Minimally supportive learning environments can deter intrinsic motivation. To be intrinsically motivated, individuals must maintain a level of confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to achieve goals (Brophy, 2010). Although the findings did not support racial socialization (preparation for bias and cultural socialization) as a significant predictor of African American's academic self-efficacy and academic motivation to attend graduate school, there is an indication that being in an environment where support and cooperative collaboration among peers and mentors, such as the NBSU, can possibly influence African Americans' exploration of self-directed interests.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Using a convenience sample from an available volunteer population of African American college students was one limitation of the study. The results of this research may not be generalizable to all individuals, and in particular (a) non-volunteer individuals, (b) African American students from specific geographic locations, or (c) students of different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The study is also limited by design, since the study variables were not directly manipulated, and results were observed from existing groups yielding descriptive findings only. Further, the study was limited by the use of an online survey which did not allow for researcher clarification of information or questions.

### **Recommendations**

Since there are limitations due to the sample, it is recommended that it be replicated in a future study that includes a larger sample, randomly selected from specific geographic locations. Because the study is limited by its design, it is recommended that a future study explore multiple variables that might impact outcomes such as family

functioning, stress, access to educational resources, peer association, support networks, student connection and learning problems. Because the study is limited by the online survey, it is recommended that a future study include the use of a design that allows for researchers to address participant concerns. While this study provided important and useful information, findings were unexpected. It is, therefore, recommended that a future study further investigate the variables and findings from this study with a mixed-methods research design.

### **Implications**

#### **Implications for Positive Social Change, Methods, and Practice**

Study findings have implications for positive social change at individual, family, organizational, and societal/policy levels. Because research indicates that African American students benefit from cultural socialization and bias preparation, and that they benefit from parental support, findings imply the need for further study. It remains unclear why this parental influence did not result in significant positive student educational outcomes. Understanding the diverse and unique needs of African American youths is important for parents, researchers, and practitioners in order to address their academic underachievement. Methodological limitations are implicated in that findings were unexpected. More information was needed to fully understand outcomes, which implies the need for a mixed-methods study design that allows for an explanation of findings. In a mixed methods design, quantitative and qualitative data can be collected concurrently and potentially identify specific quantitative findings that need additional explanation such as statistical differences among groups or unexpected results (Zhang, Watanabe-Galloway, 2014).

### **Conclusion**

Findings from this study were unexpected because none of the hypotheses, suggested by previous research reviewed in chapter 2, was supported. Findings from this study suggest that parental support with cultural socialization and preparation for bias were not significant predictors of African American students' academic self-efficacy, academic motivation, or likelihood to attend graduate school, and SES was not an influential factor. However, these findings were not consistent with previous findings, implying the need for future research.

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Appendix A: University Members of the National Black Student  
Union

Aquinas College  
Bowling Green State University  
Calumet College of St. Joseph  
College of Mount St. Joseph  
DePaul University  
Drake University  
Grand Rapids Community College  
Howard University  
Lane Community College  
Lincoln Land Community College  
Milwaukee Area Technical College  
Monmouth College  
Northeastern Illinois University  
Ohio University  
Principia College  
Rock Valley College  
University of Alabama  
University of Florida  
University of Iowa  
University of North Carolina-Greensboro  
University of Toledo  
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay  
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point  
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater  
Western Michigan University  
Beloit College  
Brookdale Community College  
College of Lake County  
Defiance College  
Dominican University  
Fort Hays State University  
Harper College

Inver Hills Community College  
Lewis University  
Marquette University  
Minnesota State University-Mankato  
Muskingum University  
Northern Illinois University  
Olivet College  
Ripon College  
Roosevelt University  
University of Dubuque  
University of Indianapolis  
University of North Carolina-Ashville  
University of Northern Iowa  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
University of Wisconsin-Parkside  
University of Wisconsin-Stout  
Wayne State University



## Appendix B: Permission Letter from the National Black Student Union



Richard C. McGregory Jr., PhD  
National Black Student Union (NBSU)  
Director, Center for the Study of Black Students  
Office of National Black Student Union

