

THE IMPACT OF RACIAL-ETHNIC IDENTITY ON ACADEMIC MOTIVATION OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation of African American high school students. African Americans have had a tumultuous history that has affected access to education. This study represents a significant contribution to educational research by extending the understanding of policy makers and curriculum developers to create meaningful curricula that support all students' educational growth. A bivariate regression analysis was used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between African American students' sense of connectedness, embedded achievement, awareness of racism, and academic motivation. The sample included 84 high school students enrolled in a southeastern Virginia high school; each participant completed the Racial/Ethnic Identity Scale and the Academic Motivation Scale. A bivariate correlation found a weak significant correlation between a sense of connectedness and academic motivation. There was no significant relationship between embedded achievement or awareness of racism and academic achievement. Recommendations for future research include examining participants' socioeconomic status and conducting a qualitative study to examine racial/ethnic identity and academic motivation of different demographic populations. This study will help curriculum developers and policy makers support academic achievement of African American high school students.

Keywords: African American culture, academic motivation, racial-ethnic identity

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List of Abbreviations

Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

Basic Need Theory (BNT)

Causality Orientations Theory (COT)

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)

Racial Ethnic-Identity Scale (REIS)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Academic success is one of the most widely assessed and evaluated constructs in the field of educational research. According to Griffin, Mackewn, Moser & VanVuren (2013), academic motivation is one of the most important factors that contribute to a student's academic success. However, personal beliefs of motivation and self-efficacy also influence a student's ability to perform educational tasks (Griffin et al., 2013). African Americans may have different personal beliefs than European Americans regarding motivation and racial ethnic identity, which may impact academic motivation and achievement. Currently, there is concern that African American students are not performing at the same rate as European American students.

In school year 2013-14, fewer African American secondary students (73%) graduated than European Americans (87%), Hispanic Americans (76%), or Asian Americans (89%) (NCES, 2015). Additionally, according to the U.S. Department of Education (2014), African American students are suspended 3 times more often than European American students. On average, European American students were suspended at a rate of 5% compared to 16% of African American students in a school year. Of the students who entered high school in 2013, 87.2% of white students graduated on time, compared to 72.5% of African Americans (National Center of Education Statistics, 2015). The 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment found that 46% of 4th grade and 44% of 8th grade European American students scored as "proficient or above," while among African American students, only 18% of 4th graders and 16% of 8th graders scored as "proficient or above." These findings were strengthened by similar findings in mathematics: on the 2015 NAEP, 51% of 4th grade and 43% of 8th grade European American students scored as proficient or above, while among African American students, 19% of 4th grade students 13% of 8th grade students scored as

proficient or above. Since African American students are not always as academically successful as European Americans, it is important to examine factors that are potentially related to this disparity, such as academic motivation.

When looking at academic achievement among African Americans, low academic achievement may be related to different values and motivations. African American high school students are experiencing lower graduation rates and lower college enrollment (Aud et al., 2010, US Department of Education, n.d.). African American students graduate from high school at a rate of 60% compared to 80% of European Americans (Aud, et al., 2010; US Department of Education, n.d). Although high school dropout rates have decreased and college enrollment has increased among African American students, in 2008, only 32% of African Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in colleges and universities, compared to 44% of European Americans (Aud, et al., 2010, US Department of Education n.d.). These statistics begin to reveal the significant education gap between African American and European American high school students, which may be partially due to racial-ethnic values, as well as to cultural variables that are promoted in the school system (Robinson & Biran, 2006). As stated above, African Americans are experiencing lowered graduation rates and high school completion which may be impacted by demographic variables such as racial-ethnic identity and motivational factors.

Researchers have examined many reasons for the education gap between African Americans and European Americans, including racial identity, socioeconomic status, family structure, and genetics (McKown, & Strambler, 2008). NAEP (2015) data shows that between 1992 and 2015, the achievement gap in reading between African American and European American 12th grade students expanded, while the gap in mathematics remained the same. In addition, researchers have examined differences between various racial-ethnic groups in

motivation and psychological factors (Graham, 1994), conflict between school and home values (Tyler et al., 2010), lack of quality instruction in poor areas (McLaren, 2007), lack of educational value (Cokely, 2002), and racial identity (Fordham, 1988; Fordham & Ogbu 1986). With multiple factors contributing to achievement gaps between African and European Americans, it is important to continue to explore possible reasons for disparities in achievement. Despite the fact that there may be many variables that affect African Americans students' academic motivation, racial-ethnic identity has not been addressed in the United States school system as a possible contributing factor.

Currently, schools in the United States reflect the cultural and racial-ethnic norms and values of middle-class European Americans, emphasizing competition and individualism (Maryshow et al., 2005), while the racial-ethnic norms of African American culture value collectivism and community. The racial disparity in academic achievement may be attributed to a lack of understanding among African American students of the European American racial-ethnic value system (Good, Dweck and Aronson, 2007; Maryshow, Hurley, Allen, Tyler & Boykin, 2005). Oyserman, Brickman and Rhodes (2007) have found that a strong racial identity is connected to higher academic performance. For African American students to thrive in academic settings, it is important that they feel connected to their school communities (Oyserman, Brickman & Rhodes, 2007; Good Dweck & Aronson, 2007). African Americans' racial-ethnic identities should be represented in their school environments. This research is supported by developmental research showing that students' engagement and motivation is connected their values and beliefs (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992; Pintrich, Roeser & DeGroot, 1994).

Overall, African American academic differences relate to racial-ethnic schemas and their impact on academic motivation. Without education, opportunities for African American students

may decline. African American students may not be accessing education in the same ways as European Americans. All students deserve opportunities to be academically successful. Determining how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation can help educators develop tools needed to assist African American students by providing the resources, support, and motivation needed to learn and understand academic content in the same manner as European Americans. This research may help identify academic values related to racial-ethnic identity and how they impact academic motivation, African American students will be able to achieve academically in the same manner as European American students in the public school system. Teachers and administrators can also find way to promote academic engagement and hopefully increase academic outcomes.

Racial-ethnic identity may also play a role in how African Americans access education. To address how the achievement gap is impacted by racial-ethnic identity it is important to research these factors. This research investigates how racial-ethnic identity predicts academic achievement of African American students. Oyserman, Grant and Ager (1995) investigated how racial-ethnic identity has an impact on how African Americans view themselves, but there are limited quantitative studies on how racial-ethnic identity impact academic achievement of African American high school students.

This chapter will outline academic challenges that have affected African Americans over time, as well as the theoretical underpinnings of academic motivation; outline the significance of the study, research questions, and hypotheses; and identify the key variables used in the study. This study will use a simple linear regression to determine how racial-ethnic identity predicts academic motivation of African American high school students.

While African Americans lag behind their European American counterparts, American students also lag behind other students worldwide. Globally, students in United States rank 62nd in math proficiency and 17th in reading proficiency (Peterson, Woessmann, Hanushek & Lastra-Anadon, 2011). According to Peterson et al. (2011), the U.S reading proficiency rate is 31%, compared to other countries such as Korea (47%), Singapore and New Zealand (42%), Japan and Canada (41%), Australia (38%) and Belgium (37%). These numbers indicate a larger problem with academic achievement in the United States. Students sit in the same classes, learning the same curriculum from the same teacher, and yet disparities in achievement are evident. To give all students the education they deserve, it is important to determine what factors contribute to these disparities.

In an effort to determine ways to reduce racial disparities in academic achievement, this paper will examine how African American racial-ethnic schemas predict academic motivation. By doing so, this research will help teachers, policymakers, and school administrators to more effectively meet the needs of African American high school students; it may also help to motivate African American students to perform academically, increasing their access to educational opportunities, and ultimately reducing academic disparities between African and European American students.

Background

Throughout history, African Americans have had a difficult time accessing education in the United States. During slavery, they were not allowed to receive an education; after slaves were freed, African Americans developed their own schools and, for the first time, were allowed to be educated. African American schools did not have many resources and were not comparable to European American schools; students often had to commute significant distances as schools

were not located near their homes. African Americans had their own traditions, beliefs, and attitudes that were not reflected in integrated schools. After desegregation, school reform began, changing how education was provided to all students, but integrated schools often reflected the ideals of middle-class European Americans (Maryshow et al. 2005; Payne, 2005). The Supreme Court's landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* was a turning point for the African American community, and many hoped it would provide equal opportunity and quality education to all students.

After *Brown v. Board of Education*, the educational system changed for African Americans. Racial-ethnic schemas or organized generalizations about African Americans were not taken into account when desegregating schools. Advocates of desegregation strived for equality and made significant strides; however, African American communities continue to face significant problems in attaining education. Public schools in the United States have adopted European American cultural values despite diverse school populations (Maryshow et al. 2005; Payne, 2005)

African American students typically attend schools where people of color comprise the majority of the student body, and are not performing at the same rate as their European American peers (NCES, 2007). According to the US Department of Education (n.d), 63.6% of African American students graduate in four years, while for European American students, that rate is 80.6%. There is still a disparity between African American and European American test scores (US Department of Education, n.d). Although African American students are not graduating at the same rate as European Americans, African Americans are capable of performing academically and can be academically successful.

African Americans hold education in high regard, despite academic performance records that sometimes seem to indicate otherwise. Generally, African American students value education, but perceptions regarding the value of education drive student success. For example, Irving and Hudley (2008) found that negative attitudes toward education were predictive of lower achievement for African American students. Ogbu (2004) found that African American students who experienced racial barriers were likely to devalue the relevance of school, while those who valued reading and math were more likely to achieve in school (Eccleston, Smyth, & Lopoo, 2010). Overall, African American students who can see the personal value and benefits of education, and whose psychological needs are being met, are more likely to be academically motivated (Chavous, et al., 2003).

In order to meet the needs of African American students, it is important to learn about African American academic motivations. Despite a long history of adversity, African Americans have been self-determined, motivated and successful. African Americans' motivation in particular is based on autonomy, competence and relatedness, which are also the basis of Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory (SDT). SDT provides a framework for understanding how people become intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, or amotivated based on the basic human needs for autonomy, competence, and connectedness (relatedness to others).

African Americans may have experienced autonomy, competence, and relatedness to others differently from European Americans, which may have impacted how African American are motivated to learn. Historically, African American students have underachieved in public education. There are many social justice issues affecting African American communities, which may also contribute to high dropout rates and lower standardized test scores, exacerbating the

educational gap between European Americans and minorities. According to Caldwell and Obasi (2010), the segregation that African Americans have experienced has perpetuated the achievement gap. Despite their emancipation from slavery, African Americans are still not afforded the same liberties as European Americans. Due to these challenges, it is important to increase understanding of the different factors that contribute to African American academic outcomes. For educators to understand how to promote academic engagement and motivation among African American students, it is important to examine African American educational history, which may affect academic motivation. The following section will examine how African Americans have experienced education throughout history.

History of African American Education

Historically, African Americans were not allowed to be educated. During slavery, fewer than 5% of African Americans attended school and 90% were considered illiterate (Span, 2009). In 1740, South Carolina was the first state to enact a law prohibiting African Americans from learning to read (Span, 2009); Georgia enacted a similar law in 1770. The Southern states continued to implement restrictions preventing African Americans from learning to read, out of fear that literacy would lead to freedom or escape (Span, 2009; Anderson, 2002; Margo, 1990). By 1840, there were punishments and fines for anyone caught teaching African Americans to read. Although not all of the colonies enacted such laws, community sentiment in the South opposed educating African Americans (Span, 2009; Anderson, 2002; Margo, 1990).

Span (2009) found that proponents of slavery voiced their opinions within the community to ensure that European Americans would not want to teach slaves to read, or associate with literate, free African Americans, and as a result, the only education most African Americans were permitted to receive was instruction in the area in which they worked. This mindset was

infused throughout the South, perpetuating and legally enshrining the ideology that African Americans were substandard and incompetent (Span, 2009, Anderson, 2002; Margo, 1990).

Despite the threat of serious consequences, many African Americans continued to teach themselves to read and write in secret, and after emancipation, many sought educational opportunities in order to compete in the free world (Johnson-Blake, 2010). Slaves were punished severely for showing an interest in education: for example, one slave had his thumb removed and was beaten for learning to read and write (Reuf and Fletcher, 2003). Many other slaves gave similar accounts of being severely punished and disfigured for attempting to learn (Span, 2009). Approximately 5-10% of African Americans did learn some literacy skills from slaves who learned to read early in life, or from slave owners' children who were not aware of the anti-literacy sentiment (Span, 2009). After the Civil War, those African Americans who possessed literacy skills were the first to teach newly emancipated slaves, as anti-literacy laws became invalid. However, although African Americans were legally allowed to learn to read and write, there were still barriers that prevented them from accessing education.

After 1863 and the ratification of the Emancipation Proclamation, free African Americans began to develop and attend schools and churches. According to Buchard (2010), in the mid-1860s, African Americans had a difficult time receiving education due to attacks on African American teachers, schools, and students. Booker T. Washington wrote in his autobiography about the surge of African Americans who yearned for education: "Few people who were not right in the midst of the scenes can form any exact idea of the intense desire which the people of my race showed for education.... It was a whole race trying to go to school. Few were too young, and none too old, to make the attempt to learn" (Cited in Span, 2010. p.30-31).

During this period, a number of grassroots efforts emerged to help educate former slaves. By 1870, almost 10,000 teachers from the North had migrated south to assist at the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, where they taught a quarter of a million African Americans in 4,300 schools (Span, 2009). These “Freedom Schools” were self-governing schools, paid for and implemented by former slaves that assisted free African Americans. According to Span (2009), by the end of the 1800s almost 60% of African Americans were literate. The improvement in African American literacy led to improved opportunities but there continued to be obstacles that prevented African Americans from being educated in the same manner as European Americans.

Despite these hardships and obstacles, African Americans continued to educate themselves. Schools, however, were segregated, and in 1896, the Supreme Court in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which found that educational facilities for African Americans could be “separate but equal”, upheld segregation. This ruling allowed African American schools to remain in poor condition and without the necessary resources and materials (Moore-Thomas, 2009). During segregation, African Americans were able to achieve their goals in lesser conditions, but the injustices and inequalities they endured could not be ignored, and change did not occur for decades until the Civil Rights Movement. Overall, African Americans were not afforded the same opportunities as European Americans, leading to resentment and rejection towards the dominant European American culture (Moore-Thomas, 2009).

Slavery caused cultural genocide among African Americans. African Americans’ ancestral African culture was destroyed, yet the desire for education remained. African Americans were viewed as unequal and often internalized this belief due to the dominant culture’s beliefs. McSwine (2010) posits that implementing desegregation after *Brown v. Board*

of Education was not beneficial for African American students when the knowledge of culture, resilience, and racism are considered. He indicates that idea behind *Brown v. Board of Education* was wrong because the court's decision did not account for the cultural background of African Americans, which is the contributes to academic achievement. Although the court recognized the impact that feelings of inferiority might have on student motivation, they failed to examine the culture implications of the curriculum and teaching strategies used within segregated schools, or to address issues of cultural identity for African American students based on their own traditions and cultural values (McSwine, 2010). This would lead one to conclude that racial identity may have an impact on academic motivation. Therefore, it is important for educators to understand how African American culture impacts educational outcomes.

Overall, African Americans have had a tumultuous history and have not always had opportunities to be academically successful, given the realities of anti-literacy laws and slavery, which forced them to hide their desire for education. Eventually, anti-literacy laws were eliminated, but the lingering effects of mistreatment, as well as segregation by the dominate white culture, has impacted how African Americans students are affected by the European American cultural value educational system (Maryshow et al. 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Today, African American students face many hardships in society. While in high school, African American students are flooded with social obstacles that affect them both in school and within the community. As a result, African Americans are often academically disadvantaged due to a lack of resources, lower socioeconomic status, and less family support.

Several studies indicate that a strong racial identity or sense of belonging to a racial group positively predicts academic achievement or motivation (Oyserman et al., 2003; Seller,

Chavous & Cook, 1998; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus & Harpalina, 2001). Conversely, however, other researchers have found a negative relationship between racial identity and self-concept (Worrell, 2007; Harper & Tucker, 2006), or no relationship or a minimal relationship between racial identity and academic achievement (Awad, 2007; Lockett & Harrell, 2003). While extensive research has been conducted on how racial identity impacts academic motivation, the current literature examining how African American racial identity impacts academic motivation of African American high school students is inconsistent and inconclusive (Oyserman et al., 2003; Seller, Chavous & Cook, 1998; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus & Harpalina, 2001, Worrell, 2007; Harper & Tucker, 2006; Awad, 2007; Lockett & Harrell, 2003). It is important to examine African American racial-ethnic schemas to determine which factors of African American culture predict academic motivation.

Additionally, a large body of research has been conducted focusing on self-efficacy, self-concept, social support, and self-esteem of college students (Martin, 2013; Rodger & Summers, 2008; Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009; Somers, Owens & Piliawsky, 2008). However, there are limited studies examining African American high school students' racial-ethnic identities and academic motivation.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine how racial-ethnic identity of African American students impacts their academic motivation based on the Racial-Ethnic Identity Scale (REIS) (Oyserman, Grant & Ager, 1995; Oyserman, Brickman & Rhodes, 2007) and the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) (Vallerand et al., 1992). A correlational analysis will be used to test the theory of self-determination in regards to the racial-ethnic identity of African American high school students and academic motivation at one southeastern Virginia high school. This study

will help address the gap in the literature concerning how African American high school student's racial ethnic schemas impact academic motivation. By examining racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation, teachers, policy makers and school leaders can possibly incorporate culturally relevant educational practices within the school and in turn, increase academic success of African American students.

The criterion variable in this study is academic motivation. Academic motivation is defined by Vellarand et al. (1992) as intrinsic motivation—to know, towards accomplishment, and to experience stimulation; extrinsic motivation – external regulation, introjected regulation and identified regulation; and lastly, amotivation. The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) developed by Vellarand et al (1992) will measure academic motivation.

The predictor variables were selected based on the research throughout the literature review (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne & Pugh, 2011; Rust et al. 2011; Coker, 2003; Caldwell & Obasi, 2010; Butler-Barnse, Williams & Chavous, 2011; Byrd & Chavous, 2011; Robinson & Biran, 2006; Oyserman et al. 2003). This study will use the predictor variables of connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement. These variables were shown to be influential to African American motivation. The REIS was selected because it most closely measures the aspects of African American culture reflected in the literature (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne & Pugh, 2011; Rust et al. 2011; Coker, 2003; Caldwell & Obasi, 2010; Butler-Barnse, Williams & Chavous, 2011; Byrd & Chavous, 2011; Robinson & Biran, 2006). The REIS allows the participants to express generalizations about their racial identity and culture. The questions will be used to determine the relationship between racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. Understanding how racial-ethnic identity impact academic motivation can potentially help

educators develop educational programs that will promote academic success among African American high school students in a culturally relevant way.

Significance of the Study

Educational outcomes are often linked to a person's core value system (Lent & Brown, 2006). Kao and Thompson (2003) found that when socioeconomic status is controlled, African American students still performed significantly less than European American students. According to Fryer and Levitt (2004), African American children are approximately 1.5 standard deviations behind European American students on standardized math and reading tests. In addition, Peterson et al. (2011) showed that in math proficiency, European Americans scored 42%, while African Americans scored 11%. Math is not the only area that African Americans are scoring below European Americans on proficiency exams (Peterson et al., 2011). African Americans scored 13% in reading proficiency when compared to 40% by European Americans. These statistics support the fact that there is a gap in academic performance between the two groups. These studies support why identifying variables that will improve educational outcomes for African American is significant because educators need to determine if culture does affect academic motivation and if so, to what extent. In addition to gaining an understanding about improving academic achievement for African American students, research shows that there is a positive link between racial identity and academic motivation (Lent et al., 1993; Wolters, Denton, York & Francis, 2013). It would logically be expected based on this research that it is important for educators to increase African American student motivation by maintaining positive racial identity. There are several studies that argue that motivation is directly related to student attendance, student effort, discipline and time spent on homework (Bishop et al. 2003; Betts, 1996). When students increase academic motivation, students are more likely to perform better

in school. By examining how racial-ethnic identity plays a role in motivation, African American students can achieve at the same levels as European American students.

Understanding what factors contribute to African American student motivation may help educators reduce under achievement. It is important to identify the unique needs of African American high school students and how culture plays a role in African American student motivation. According to Johnson and Biran (2006), African American students with a high level of African self-consciousness have a higher level of intrinsic motivation and feelings of responsibility for the African American community. This study supports that African Americans value connectedness to the community. In addition to academically self-consciousness, African Americans are more motivated in school when there is a sense of community (Johnson & Biran, 2006). This is further supported by Oyserman, Grant and Ager (1995) study, which examined racial identity and school persistence. The study found that a balance of racial-ethnic variables of connectedness, embedded achievement and awareness of racism predicted academic achievement. Stinson (2011) also found that schools that adopt group centered ethos for African American students are motivated in school. Following the research in this area, schools are not meeting the psychological needs of African American students to be successful in school. Research implies that African American students may have different needs because of their history of slavery and history of perceived inferiority that continues to impact African American students. When student basic needs are not met, academic motivation and interest diminish (Wang & Eccles, 2013).

Many times educational institutions do not take African American racial-identity and motivational factors into consideration when helping African American students succeed academically. Ultimately, racial integrity should not have to be sacrificed in order for African

American students to be successful. By developing an educational environment that promotes African American racial-ethnic identity, schools may be able to help increase academic achievement of African American high school students.

It is unclear if African American racial-ethnic identity has an impact on academic motivation. The research does not explain if or how racial-ethnic identity impacts student academic motivation. There is a considerable need for research to determine if African American racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation. Researchers have found that there are different reasons why African American students lack motivation. One reason according to Fordham (1988) is that students have a difficult time balancing the dual relationship between African American racial-ethnic identity and the dominant society's cultural system because the dominant society promotes individualism while the African American racial-ethnic identity promotes collectivism. African American students are forced to adopt the racial-ethnic identities of European American students. This may or may not impact African American ability to be motivated academically, which in turn may cause the achievement gap

More information is needed to determine the cause of the lack of motivation. It is important to understand how academic motivation of African Americans is possibly linked to positive ethnic-racial identity. Determining what variables promote academic motivation may help educators and policy makers develop curriculum and supports to help African American students achieve in the same manner as European American students. More research on African American racial-ethnic identity can provide insight into academic motivation in ways traditional methods of educating African American students cannot (Caldwell & Obasi, 2010).

The research focuses on African American college students and how self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social factors impact academic motivation. Building on Caldwell and

Obasi's (2010) findings, the current study will examine African American high school students to determine how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation. Additional information is critical to determine the possible impact of African American racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation. This possible link between African American racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation is just beginning to be explored through research and has not been clearly defined. Since the impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation of African American is not clearly defined, it is important to examine these factors.