February 12, 2015

Dear Judith Parker,

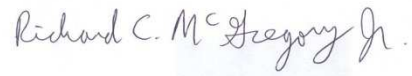
Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to provide members of the National Black Student Union an email with a link to an online survey tool in order to conduct the study entitled The Relationship Among Racial Socialization, Academic Motivation, Academic Self-Efficacy and African American Students Likelihood to Attend Graduate School . As part of the study, I authorize you to insert a link that will allow access to the survey. Additionally I authorize you to insert basic information about the study along with the approximate time to complete the study, an informed consent form that will contain a description of confidentiality, the respondents' rights relating to participation, and how the study will be used. After completing the study, all respondents' will receive a message thanking them for their participation in the study. If respondents have any questions, an email address will also be provided after the completion of the study to provide respondents the opportunity to contact the researcher. Individual's participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: Sending an email to members of the National Black Student Union which will include a link accessing the survey. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard C. McGregory Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light blue rectangular stamp.

Richard C. McGregory Jr., Ph.D.  
Director, Center for the Study of Black Students  
Office of National Black Student Union

### Appendix C: Racial Socialization Scale

For the questions below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements. Please use the 1 to 4 scale below where 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, and 4 = often 5 = very often.

1= NEVER

2= RARELY

3= SOMETIMES

4= OFTEN

5= VERY OFTEN

1. How often did your parent(s) talk to you about racism?
2. How often did your parent(s) tell you that people might treat you badly due to race?
3. How often did your parent(s) explain to you something you saw on TV that showed poor treatment of Blacks?
4. How often did your parent(s) tell you people might try to limit you because of race?
5. How often did your parent(s) talked to you about the fight for equality among Blacks?
6. How often did your parent(s) talked to you about things you mislearned in school?
7. How often did your parent(s) tell you that you must be better than White kids to get the same rewards?
8. How often did your parent(s) talk about race with someone else when you could hear them?
9. How often did your parent(s) talk about racial differences in physical features?
  
10. How often did your parent(s) read Black history books to you?
11. How often did your parent(s) read Black story books to you?
12. How often did your parent(s) take you to Black cultural events?
13. How often did your parent(s) do things to celebrate Black history?
14. How often did your parent(s) take you to get Black clothes or hairstyles?

### Appendix D: Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale

Directions: Please indicate how much confidence you have that you could successfully accomplish each of these tasks. Circle the number according to the following 5-point confidence scale.

- 1= Not at all confident
- 2=Very little confidence
- 3=Some confidence
- 4=Much confidence
- 5=Complete confidence

1. Finish homework assignments by deadlines?
2. Study when there are other interesting things to do?
3. Concentrate on school subjects?
4. Take class notes of class instruction?
5. Use the library to get information for class assignments?
6. Plan your schoolwork?
7. Organize your schoolwork?
8. Remember information presented in class and textbooks?
9. Arrange a place to study without distractions?
10. Motivate yourself to do schoolwork?
11. Participate in class discussions?

### Appendix E: The Academic Motivation Scale

Using the scale below, indicate to what extent each of the following items presently corresponds to one of the reasons why you go to college.

Does not correspond at all						Corresponds exactly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. Because with only a high-school degree I would not find a high-paying job later on.
2. Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.
3. Because I think that a college education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.
4. For the intense feelings I experience when I am communicating my own ideas to others.
5. Honestly, I don't know; I really feel that I am wasting my time in school.
6. For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies.
7. To prove to myself that I am capable of completing my college degree.
8. In order to obtain a more prestigious job later on.
9. For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.
10. Because eventually it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.

11. For the pleasure that I experience when I read interesting authors.
12. I once had good reasons for going to college; however, now I wonder whether I should continue.
13. For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my personal accomplishments.
14. Because of the fact that when I succeed in college I feel important.
15. Because I want to have "the good life" later on.
16. For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects which appeal to me.
17. Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.
18. For the pleasure that I experience when I feel completely absorbed by what certain authors have written.
19. I can't see why I go to college and frankly, I couldn't care less.
20. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities.
21. To show myself that I am an intelligent person.
22. In order to have a better salary later on.
23. Because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.
24. Because I believe that a few additional years of education will improve my competence as a worker.