Recent research focuses on the differences in African American racial-ethnic identity and the school environment. For example, two studies (Brown-Wright & Tyler, 2010; Tyler, Brown-Wright, Stevens-Watkins, Thomas et al. 2010) found perceived differences between the values and operations in the school environment did not exist in the home environment of African American students. This is further explored through limited quantitative studies that examine how cultural values predict academic motivation. These studies begin to reveal that African American students experience school home dissonance.

Home and school dissonance may attribute to a lack of academic motivation among African American students. Many times, in addition to a lack of connection to the values shared in the home, African American students have had unequal opportunities in the United States and devalue the benefits of academic achievement, which leads to lower educational outcome expectancy (Caldwell & Obasi, 2010). Despite social, economic and racial discrimination, some African Americans have responded to adversity by developing strong racial identity and commitment to academic success (Sanders, 1997). In 2003, Ogbu conducted a study that analyzed the phenomenon of African American disengagement within an affluent suburb. Ogbu found that African American students were disengaged from academics due to societal problems,

school dissonance and community influences. Further factors consisted of race relations, internalized white beliefs, collective identity, culture, and language and peer pressure. By examining how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation, educators can possibly increase educational outcomes of African American students and provide a solution to increase academic engagement in schools.

Based on this research, it is clear that African American students face larger issues that are not being addressed in the academic setting. This pitfall in the American educational system may cause African American students to fail at a rate that is not equal to European American students in the same schools. This study will examine whether African American racial-ethnic identity may impact academic motivation. Educators will be able to use this research to develop culturally relevant curriculum and educational strategies to improve educational outcomes for African Americans.

Research Questions

The research objective for this study is to determine how racial-ethnic identity impacts the academic motivation in African American high school students. Racial-ethnic identity is defined as a social construction that “refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a particular racial group” (Helms, 1993, p. 3). African Americans motivation varies based on African self-consciousness (Robinson & Biran, 2006) perceived social support (connectedness to the community) (Young et al., 2011), and the impact of specialized school’s culture, neighborhoods and racism (Fraizer, 2012). The related research questions are shown below:

RQ1: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?

RQ2: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component awareness of racism have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?

RQ3: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of embedded achievement have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?

Null Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness and academic motivation, as measured by the AMS.

H₀₂ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of awareness of racism and academic motivation, as measured by the AMS.

H₀₃ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of embedded achievement and academic motivation, as measured by the AMS.

Definitions

Academic achievement: When a student meets the educational outcomes outlined by the school or district.

Academic Motivation: The amount of intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation a person has to perform academically (Vallerand et al., 1992).

Amotivation: When a person is neither intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. A person does not perceive exigencies between the effects of their own actions (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Extrinsic motivation – external regulation: A person’s behavior is guided by external rewards and punishments (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Extrinsic motivation – identified regulation: When a person internalizes their chosen actions and it is deemed as valuable, it is internalized as important by the individual (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Extrinsic motivation – introjected regulation: A person who begins to internalize the reasons for their actions and this is based on experiences (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Intrinsic motivation – stimulation: A person who engages in an action based on sensory pleasure and fun and excitement from an activity (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Intrinsic motivation – to accomplish: Participating in an activity for pleasure and satisfaction of attempting to accomplish or creating something (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Intrinsic motivation – to know: Performing an activity for the pleasure that a person derives from learning and exploring new things (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Racial Ethnic Identity -- “refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a particular racial group” (Helms, 1993, p. 3).

Values: “Standards that not only guide the behavior of the individuals who hold them, but serve as their basis for judging the behavior of others” (Rokeach, 1973).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive literature review of racial ethnic identity and academic motivation. African American students may be at an increased risk of being less successful in school than European American students. Researchers have found that different cultural values may contribute to the success of African American students (Caldwell & Obasi, 2010).

Motivation is one of the most important factors in a student's academic performance (Griffin, Mackewn, Moser & VanVuren, 2012). School climate, educators, beliefs and perceptions, family, and social values all influence motivation (Rowell & Hong, 2012). Lack of motivation can cause students to underachieve and increases students' chances of dropping out of school (Rowell & Hong, 2012). African American students with a strong racial identity, who are aware of discrimination and who understand the contributions that their race will possess positive academic values and demonstrate higher academic motivation and achievement (Smalls, White, Chavous & Sellers, 2007; Kunjufu, 1995; Spencer et al, 2002). The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. This study uses a correlational analysis through a convenience sample from a school in the southeastern region of Virginia. This research will provide more insight into how racial ethnic identity of African American high school student's impacts academic motivation. This chapter contains precedent literature and research organized to examine the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by exploring intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The latter part of the literature review will analyze racial-ethnic identity of African American students through the components of connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement.

An exhaustive review was conducted on this topic, using keywords such as African American motivation; racial identity; African American culture and academic achievement. The literature is centered on the following topics: motivation, culture of African Americans and racial-ethnic identity of African Americans, self-determination theory, and academic motivation. Literature related to each of these topics will be discussed and summarized, with strengths and weaknesses identified in an effort to provide an understanding of what variables serve as the best predictors of academic achievement of African Americans. The purpose of this study is to determine how racial-ethnic identity of African American students based on the REIS (Oyserman et al, 1995; Oyserman et al, 2007) impacts academic motivation of African American high school students as measured by the AMS (Vallenrand et al, 1992).

Theoretical Framework

Student motivation has been consistently researched throughout the history of education. Within the last twenty years, motivation of students from different cultures has been explored. African American student motivation, in particular, has been studied using self-determination theory to explain academic motivation, but to date, the focus has been on African American college students (Martin, 2013; Rodgers & Summers, 2008; Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009; Somers, Owens & Piliawsky, 2008). African American student motivation can be explored by examining Self-Determination Theory (SDT). SDT is the study of motivation, which can be intrinsic or extrinsic, and holds that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors stem from how social and cultural development affect individual differences (Deci & Ryan, 2008). According to Deci and Ryan (2008), the conditions that best support individual differences are autonomy, defined as perception of independence despite external factors; competence, defined as control of an outcome and achieving mastery; and relatedness, defined as being connected with others.

SDT implies that if these basic psychological needs are met, then an individual will be considered self-determined and will be able to reach their goals (Deci & Ryan, 2008). In order to understand African American student motivation, it is important to examine SDT and how it impacts African American students.

Numerous studies have examined academic motivation using self-determination theory, but the results are inconsistent. For example, Othman and Leng (2011) found a weak relationship between self-concept, intrinsic motivation, self-determination, and academic achievement for students who attended a Chinese Primary School. Byrd & Chavous (2011) found that African American students who received positive messages about race from teachers reported higher rates of intrinsic motivation. Another study examined valuing achievement and behavioral engagement and found that achievement values do not have a significant influence on achievement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2013). Socioeconomic status, college experience in previous family generations, and perceived social support predicted intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for African American students in accordance with self-determination theory (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne & Pugh, 2011). Gamboa, Rodriguez and Garcia (2013) found that self-motivation in any capacity determine academic outcomes. Finally, Ryan and Deci (2000) include connectedness to others as a source of motivation. The goal of relating or feeling connected stems from a person's cultural values. In summary, the ways Africans Americans feel self-determined varies; however, it is important to determine how African American students experience autonomy, competence, and connectedness in order to understand how their racial-ethnic identity may impact their academic achievement.

Self-Determination Theory

SDT offers a way to understand academic motivation. After reviewing the literature, it became apparent that academic motivation could be explained by self-determination. This link is critical, because motivational skills stemming from self-determination correlate with, and may be causal factors in, achievement. SDT rests on an organismic view of human nature, which indicates a natural inclination to act and grow developmentally (Ryan & Deci, 2008). The organismic view of human nature suggests that a person will seek out challenges and attempt to make discoveries within their environment. Rigby et al. (1992) indicates that humans have an innate tendency to integrate their own experiences, knowledge, and personality into a sense of self, as well as to integrate with other individuals. Deci and Ryan (2002) argues that external factors can either inhibit or promote the integration process of developing psychological wellbeing. SDT reveals interactions between the natural tendency to interact, develop and external factors that suggests three basic psychological needs of all individuals: autonomy, competence and relatedness. If all these needs are met, then most individuals will be able to integrate and develop. While it is true that SDT is critical to motivation, it is important to see how African American students experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy is defined as the perception of a person's ability to have control over one's own behavior. Although external forces can influence independence, individuals have the ability to act on their own will because of the values that are integrated within ones self (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Competence is best defined as a person's perception of their ability to feel successful in their own environment. The need for competence is what drives a person to seek out challenges within their own environment, maintaining their ability levels and in turn, increasing their sense of competence (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Relatedness is defined as the predisposition for people to

want to be and feel connected to others. Individuals want to feel as if they belong to a community (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Deci and Ryan (2000) describe intrinsic motivation as “the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one’s capacities to explore and learn” (p. 70). Turner, Chandler and Heffer (2009) used SDT to determine how parental styles, motivation to achieve, and self-efficacy influence academic performance in college students, but did not focus on racial or ethnic differences. Another study used SDT as one of the theoretical frameworks to explain African American students academic success at predominately white institutions and motivational factors of college students (Rodgers & Summers, 2008). Additionally, Wang and Eccles (2013) also used SDT to explain school context, motivation to achieve, and academic engagement among ethnically diverse students to measure academic motivation.

In contrast to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation “refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome and, thus, contrasts with intrinsic motivation which refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 72). Cokley found that African American college students had higher levels of extrinsic motivation when attending predominately white institutions, but had lower grade point averages. Cokley (2003) also noted that African American students who attended historically black colleges/universities reported higher levels of intrinsic motivation and higher academic self-concept. This is important because it suggests that African American students may be academically motivated in different ways than European American students. Overall, the differences in intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation imply that African Americans motivational needs are different, and that gaining an understanding of academic motivation may reduce academic disparities (Allen, 1988; Ford, 1996).

Behavior is regulated by either internal or external factors: a student's behavior can be controlled, or self-determined. Self-determined behavior is considered internally regulated, and behavior that is controlled is externally regulated. Meeting the psychological needs identified by SDT improves self-determination. Students who have their basic needs met are more likely to be motivated to perform. In academic settings, teachers, peers, and family members can promote or hinder self-determination. When a student's needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence are supported, students are likely to succeed academically. When students are only focused on external factors, such as earning grades or approval, the student will be less self-determined. While intrinsically motivated students exhibit greater self-determination, both factors are important. Cokely (2003) used the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) to measure academic motivation, using the Academic Self-Concept Scale and the Roseburg Self-Esteem Scale in a structural equation model to analyze the data. Cokely (2003) found that African American students had significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation in academic self-concept, self-esteem, and academic performance when attending historically Black colleges/universities than did African American students attending predominately white institutions. This suggests that African Americans basic needs are being met in a different manner at historically Black colleges/universities, and that racial-ethnic identity may play a role in motivation. However, another study from Cokely, Bernard, Cunningham and Montoike (2001) found no difference in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in African American students. The researchers used the AMS and the Academic Self-Concept Scale in a structural equation model to analyze the data. These mixed results indicate more research is needed related to racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation of African American students.

In another study, Brown (2002) posits that when researchers control for socioeconomic status, level of parental education, and a variety of other factors that contribute to achievement, a racial gap in academic achievement persists. This supports the idea that the current educational practices exhibited by schools and teachers are counterproductive to academic success of African American students.

Intrinsic motivation. Motivation is based on three basic psychological needs being met, autonomy, competence and relatedness. Although people have intrinsic motivational characteristics, evidence suggests that if a person is not in an environment that supports intrinsic motivation, these can be easily thwarted. Vansteenkiste, Lens and Deci (2006) determined that there are additional ways to be intrinsically motivated, and that autonomous motivation involves a person's ability to make choices. "Intrinsic motivation and well-internalized forms of extrinsic motivation are considered autonomous, whereas poorly internalized forms of extrinsic motivation are considered controlled" (Vansteenkiste et al, 2006 p. 19). Supporting and developing teaching practices that satisfy the three basic needs (autonomy, competence and relatedness) will help develop students who are self-determined and motivated (Kusharkar, Croset, Ten & Cate, 2011).

According to Deci and Ryan (2000), students who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to pursue a college education in a field that they are passionate about. This is primarily true for European Americans. Cokely (2003) found that African American students who attended historically Black colleges or universities were more intrinsically motivated because of culturally relevant experiences. SDT can provide some insight on self-determined behavior, but there is limited research on how SDT applies to African American high school students.

Extrinsic motivation. Vansteenkiste et al. (2006) discussed two forms of extrinsic motivation: external regulation and introjected regulation. The least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation, external regulation is motivation by rewards, punishments, and deadlines, none of which are internalized. Introjected regulation is a form of extrinsic motivation that is only partially internalized, whereby a person may comply with something because of internal pressure to avoid feelings of guilt and shame. The person does not accept the motivation internally as they would with intrinsic motivation.

In order for students to abide by school rules and regulations, they must be presented in a way that enhances students' relatedness, competence, and autonomy "with respect to relevant behaviors" of the people involved (Vansteenkiste et al, 2006, p 21). African American students may feel they are unable to achieve a desired outcome or feel that they cannot complete an activity effectively and thus may become demotivated (Vansteenkiste et al, 2006). According to Assor, Kaplan and Roth (2002), students have a need to feel autonomous and when students do not feel autonomy they will see schoolwork as irrelevant to their goals or expectations.

Although, Ryan and Deci coined SDT in the 1970s, it has progressed to incorporate several mini-theories to explain motivation based on the three fundamental psychological needs (competence, autonomy, and relatedness). These four variations of SDT theory include: Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), Causality Orientations Theory (COT), Basic Needs Theory (BNT), and Organismic Integration Theory (OIT). Each mini-theory will be addressed in the context of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)

CET focuses on intrinsic theory and how environmental factors affect it. Intrinsic motivations are behaviors that are done willingly because there is pleasure in simply doing the

behavior or activity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). DeCharms (1968) found that it is important for people to believe that they are in control of their own actions and behaviors. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation negate each other. According to CET, the need for autonomy and competence are linked to intrinsic motivation; therefore, if internal forces drive a person, that person's behavior will also feel controlled and autonomous (Deci & Ryan, 2002). If a person is competent, intrinsic motivation will increase because the individual is able to effectively manage his or her environment (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Intrinsic motivation can increase autonomy and competence. Unlike autonomy and competence, relatedness is indirectly influenced by intrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (2002) claim that a child's attachment to their primary caregiver increases exploring behavior, which indicates that relatedness is intrinsically motivated. This occurs because children tend to be naturally curious about their environment when in the company of their primary caregiver as opposed to a stranger. Although relatedness is not directly affected by intrinsic motivation, it is an intrinsically motivating factor.

Basic Needs Theory (BNT)

BNT focuses on the basic needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness as they pertain to well-being and mental health. This theory asserts that if a person's psychological needs are met, they will have improved well-being and psychological health. Deci and Ryan (2001) state that when a person's needs are satisfied, that person has greater well-being. They also argue that people experience negative consequences when their basic needs are not met. The researchers hypothesized that basic needs are universal across cultures, ages and genders, but that how those basic needs are met varies across demographics. Due to these differences, Deci and Ryan (2002)

posits that motivation that satisfies one group may inhibit another group, but that the process in which basic needs are met remains the same.

Research on BNT falls into three categories. The first one examines how people experience well-being over time with other people. The second category explores how people pursue and attain personal goals and obtain well-being. The third category examines satisfaction of basic needs across cultures, suggesting that such satisfaction relates to well-being regardless of cultural differences.

In addition to these research categories, BNT also explores the relationship between aspirations and well-being. Kasser and Ryan (1996) suggest that there are two types of aspirations: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic aspirations are personal goals, while extrinsic aspirations are external factors, such as wealth and fame. Aspirations that are extrinsic do not satisfy the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Extrinsic aspirations may lead to depression and anxiety (Deci & Ryan 2002).

Organismic Integration Theory (OIT)

OIT examines motivation and focuses on extrinsic motivation, which is when a person engages in a behavior or activity based on external factors. This mini theory views extrinsic motivation as a continuum varying of self-determination. OIT argues that people may exhibit behavior that is prompted by external factors, but may become intrinsically controlled over time. The degree of that integration of control occurs leads to self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2002). There are four motivational OIT categories positioned on the continuum, ranging from high self-determination to low self-determination respectively: integrated regulation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, and external regulation. The continuum does not contain intrinsic motivation. On the other end of the spectrum, amotivation is the absence of self-determination.

Integrated regulation is defined as the most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. Integrated regulation is when a person's values are integrated in themselves or comes from within. This regulation allows a person to achieve outcomes that may not be inherent or natural actions despite being integrated within the self (Deci et al., 1996). Identified regulation is the act of knowing that there is value in a goal and accepting that value, but the integration is not a core value; therefore, it cannot be considered completely self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Introjected regulation incorporates some regulation, but there is a significant level of control present to protect the ego from things such as shame or guilt (Rigby et al., 1992). Finally, external regulation is the least self-determined form of regulation, satisfying an external source to avoid punishment or receive a reward (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Deci and Ryan (2002) argue that relatedness plays a critical role in regulation. Regulation may develop from an external reward, but the outcome is achieved by a person's need to feel connected with others. However, competence also plays an important role in regulation. If an individual does not feel that the action or behavior can be done successfully the person will not perform the act. Relatedness and competence both must be present for integration and autonomy to occur (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Causality Orientations Theory (COT)

COT focuses on individual differences of one's positioning on being self-determined. There are three main causal orientations that develop based on how a person interacts with their environment. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), autonomous orientations are persons that tend to be intrinsically motivated and integrated or extrinsically motivated. An individual's behaviors are regulated based on one's own sense of self. The majority of people's behavior stems from internally regulated factors. Unlike autonomous orientation, controlled orientations

are dictated by external pressure, by status, success or to seek approval from others. Controlled orientation occurs from excessive involvement in controlling environments. This leads to impersonal orientation, which is the absence of self-determination that develops from feelings of inability and powerlessness to deal with the environment (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Vallerand (2002) expanded COT into levels of generality: global, contextual and situational. The global level is stable motivation that is based on how the individual perceives motivation throughout one's life. It is mainly intrinsic, extrinsic or amotivated. The contextual level is based on interactions and relationships in life and is somewhat stable despite being based on social factors. Lastly, the situational level examines why people are motivated in specific situations at specific times. The situational level is unstable because it is dependent upon environmental factors. The motivational orientations affect each other. A person's global level motivation orientation has an impact on the contextual level, which also influences the situational level. The vice versa is also true. If a person at the situational level has positive experiences this encourages a person to have more intrinsic motivation at the contextual level and ultimately the global level (Vallerand, 2002).

Summary

Overall, SDT examines motivation and the factors that nurture or hinder its development. The current school environment is not conducive to African American motivation because African American student's basic psychological needs are not being met. SDT can be attributed to a student's motivation in education. Students have become increasingly less motivated and SDT may help provide some context to the lack of motivation. CET argues that people have an innate need to explore their environment. OIT implies that students may integrate their experiences and social environment and become self-determined. COT argues that a person's

experiences affect their motivational orientation. Lastly, BNT states that basic needs are deeply rooted in physical and emotional wellbeing. SDT implies that there may be many factors that affect self-determination. The different ways that people are motivated vary based on cultural or individual factors. African Americans have experienced motivational barriers and in order to determine how self-determination is affected by African American culture. It is important to understand African American culture by analyzing the natural factors and external factors that affect the psychological needs essential for self-determination. African American culture will be analyzed by examining autonomy (perception of control from external factors), competence (perception of success) and relatedness (connectedness to the community) in education.

Factors That Affect African American Motivation

Post desegregation, African Americans have struggled academically when compared to European Americans (Peterson et al., 2010). In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was enacted by the US Department of Education to address the achievement gap and required that all schools make adequate yearly progress (AYP) towards academic growth (Department of Education, n.d.). Many African Americans continue to fail despite these government initiatives. Consequently, many African Americans have not had successful academic experiences. It is important to identify why many African American students are not succeeding at the same rate as European Americans.

African American students should be able to achieve academically in the same manner as European Americans in public schools, but the research states that this is not happening for all students. According to Kunjufu (2010), approximately 100,000 African American males drop out of school each year. He also reports that these students often have poor attendance, excessive absences and lack of motivation due to lack of parental involvement. According to the

National Center for Educational Statistic's 2009, graduation rates were severely disproportionate among European American and African American students. European Americans are graduating at rate of 80.3% while African Americans are graduating at a rate of 60.3% (Stillwell, 2009). Overall, the high school dropout rate leads to underachievement and lack of success, which affects the student's capacity for success. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) high school dropout in (2005) was earning \$17,299, while high school graduates' earnings was \$26,933 (Baker, 2012).

Despite these statistics, there are African Americans students who are academically successful. Although African American students are not performing at the same rates academically as European Americans, African Americans value success (Coker, 2003). One study found that achieving educational goals was a function of African American culture and lives (Coker, 2003). There is not enough information to determine what aspects of African American cultural values support African Americans desire to be academically motivated. The current literature focuses on college student's academic motivation (Young, Hawthorne, & Pugh, 2011). More research is needed to determine how African American high school students are motivated and if culture or racial-ethnic identity plays a role in their academic motivation (Rust et al. 2011; Caldwell & Obasi, 2010). The present literature focuses on academic motivation of African American college students using the variables of academic self-concept (Martin, 2013; Cokley, 2002), self-esteem (Rust et al. 2011; Cokely, 2002), grade point average (Cokely, 2002; Rust et al., 2011), family and community (Coker, 2003; Caldwell & Obasi, 2010), cultural mistrust (Caldwell & Obasi, 2010), cultural difference (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne, & Pugh, 2011; Rust et al., 2011) and religiosity (Butler-Barnse, Williams & Chavous, 2011), and racial identity (Byrd & Chavous, 2011; Robinson & Biran, 2006). Many variables have been

researched and racial-ethnic identity appears to be the most influential factor in academic motivation. This study will utilize two instruments to determine the impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation. One instrument, the REIS contains 3 subscales that measure Connectedness, Awareness of Racism and Embedded Achievement. The second instrument is the AMS – High School version that measures a student’s motivation to learn. The AMS measures intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. This study will determine the impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation of African American students. The next section will outline African American racial-ethnic variables and as it pertains to embedded achievement, community and family.