25. For the "high" feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects.

26. I don't know; I can't understand what I am doing in school.

27. Because college allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence in my studies.

28. Because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.

### Appendix F: Value of Education Scale

For the questions below, please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements. Please use the 1 to 5 scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.

1 – Strongly disagree   2 – Somewhat disagree   3 – Not sure   4 – Somewhat agree   5 – Strongly agree.

1. I find the idea of being a graduate student to be very appealing.
2. It is exciting to think about the challenge of graduate-level schoolwork.
3. I'm excited about the idea of going to graduate school.
4. I look forward to taking graduate school classes from professors who are experts in their field.
5. I like the idea of attending stimulating lectures in graduate school.
6. I would welcome the challenge of doing the work to get good grades in graduate school.
7. I like the idea of writing a graduate-level paper on a topic of special interest to me.
8. I look forward to advancing my knowledge of exploring new and challenging ideas in graduate school.
9. I would be very upset if I was not able to go to graduate school.
10. I feel that attending graduate school is a necessary part of what will make me feel good about myself in the future.
11. I don't need a graduate degree to fulfill my potential.
12. A graduate education is of great personal value to me.
13. Knowing that I completed all the work to get a graduate degree would make me feel good about myself.
14. I feel that I have something to prove to myself by going to graduate school.
15. I will feel like a failure if I don't attend graduate school.
16. I will be disappointed in myself if I don't attend graduate school.
17. I value the prestige that comes with a graduate diploma.
18. The main reason I want to go to graduate school is that many of my friends will.
19. I don't think a graduate degree will be very useful for what I want to do in the future.
20. I want to go to graduate school so I can make more money.
21. One of the reasons I want to go to graduate school is to meet smart, successful people of the opposite sex.
22. I want to get a graduate degree so that I can support myself.



23. I want to get a graduate degree so that I can support my children, if necessary.
24. My life goals can be met without a graduate education.
25. A graduate education is important to me because it will provide better job opportunities.
26. I feel that my understanding of the world around me will be broadened by going to graduate school.
27. I want to go to graduate school because it will help me decide what to do with my life.

## Appendix G: Hollingshead Four-Factor Index of Social Status

**For the next four questions, please think about your parents only.**

1a. Which of the following professions is closest to your father's line of work?

- (1) Farm Laborers / Menial Service Workers
- (2) Unskilled Workers
- (3) Machine Operators and Semiskilled Workers
- (4) Smaller Business Owners, Skilled Manual Workers, Craftsmen, and Tenant Farmers
- (5) Clerical and Sales Workers, Small Farm and Business Owners
- (6) Technicians, Semiprofessionals, and Small Business Owners
- (7) Smaller Business Owners, Farm Owners, Managers, and Minor Professionals
- (8) Administrators, Lesser Professionals, and Proprietors of Medium-Sized Businesses
- (9) Higher Executives, Proprietors of Large Businesses, and Major Professionals
- (10) Not applicable

1b. Which of the following professions is closest to your mother's line of work?

- (1) Farm Laborers / Menial Service Workers
- (2) Unskilled Workers
- (3) Machine Operators and Semiskilled Workers
- (4) Smaller Business Owners, Skilled Manual Workers, Craftsmen, and Tenant Farmers
- (5) Clerical and Sales Workers, Small Farm and Business Owners
- (6) Technicians, Semiprofessionals, and Small Business Owners
- (7) Smaller Business Owners, Farm Owners, Managers, and Minor Professionals
- (8) Administrators, Lesser Professionals, and Proprietors of Medium-Sized Businesses
- (9) Higher Executives, Proprietors of Large Businesses, and Major Professionals
- (10) Not applicable

2a. Please select the highest level of education that your father has completed.

- (1) Less than 7th grade
- (2) 7th, 8th, or 9th grade
- (3) 10th or 11th grade
- (4) High school graduate or GED
- (5) Partial college or technical/specialized training
- (6) Standard college or university
- (7) Graduate professional training

(8) Not applicable

2b. Please select the highest level of education that your mother has completed.

- (1) Less than 7th grade
- (2) 7th, 8th, or 9th grade
- (3) 10th or 11th grade
- (4) High school graduate or GED
- (5) Partial college or technical/specialized training
- (6) Standard college or university
- (7) Graduate professional training
- (8) Not applicable