Racial-Ethnic Identity of African Americans

Racial-ethnic identity is social construction that “refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on one’s perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a particular racial group” (Helms, 1993, p. 3). There are multiple studies that examine the effects of racial-ethnic identity and academic outcomes (Oyserman, Grant & Ager, 1995; Oyserman, Kimmelmeir, Fryberg, Brosh, & Hart-Johnson, 2003; Altschul, Oyserman & Bybee, 2006; Oyserman, Harrison & Bybee, 2001; Oysersman, Bybee & Terry, 2003; Cokley, 2005). Oyserman, Brickman and Rhodes (2007) used the structure that racial-ethnic identity is linked to self-concept and self-schemas that affect the cognitive structures that are associated with motivation and behavior. The researchers above argue that schools have social contexts that cause students to create a separate person outside of the family structure. African American students often have a difficult time developing a positive academic concept due to negative academic stereotypes (Oyserman et al., 1995).

Oyserman et al., 1995 suggests that there are three components, connectedness, and awareness of racism and embedded achievement of racial-ethnic identity that impact academic outcomes of African American students. Connectedness is the “extent to which individuals feel a positive sense of connections to their racial-ethnic group” (Oyserman et al., 2007 p. 96). Awareness of racism is the second component of racial-ethnic identity, which is defined as how a person responds to prejudice or racism (Oyserman et al., 2007). Lastly embedded achievement “which comprises beliefs that achievement is a goal that is valued by the in-group and therefore provides a specific goal (such as doing well in school) for motivation derived from the desire to enact group identity” (Oyserman et al., 2007, p. 98). The three components of racial-ethnic identity act together to promote well-being and academic achievement (Oyserman, 1995).

The three components together promote success in school and the components for student’s overtime (Oyserman et al., 2007). The three components of racial-ethnic identity were tested with several studies. One study (Oyserman et al., 1995) asked 7th and 8th grade African American students in to answer questions open-ended question about what it means to be African American before and after completing a math task or after completing a math task. The study found that students who described their racial-ethnic identity in terms of all three components, connectedness, awareness of racism and embedded achievement before the math task performed better on the math tasks than all other conditions. None of the racial-ethnic identity components alone had a significant effect on the math task.

In addition to using an open-ended racial-ethnic identity scale and Oyserman, Bybee and Terry (2003) found in a yearlong longitudinal study that African American middle school students that scored high in all areas – connectedness, awareness of racism and embedded achievement overtime became more concerned with school. This study used the REIS and found

similar results to Oyserman et al., 2001 study using the closed-ended racial-ethnic scale that found that African American students did not have a decline in self-efficacy. In addition to the researcher's results, Altschul, Oyserman and Bybee (2006) found that the relationships between the components were stable across gender, race-ethnicity and time. Overall, several studies have shown how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic outcomes. The next sections will outline how connectedness, awareness of racism and embedded achievement affects African American.

Connectedness of African Americans

Connectedness is defined as how an individual positively feels about a sense of connection to one's racial-ethnic group (Oyserman et al., 2007). This includes a sense of membership in the African American community, traditions of familialism, kin support and a worldview focused on spiritualism (Oyserman et al., 2007). This aspect of the scale is tied to student's self-esteem (Oyserman et al., 2007). According to Snowden and Hines (2000), media preferences, key group relationships, comfort with and immersion in African American socializations and settings and African American styles of thinking and patterns of behavior convey African American culture. African American culture is different than other American subcultures because it is the only culture that is rooted in slavery. Slavery has shaped African Americans social, psychological, economic, educational, and political development. European Americans worked to eradicate education from African American culture and superimpose the message that education was only for European Americans (Davis, 2005). African American education was purged during the acculturation process and stripped African Americans of African identity which is still prevalent in African American culture (Davis, 2005). African Americans become disengaged in the educational process that results in a lack of motivation (Rocques & Paternoster, 2011). It is important for educators to use culturally responsive

teaching to develop academic motivation (Davis, 2005). Notwithstanding this best practice, many educators fail to understand African American culture and ultimately fail to successfully motivate African American students.

Culture of community. This next section will examine the culture of community and how spirituality impacts African American culture. Carson (2009) argued that collectivism or a culture of community has taken place throughout history for African Americans in the pursuit of education in order to improve academically by educating each other within the community. The African American community came together to dispel myths that they were inferior (Perry, 2003a, b). One study showed that African Americans felt responsible for encouraging academic achievement for their college community and collectivism developed these beliefs, although they did not feel connected to the larger university (Carson, 2009).

African Americans value collectivism or community and cooperation whereas mainstream American culture places emphasis on individualism and competition (Maryshow et al., 2005). Schools typically focus on middle class European American values that can vary from the learning style and values exhibited by African American students. The academic disparities among African Americans and European American students may arise by the discord in cultural norms and values of African American students compared to European American students. African American students often feel there is not a link between the values and operations present in home and outside of the home environment (Brown-Wright & Tyler, 2010).

African Americans are connected in their own communities, but often experience difficulty connecting to the dominant society. Oftentimes, African American students have different principles, vernacular, patterns of communication and other factors that are different than the dominant culture (Cokely & Chapman, 2008). American society has many stereotypes

about African Americans, one, is a lack of intelligence. This stereotype may make African Americans susceptible to internalizing stereotypes because they are perceived by the dominant culture (Reyna, 2000). According to Cokley and Chapman (2008), stereotypes about minorities affect student goals and inhibit the student's ability to be successful in school. Academic underachievement may be intensified by negative experiences in school due to teacher bias, lack of appropriate resources and culturally relevant instruction (Cokely & Chapman, 2008). African Americans are unable to escape race relations. Strmic-Pawl and Leffler (2011) indicated that racial socialization was a prevalent theme in their study. Racial socialization was described as messages provided about racial identity. In the African American community, there are direct and indirect messages about race and African American families pass on to their children.

African American students may be impacted by difficulties experienced within the community or within school. Many African American students drop out of school for many reasons including past school experiences, personal characteristics, familial responsibilities and family background (Schargel, Thacker & Bell, 2007). African American students indicated that the decision to drop out of high school was a gradual process that occurred through repeated negative experiences that lead to feeling unmotivated (Bridgeland, Dilulio, & Morrison, 2006). In a recent study, it was cited that students dropped out of high school because there was no connection between the student's lives and goals for the future (Bridgeland, Balfanz, Moore & Friant, 2010). African American students do not have control over the external life factors, but with improved leadership, instructional practices that relate to the student's lives and data driven instruction may improve student dropouts despite the ability to control external factors (Baker, 2012). Overall, this lack of autonomy for African Americans has had a negative effect on academic outcomes. According to the US Census Bureau (2006), over 50% of the US population

will comprise of African-Americans, Hispanics or Asians (Li, 2012). In addition to expected census results, Scheuermann (2000) found that non-cognitive factors such as personality traits, emotional stability, experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness are equally important in the academic success of students. The previous study is particularly important because there must be a balance between academic and social characteristics, in conjunction with a supportive environment to increase intrinsic motivation and develop goals (Li, 2012). With the lack of balance experienced by African American high school students within the school community and socially has led to differing attitudes about academic success.

Robinson and Biran (2006) posit that African American culture of community consists of spiritualism and collective responsibility. The school system fails to provide African American students with a cultural base. Without a cultural base, African American students are unable to maintain a focus on academic success. Although the current educational system does not promote intrinsic motivation among African American students, many excel academically. When African American students are academically successful it is because they care about their environment and strive for harmony and spirituality in the community. Having a high level of African American self-consciousness provides intrinsic motivation and feelings of responsibility for the African American community. The study also found a positive link between self-reported GPA and African American identity. There was also a positive link between self-reported SAT score and feeling connected to other African Americans (Robinson & Biran, 2006). The culture perpetuated by the school system determines a student's self-concept (Robinson & Biran, 2006). Self-concept of an African American student is determined by how well an African American student behaves in comparison to values, beliefs and practices set by the culture within the school (Robinson & Biran, 2006; Oyserman et al., 2001). Schools are utilizing different rewards

and punishments that are not representative of African American culture; therefore, diminishing a student's ability to be self-determined. Robinson and Biran (2006), Oyserman et al., (2007) found that African American students are struggling academically because of conflicting culturally based expectations within school and the community such as negative stereotypes of African Americans, lack of African American role models, and limited emphasis on African American contributions and lack of positive societal depictions of African Americans. These attributes hinder intrinsic motivation among African American youth. Despite these conflicts, many African Americans develop a sense of purpose and excel academically. Examining which cultural or racial-ethnic factors increase intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation among African American students will improve academic outcomes for African American students.

Spirituality. Throughout history African Americans have had a firm faith-based belief. Sabbath schools were developed in the South after the Civil War to increase spirituality and improve education (Span & Benson, 2009). These schools were operated by former African American slaves and were developed to teach basic literacy skills and religion education (Span & Benson, 2009). According to Mitchell (2010), history has maintained that European American northerners developed schools for African Americans, but in fact, there were a large number of schools developed by African Americans that had a significant role in improving the literacy rate. Anderson (1988), indicated that the African American churches had a great influence in improving the literacy rate of the community from 6% at the end of the Civil War to 77% in 1930. The role of the church in the African American community produced remarkable educational results (Mitchell, 2010). The African American community ties to the church also extended to higher institutions including multiple faith based universities in the late 1880s (Mitchell, 2010).

African Americans have thrived in the community with the use of the church. According to Butler-Barnes, Williams, & Chavous (2012), found that African American students who had lower academic motivation and lower religious importance were at the highest risk for low grade point averages. Overall, African Americans made a large contribution after emancipation without wealth and political power with the leadership of the African American church (Mitchell, 2010). African Americans rely heavily on spirituality to deal with adversity.

In summary, African Americans have a culture of competence despite hardships. African Americans have countered segregation by building a strong sense of collectivism and belongingness within the community. African Americans have embraced a strong religious foundation that has provided the African American culture and community with access to education and the ability to provide wealth and political power within the community. African American culture has also extended to different family practices and values that have affected African Americans.

Family Practices and Values

Various experiences in the African American community such as slavery and segregation have affected how African Americans families function. The core of African American family values stem from collectivism and spirituality (Shorter-Gooden, 2004). African American families have dealt with external factors by adopting Afrocentric values including social support developing a family cohesiveness to address social injustices. When compared to European American families, African American families are often viewed as dysfunctional, but despite the stereotype African American families have significant strengths (Strmic-Pawl & Leffler, 2011). Strmic-Pawl and Leffler (2011) found three themes that are essential to African American families, extended and fictive kinship, racial socialization and education. Regardless of

socioeconomic status African American families are still influenced by racism and maintain a sense of African American identity. The participants in the study identified how aunts, uncles and grandparents played a significant role in raising them. There were also members of the community who were not related to the family but were active in the participant's life. These relationships provided a flexible familial unit. Nobles (2007) noted that African American families value these types of relationships because of the extended relationships that developed during slavery and when family members were bought and sold. African American families also place value on the elders in the community because their strength and dealing with the hardships they had to endure. Boyd-Franklin (2003) also noted that African American families have family members and close friends that take an active role in the home. In a study conducted by Hill (1999) identified strong kinships, strong achievement motivation, and strong religious and spiritual and strong work orientation as characteristics of African American families. These characteristics have allowed African Americans to strive in difficult circumstances despite a non-traditional family structure.

Awareness of Racism

Awareness of racism is defined as understanding negative responses to African Americans and having awareness of racism and others prejudice (Oyserman et al., 2007). According to a study conducted by McSwine (2010), African American cultural hegemony (negation of one culture by another) has caused African Americans to experience complex psychological factors such as delineation, color prejudice and xenophobia, implicit and explicit European American supremacy ideology has been the sabotaging force of academic achievement among African American. Therefore, African American students need to be grounded in their culture before they can function in the larger American society. Without a connection to the

African American culture, African American students will continue to internalize the values of the oppressors and in turn maintain their oppression (Freire, 1972).

African American students have dealt with acculturation in various ways. Thomas and Columbus (2009) found that there were three types of culture identification, oppositional identity, raceless identity and primary cultural identity. Oppositional identity is a person who does not identify with the dominant culture. Raceless identity is a person who feels they can be successful despite negative stereotypes because if they work hard they can achieve their goals. Primary cultural identity maintains that a person will work hard in school for the good of their culture and value school and education for the good of themselves and the good of the group. Overall, the study found that African American students who maintained an oppositional identity were less successful academically.

After segregation, African American student's cultural experiences were not considered in educational experiences and were expected to excel academically. The oversight of African American acculturation after educational segregation of African American students has suffered. African American students need to feel connected to their histories by utilizing an Afrocentric approach to education (Shockley & Frederick, 2010). Educating Americans should take on a different process that reflects the individual needs of all races and ethnicities within American culture. Shockley and Frederick (2010) posit that Afrocentric private schools may offer a solution to the achievement gap.

In order for African American students to value education, ethnic identity should be stressed in academics. African American students need to explore ethnic identity, which will develop internally and ethnically grounded reasons to achieve academically despite negative stereotypes and messages (Pizzaloato, Podobnik, Chaudhari, Schaeffer & Murrell, 2008).

Maintaining ethnic identity will promote psychosocial well-being. Mandara (2006) found that African American students that exhibited racial pride performed better academically. These students also spend a large amount of time in school and involved in school related activities. Schools have the propensity to either affirm or deteriorate racial identity and racial stereotypes. Schools can serve as a racial socialization hub by providing positive messages of race and academic achievement (DeCuir-Gimby, Martin & Cooper, 2012). One study showed that parents who developed their child's African American identity by encouraging African American cultural activities and having African American playmates and involvement in African American churches increased educational outcomes (DeCuir-Gimby, Martin & Cooper, 2012). The study also found that these African American students that have a firm grasp on their African American identity because they felt distinctive due to a lack of diversity. It was important to the students to maintain their identity. The adversity experienced by the participants in the group caused students to develop a sense of African American pride and develop their sense as an African American. The student's connection to the African American community despite negative experiences in the schools helped students to be successful academically (DeCuir-Gimby, Martin & Cooper, 2012).

Embedded Achievement of African Americans

Embedded achievement is described as the beliefs that African Americans value achievement and that motivation is derived from being part of the racial-ethnic group (Oyserman et al., 2007). Despite the achievement gap between African American and European American students, there are many high achieving African American students. African Americans have been able to overcome adversity throughout history. African American students who are academically successful appear to have strong connections. According to Williams and Bryan's

(2013) study they found that African American students who are connected to the school and community are more academically successful. The students that were interviewed indicated how they were involved in extracurricular activities such as church, clubs or organizations. Williams and Bryan (2013) also found that student's parents had high academic expectation for their children. In addition to this study, The Kinder Institute of Urban Research at Rice University (2013) conducted a survey and found that 90% of the African Americans surveyed indicated that success in life required post-secondary education. This was higher than any other racial group. This further proves that African Americans understand the value of academic achievement. In addition to this study, other studies have found that school belongingness predicts student success (Buote, 2001; Anderman 2002). Sense of school belonging within school has a significant effect on student achievement. Previous studies have used existing elements to determine student success such as grades and time spent on homework (Taylor et al., 1994). According to a study conducted by Taylor (1999), student's perceptions of school belonging of African American adolescents had direct effect on student grade point average.

Despite the myth that African Americans do not value education, Strmic-Pawl and Leffler (2011) found that African Americans do value family and education. According to Benjamin (2007), African Americans embrace the fact that the education is the primary route to increasing economic status. The participants in that study explained how messages from elders and fictive kinships stressed the importance of education. African American families emphasized education as a cultural value by teaching the importance of overcoming oppression.

Even with the knowledge that in order to be successful you have to go to school, African American students may be impacted by negative factors. There are variables that promote or hinder academic achievement and motivation among African American students. According to

Kao and Thompson (2003), there are cultural orientations that promote/discourage academic achievement. In conjunction to cultural orientations, structural positions of ethnic groups affect children's environment including parent, peer and school. "Ethnic groups have cultural orientations, which can benefit or hurt their odds of economic (and in this study, educational) success relative to other groups" (Kao & Thompson, 2003, p. 419). Along with these variables that may promote or hinder academic motivation of African American students, variations in grades or achievement can be attributed to parental background, student characteristics and behavior. Several studies also found that grade variation is similar to test scores. Kao and Thompson (2003) found that grades are highly correlated to parental socio economic status. Differences in academic achievement among African Americans and European Americans were further supported in a study conducted by Kao, Tienda and Schneider (1996). The mean grade point average (GPA) for African American students remained statistically significantly lower than European American students when parental socio economic (SES) status was controlled. Unfortunately stereotypes about African American students reinforce low ability grouping among African American students in schools. African American students are more likely to be placed in low ability groups and vocational curricular than affluent European American peers. When students are placed in low ability groups, students develop negative attitudes and behaviors related to learning (Kao & Tienda, 1996). This decreases African American student's competence in education leading to decreased self-determination and motivation.

Factors That Affect African American Motivation Summary

Overall, African Americans have may have differing cultural or racial-ethnic experiences that lead to academic success or failure. The current research does not fully cover how to improve academic outcomes of African American students. The research indicates various

reasons why African Americans educational experiences vary (Martin, 2013; Cokley 2003; Rust et al., 2011; Coker, 2003; Caldwell & Obasi, 2010; Young et al., 2011; Byrd & Chavous, 2011; Robinson & Biran, 2006). It is important to determine what educators can do to improve academic outcomes for African American students.

The research outlined highlights the hardships that African American students face in the current educational structures and academically successful African Americans. The studies suggest that African American students are most successful when they are connected to the community through clubs, organizations or church (Robinson & Biran, 2006; Butler-Barnes et al., 2012). According to the research, it is important to understand the complexity of racial-ethnic identity of African American and how the construct of racial-ethnic identity motivates students (Wright, 2009). African Americans have the ability to be successful in the academic setting. Oftentimes African Americans are not successful because there is school home dissonance, lack of connection to the school community, and lack of control over external life factors. When African Americans have their basic psychological needs met, they will be motivated and academically successful.

Overall, African Americans have had a tumultuous history in education and many African Americans have had both positive and negative experiences. African American students face continued sociocultural obstacles. The research shows that African Americans have experienced the basic psychological needs of self-determination (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in a variety of ways. Some may have had negative experiences in education due to internal or external factors while others may have had positive internal and external experiences in education. There are a variety of way racial-ethnic identity impacts African Americans that may cause African Americans to experience self-determination differently than European

Americans. It is important to understand the impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation of African American high school students to improve academic outcomes. It is unclear how SDT contributes to the academic success of African American students. It is clear that African American students' basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness are not being met in the current academic setting.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide background and support for how racial-ethnic identity impacts African American academic motivation. Overall, based on the literature reviewed it can be predicted that racial-ethnic identity can have a positive (Mandura, 2006; Decuir et al, 2012) or negative affect (Worrell, 2007; Harper & Tucker, 2006) on academic motivation of African American students. Embedded achievement (Strmic et al, 2011) and connectedness (Buote 2002; Anderman 2002) are likely to increase academic motivation. In addition, awareness of racism such as interracial attitudes and segregation are more likely to decrease academic motivation. According to the research, African American students thrive in environments where they feel connected and can see the usefulness education (Buote 2002; Anderman 2002). This study will examine how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology for the exploration of academic motivation and African American racial-ethnic identity. Participants will complete two surveys, the REIS questions and the AMS. A simple linear regression analysis will be used to determine the impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation of African American high school students. This chapter will discuss the purpose of this study and outline the research design, research questions, hypothesis, participant demographics, setting, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation in African American high school students, and if so, what aspects of racial-ethnic identity best predict academic motivation in African American high school students. Ideally, this research will provide a foundation to develop racially relevant strategies to motivate African American high school students and subsequently improve their academic performance. By examining the possible impact of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation, this study will begin to establish evidence that could inspire changes to existing curricula and learning strategies.

As previously noted, as a group, African American students consistently lag behind their European American counterparts (US Department of Education, n.d.). With increased academic motivation, academic outcomes may improve for African-American students, helping to close racial achievement gaps. By identifying how racial-ethnic identity affects academic motivation, teachers can implement more effective teaching strategies that address the unique racial-ethnic needs of African American high school students. This research may help African American students increase their motivation and in turn, better relate to instruction and understand its value

in their lives (Bridgeland, Balfanz, Moore & Friant, 2010). In addition, other studies have examined racial factors for various ethnic groups and determined that self-determined behavior varies across cultures (Leake & Boone, 2007; Shogren, 2012; Trainor, 2005; Zhang, 2005).

Research Design

This study will utilize a correlational research design to determine the extent of the relationship between the AMS and REIS variables. A linear regression analysis will be used with the REIS components (connectedness, embedded achievement and awareness of racism) and the AMS. A correlational design is “used to determine the correlation between criterion variable and a combination of two or more predictor variables” (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007, p. 353). This design allows the researcher to investigate the relationship between academic motivation and racial-ethnic identity components (connectedness, embedded achievement and awareness of racism) of African American high school students.

Research Questions

The research objective for this study is to determine which racial-ethnic variables best predict academic motivation in African American high school students. The related research questions are shown below:

- RQ1: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?
- RQ2: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component awareness of racism have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?
- RQ3: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of embedded achievement have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?

Null Hypotheses

H₀₁ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness and academic motivation.

H₀₂ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of awareness of racism and academic motivation.

H₀₃ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of embedded achievement and academic motivation.

Participants

A convenience sample was taken from African American students in grades 9-12 enrolled in the 2015-2016 summer school program at a high school in southeastern Virginia. The school's student body was predominantly African American (85.13%); out of a total 962 African American students, 504 were male (52.39% of the African American student body) and 458 were females (47.61% of the African American student body). A minimum of 74 participants was needed to perform a simple linear regression analysis according to Green's (1991) formula of $50 + 8k$, where k is the number of predictor variables.

The students in this study were enrolled in the summer program, which required payment for participation, to obtain course credits for high school graduation. The school district was located in a suburban district with a population of 242,803 residents, where incomes ranged from high to very low; the poverty rate was 17.9%. 75% of students at the high school are eligible for free and reduced priced meals. Participant ages ranged from 14-20 years, and students were enrolled in grades 9-12. All participants who completed the survey ($n = 84$) self-identified as African American (Virginia Department of Education, 2016); 44 were male, and 40 female (Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Data

Characteristics	Students	Percent
Grade Level		
Grade 9	12	14
Grade 10	23	27
Grade 11	30	36
Grade 12	19	23
Gender		
Male	44	52
Female	40	48

Note: Survey participant demographics retrieved from self-reported demographic data collected during the survey

Setting

The setting for the study was an urban high school in the southeastern area of Virginia, referred to here as “ABC High School”. During the 2015-2016 academic year, the student body of ABC High School was 85.13% African American, 6.19% European American, 3.36% Hispanic, 3.10% multiracial, and 2.22% from various other racial groups (Table 2). A total of 962 African Americans students are enrolled in the school across grades 9-12, 77% of who are economically disadvantaged.

Table 2

ABC High School Population

Race	Population	Male	Female
African American	962	504	458
European American	70	44	26
Hispanic	38	20	18
Other	38	18	20
Asian	22	14	8

Instrumentation

Demographic data was collected using a questionnaire in conjunction with two instruments. Academic motivation was assessed using the AMS, and African American identity was measured using the REIS. According to George and Mallery (2003), Cronbach's alpha scores that are closer to one have more internal consistency and a score of .80 will be used for overall scores. In addition, Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommend that Cronbach alpha scores between 0.6 and 0.7 are acceptable for subscales of instruments assessing performance on clinical and psychoeducational tasks. Validity was determined through confirmatory factor analyses and construct validity through multiple group differences (Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, Briere, Senecal & Vallieres, 1992).

Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

The AMS (Vallerand, et al., 1992) was developed to measure intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation for academic achievement. The scale is comprised of three different subscales (intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation). The intrinsic

scale contains three components that measure intrinsic motivation: knowledge, accomplishment, and stimulation. The extrinsic motivation subscale is also comprised of three components: identified, introjected and external regulation. Overall, the AMS consists of a total of 28 questions asking students to determine why they attend school using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “corresponds exactly” to “does not correspond at all.” The AMS produces an overall Self-Determination Index (SDI) based on components of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. Possible SDI scores range from -18 to + 18. Students with higher scores are considered more intrinsically motivated.

Intrinsic motivation sub-scale. This scale examines three types of intrinsic motivation: intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation toward accomplishments, and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation. Each type of intrinsic motivation is assessed with four questions (for a total of twelve), and one total score is formed from the three subscores. “Intrinsic motivation to know” is defined as performing an act for the pleasure and satisfaction of learning and experiencing something new (Vellarand et al., 1992). “Intrinsic motivation toward accomplishment” focuses on satisfaction gained from attempting to accomplish a goal. For example, if a student completes additional work for an assignment in order to outshine himself or herself, that student is intrinsically motivated toward accomplishment. Finally, “intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation” is the pursuit of sensory pleasure, aesthetic experiences, and excitement. For example, a student who attends class to experience stimulating class discussion might be described as intrinsically motivated to experience stimulation (Vellarand et al., 1992).

Reliability and validity of intrinsic motivation subscales. Vallerand et al. (1992) conducted reliability tests utilizing Cronbach’s alpha test retest (Table 3). The Cronbach’s alphas

are as follows: external regulation (0.83), interjected regulation (0.73), and identified regulation (0.71). The reliability exceeds the benchmark. A confirmatory factor analysis confirmed a 7-factor structure to show validity. The confirmatory factor analysis showed the researcher found the same 7 factors (amotivation, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation) after re-testing the results, including gender differences (Table 4). This is in agreement with the validity requirements stated above.

Extrinsic motivation subscale. This scale measures three types of extrinsic motivation: identified, introjected, and external regulation. Each type of extrinsic motivation is assessed using four questions (for a total of twelve) and one total score is calculated from the three subscores. Extrinsic motivation is defined as behavior that is motivated by external rewards. Identified regulation is the act of knowing that there is value in a goal and accepting its value, but the integration is not a core value; therefore, it cannot be considered completely self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Introjected regulation incorporates some regulation, but there a significant level of control is needed to protect a person's ego from things such as shame or guilt (Rigby et al., 1992). Finally, external regulation is the least self-determined form of regulation, and is defined as satisfying an external source to avoid punishment or receive a reward (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Reliability and validity of extrinsic motivation subscales. Vallerand et al. (1992) conducted reliability tests utilizing Cronbach's alpha test retest (Table 3). The Cronbach's alphas are as follows: intrinsic motivation to know (0.79), intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment (0.83), and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation (0.80) that exceeds George and Mallery

(2003) established criteria. As stated above, the factor analysis confirmed a 7-factor structure to indicate validity, which included gender differences.

Table 3

Internal Consistency Values (Cronbach alpha) and Test-Retest Correlations of the AMS 7 subscales Samples 1 and 2

	Alpha Sample 1 (N = 745)	Alpha Pretest Sample 2 (N = 57)	Alpha Posttest Sample 2 (N = 57)	Test-Retest Correlations Sample 2 (N = 57)
External Regulation	.83	.85	.89	.83
Introjected Regulation	.84	.76	.83	.73
Identified Regulation	.62	.72	.78	.71
IM – To know	.84	.85	.90	.79
IM – Accomplishment	.85	.90	.87	.83
IM – Stimulation	.86	.88	.84	.80

Table 4

Means (and Standard Deviations) for Males and Females on the AMS Sample 1

Subscales	Males	Females
External Regulation	21.78 (4.79)	21.80 (5.27)
Introjected Regulation*	16.0 (5.28)	17.80 (5.81)
Identified Regulation*	21.60 (3.57)	22.19 (3.98)
Intrinsic Motivation - Knowledge*	18.89 (4.22)	20.46 (4.74)
Intrinsic Motivation – Accomplishment*	15.93 (5.03)	17.52 (5.39)
Intrinsic Motivation – Stimulation*	12.21 (5.33)	13.83 (5.75)

Note. *Females scored significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) than males

Racial Ethnic Identity Scale (REIS)

Oyserman et al. (2001) developed the REIS, which includes 3 sub-scales: connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement. There a total of 12 items, scored based on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Each of the sub-scales contains 4 items. The scale was developed from an open-ended scale used by Oyserman et al. (1995) to measure racial-ethnic identity quantitatively.

Connectedness. Connectedness is defined as an individual’s positive feelings about a sense of connection to their racial-ethnic group (Oyserman et al., 2007). This includes a sense of membership in the African American community, familial traditions, support of kin, and a worldview focused on spiritualism. This aspect of the scale is tied to student self-esteem (Oyserman et al., 2007). One total score is used for Connectedness. A sample item from the connectedness sub scale is, “It is important to me to think of myself as an African American.”

Reliability and validity of connectedness. Oyserman et al. (2007) conducted reliability and validity testing on connectedness. Test-retest reliability used Cronbach’s alpha’s test and the sub-scale connectedness was a 0.78, which meets reliability requirements (George and Mallery, 2003). To determine structural validity, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine whether the scale structure is similar across groups. The scale was reliable across races, genders, and age groups (Oyserman et al., 2007).

Awareness of racism. Awareness of racism is defined as understanding negative responses to African Americans and having awareness of racism and others’ prejudices (Oyserman et al., 2007). One total score is calculated for the subscale Awareness of Racism. An example of an awareness of racism question is, “Some people will treat me differently because I am African American.”

Reliability and validity of awareness of racism. The awareness of racism subscale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, indicating the test is reliable (George and Mallery, 2003). A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted across races, gender, and age groups and determined the test is valid.

Embedded achievement. Embedded achievement is described as beliefs that African Americans value achievement, and that motivation is derived from being part of a racial-ethnic group (Oyserman et al., 2007). A sample item from this subscale is, "If I am successful it will help the African American community."

Reliability and validity of embedded achievement. The Embedded Achievement subscale was found reliable based on its Cronbach's alpha score of 0.65. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), this score is acceptable for a subscale. The scale was determined to be structurally valid based on gender, age group, and race using a confirmatory factor analysis.

Summary

Overall, the AMS measures intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. The REIS measures connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement. All subscales meet validity and reliability criteria according either to George and Mallery's (2003) decision rule of .80, or Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) recommendation that acceptable Cronbach's alphas between 0.6 and 0.7 are acceptable for subscales on tests of clinical and psychoeducational tasks.

The Cronbach's alpha scores for the AMS range from 0.71 (identified regulation) and 0.83 (external regulation and intrinsic motivation – accomplishment) (Table 3). The Cronbach alpha scores for the REIS range from 0.65 (embedded achievement) to 0.81 (awareness of racism).

Procedures

Approval from the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) was acquired before research began. The researcher contacted the district research evaluator to obtain approval to conduct the study in the school district, and the district granted permission pending principal approval. The researcher sent a copy of IRB approval to the school district's research department and the school principal. The school and district's individual needs were accounted for to ensure that the research process will minimally affect school procedures.

The building principal determined that the best time to conduct the study was during summer school, which had a total enrollment of 213 students. The researcher sent a letter to the teachers to explain how to conduct and return the survey (Appendix B). The survey includes instructions for the students, demographic data, the AMS, and REIS.

One week prior to administering the survey, the teachers were provided with copies of the opt-out permission form (Appendix A) to distribute to the students, who brought them home to give parents and families the opportunity to opt out of participating in the study. Students who did not opt out were asked to complete the survey; however, student participation was voluntary for all students whether or not the opt-out form was returned. Teachers collected the opt-out forms until the day the survey was administered. Five students returned the opt-out form.

Teachers received a handout with step-by-step standardized directions for survey administration (Appendix C). Before the survey was administered, the teachers reviewed the directions. On the day of survey, the teachers read the following statement from the researcher: "Today you will be taking a survey. This survey will look at academic motivation and racial ethnic identity. Your participation is appreciated if you did not return the opt out form. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes. Your answers are important and will be used to

make educational decisions. It is important to try to answer all of the questions. Does anyone have any questions? If you have questions during the survey raise your hand. Thank you for your participation. The researcher appreciates your participation in the survey. You may begin your survey now.” After 20 minutes, the teacher thanked the students for participating and returned the completed surveys in the self-addressed envelope.

The teachers were able to answer questions and contact the researcher at any time during the survey. The researcher did not receive any calls from teachers administering the survey. The researcher received the completed surveys four weeks after the surveys were mailed to the school. The researcher then converted the data into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) format.

Data Analysis

A linear regression analysis was used to determine whether racial-ethnic identity components predicted academic motivation of African American high school students. This study utilized a predictive regression analysis to examine how racial-ethnic identity (connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement) predicts academic motivation. A linear regression analysis was an appropriate choice for this type of data analysis: according to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007), standard regression analysis requires at least 74 participants, using the $50 + 8k$ formula where k is the number of predictor variables. This study will examine how the three racial identity subscales best predicts intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation academic motivation sub-scales. A significance value of $p < .02$ was used based on multiple bivariate regression using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level of .0167 per test ($.05/3$) to determine whether to reject or accept the null hypothesis (Warner, 2013). Assumption testing was performed to test for linearity, extreme outliers, and normality. A simple linear regression

model was used to describe the linear dependence of one variable on another. This model also predicts values of one variable from values of another, and corrects for the linear dependence of one variable on another using variability features.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is report the findings of the current study. This study examined the relationship between academic motivation and racial ethnic identity of African American high school students using a correlational design. The correlational design was appropriate because the study involved a relationship between, rather than a manipulation of, two variables. The independent variables were the racial/ethnic identity components of connectedness, awareness of racism, and embedded achievement; the dependent variables were self-reported academic motivation.

To attempt to address the racial education gap in the United States, this study will help teachers understand what factors contribute to African American students' educational needs. Stinson (2011) found African American students are more motivated in schools that adopt a group-centered ethos. Additionally, identifying variables that promote academic motivation may help educators and policy makers develop curricular support to help African American students achieve at the same rate as their European American counterparts. More research on African American racial-ethnic identity can provide insight into academic motivation in ways that traditional methods of educating African American students cannot (Caldwell & Obasi, 2010). The link between African American racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation is just beginning to be explored through research, and has not been clearly defined. Therefore, it is important to examine these factors.

This chapter provides an overview of the descriptive data, followed by more specific analysis of each null hypothesis and the related findings. Results are organized in three sections. First, the study research questions and hypotheses are restated. Next, descriptive statistics are

discussed. The results section is organized by hypothesis. Assumption testing for each statistical test follows. The assumption data is explained and reviewed. Tables and charts are presented confirming the assumptions. Next, data for each hypothesis was analyzed to either accept or reject the null hypothesis. The results of each hypothesis are stated.

The three null hypotheses were evaluated using three bivariate regressions. To reduce family-wise error and decrease the possibility of type I error, a Bonferroni correction was used, $\alpha/n = (.05/3)$ to set a more conservative p value $\alpha = .02$ (Warner, 2013).

Research Questions

The research questions used in the study are outlined below:

- RQ1: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?
- RQ2: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component awareness of racism have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?
- RQ3: What impact does the racial-ethnic identity component of embedded achievement have on academic motivation as measured by the AMS?

Null Hypotheses

- H₀₁ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation.
- H₀₂ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation.
- H₀₃ There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation.

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 84 participants participated in the study after eliminating participants who did not identify themselves as African American, and those whose surveys were incomplete. The means and standard deviations for each of the predictor variables ($n = 84$) of connectedness, embedded achievement and awareness of racism are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation for each Predictor Variable

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Predictor		
Connectedness	3.96	.90
Embedded Achievement	3.82	.89
Awareness of Racism	3.68	.92
Criterion		
Academic Motivation	2.86	4.00

The participants' survey responses from the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) and the Racial Ethnic Identity Scale (REIS) were analyzed. The REIS was used to measure the racial-ethnic identity predictor variable using items that measured what it means to be African American. This scale used a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) measuring racial ethnic identity using the components embedded achievement, connectedness and awareness of racism. The embedded achievement scale yielded a mean score of 3.185 ($SD = .903$); the connectedness subscale yielded a mean score of 3.9554 ($SD = .90361$); and the awareness of racism scale yielded a mean score of 3.6786 ($SD = .91964$). Each subscale of the REIS impacts academic success (Oyserman, 2007).

The AMS was used to generate an SDI score measuring academic motivation. The AMS used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Does not correspond at all to 7 = corresponds exactly); the SDI scores yielded a mean score of 2.86 ($SD = 4.001$). Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for three predictor variables and the criterion variable for this study.

Results for Research Question One

Null hypothesis one states that there is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of connectedness and academic motivation as measured by the AMS. A bivariate regression was conducted to test this null hypothesis. Since three bivariate regressions were conducted, a Bonferroni-corrected alpha level of $\alpha = .02$ was used to determine significance (Warner, 2013; Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2013).

Assumption Testing

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether academic motivation could be predicted from the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity. The null hypothesis tested that the regression coefficient (slope) was equal to 0. The data was screened to for violations of assumption prior to analysis.

Linearity. The scatterplot (Figure 1) of the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation indicates that the assumption of linearity is reasonable. As the racial-ethnic component of connectedness increases, academic motivation generally slightly increases.

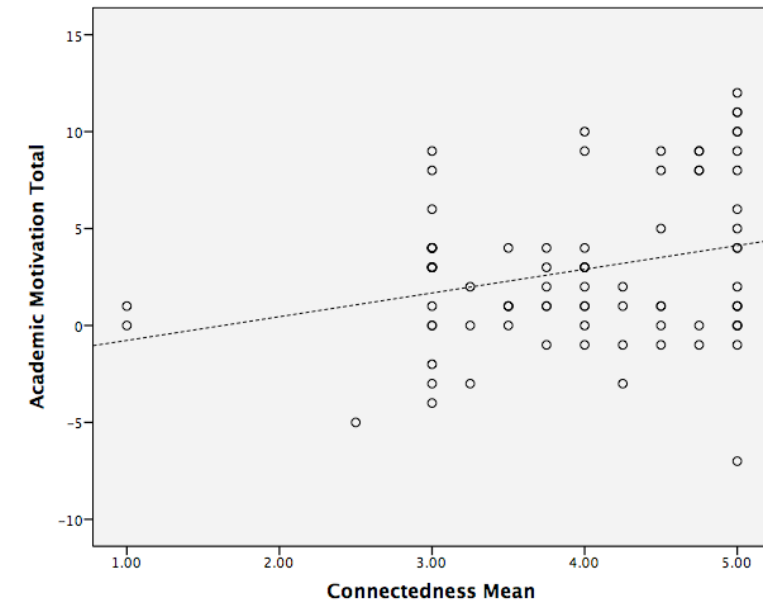


Figure 1- Scatterplot of independent variable and dependent variable

Normality. The assumption of normality was tested via an examination of the scatterplot of the REIS connectedness and AMS (Figure 1). The scatterplot data appears to be normally distributed.

No significant outliers. There are no significant outliers (Figure 1).

Results summary assumption testing. Overall, the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity has met all of the assumption testing. See Table 6 for the results of the assumption testing for research question one.

Table 6

Results of Assumption Testing for Research Question One

Assumption	Result
Linearity	Assumption not violated
Normality	Assumption not violated
No Significant Outliers	Assumption not violated

Hypothesis One Testing

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics for the simple linear regression are presented in Table 5. Descriptive statistics was collected for the simple linear regression for 84 participants after eliminating 9 surveys from students who did not identify themselves as African American and 3 surveys from students who did not complete the entire survey. There were no significant outliers.

Analysis. A simple linear regression was carried out to ascertain the extent to which the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity can predict academic motivation. A very weak but still-significant positive correlation was found between the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation scores ($r = .278$), and the regression model predicted 8% of the variance. The regression equation for predicting the dependent variable of academic motivation is $y = 1.23x_{\text{connectedness}} - 2.01$. The 95% confidence interval for the slope, .295 to 2.163, does not contain the value of zero, and therefore overall connectedness is significantly related to overall academic motivation. There was sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that perceived connectedness to other African American high school students ($M = 3.9554$, $SD = .904$) significantly predicted those students' academic motivation ($M = 2.850$, $SD = 4.014$), $F(1, 82) = 6.853$, $p = .011$. Table 7 provides a summary of

the regression analysis for the variable predicting academic motivation. Accuracy in predicting academic motivation is weak.

Table 7

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variance Predicting academic motivation (n = 84)

Variable	B	SE B	β
Connectedness	1.229	.470	.278

Note $r = .278$; $r^2 = .077$; $p < .0167$

Results of null hypothesis one. H_{01} stated that there is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. The first null hypothesis was rejected. Tests of three-priori hypothesis were conducted using Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .017 per test (.05/3); inspection of the simple linear regression indicated that the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity was a significant positive predictor of academic motivation. $F(1, 82) = 6.853$, $\beta = .278$, $R^2 = .077$, $p = .011$. This indicates that the self-reported racial-ethnic component of connectedness as measured by the REIS increased African American high school students self-reported academic motivation as measured by the AMS. Specifically, this indicates that African American high school students were academically motivated when they felt connected to other African Americans and the school community. The regression equation is indicative of a weak positive relationship.

Results for Research Question Two

Null hypothesis two states that there is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the racial-ethnic identity component of awareness of racism and academic motivation as measured by the AMS. Since three bivariate correlations were conducted, a Bonferroni-corrected alpha level of $\alpha = .017$ was used to determine significance.

Assumption Testing

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine to whether academic motivation could be predicted from the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity. Testing the null hypothesis revealed that the regression coefficient (slope) was equal to 0. The data was screened for violations of assumption prior to analysis.

Linearity. The scatterplot (Figure 2) of the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation indicates that the assumption of linearity is not tenable.

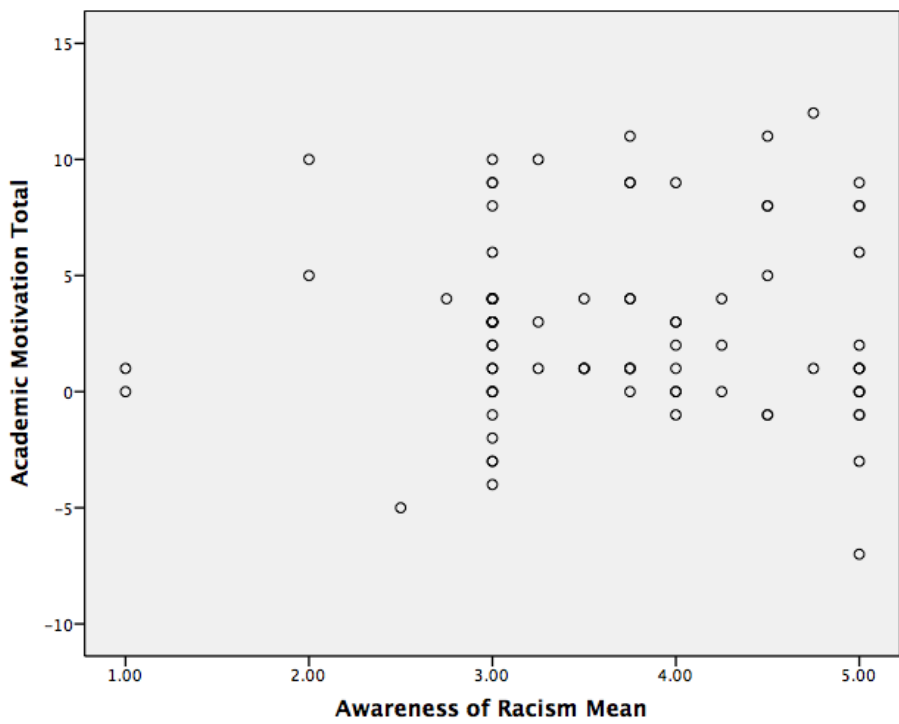


Figure 2 - Scatterplot of independent variable and dependent variable

Normality. The assumption of normality was tested via an examination of the scatterplot of the REIS awareness of racism and AMS (Figure 2). The scatterplot data appears to be normally distributed.

No significant outliers. There are no significant outliers (Figure 2).

Results summary assumption testing. The awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity has met all of the assumption testing. See Table 8 for the results of the assumption testing for research question two.

Table 8

Results of Assumption Testing for Research Question Two

Assumption	Result
Linearity	Assumption violated
Normality	Assumption not violated
No Significant Outliers	Assumption not violated

Null Hypothesis Two Testing

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics for the simple linear regression are presented in Table 5. Descriptive statistics was collected for the simple linear regression for 84 participants after removing surveys from 9 students who did not identify themselves as African American and from 3 students who did not complete the entire survey. There were no significant outliers.

Analysis. A simple linear regression was carried out to ascertain the extent to which scores for the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity can predict academic motivation. No relationship was found between the awareness of racism component of racial-

ethnic identity and academic motivation scores ($r = .005$), and the regression model predicted 0% of the variance. A regression equation for predicting the dependent variable of academic motivation could not be created. The 95% confidence interval for the slope, $-.933$ to $.978$ does contain the value of zero, and therefore awareness of racism is unrelated to academic motivation, as measured in this study. The researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis and concluded that awareness of racism ($M = 3.679$, $SD = .9197$) did not significantly predict academic achievement ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 4$), $F(1, 82) = .002$, $p = .962$. Table 9 provides a summary of the regression analysis for the variable that was unable to predict academic motivation. Accuracy in predicting academic motivation could not be determined. There was no accuracy in predicting the dependent variable.

Table 9

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variance Predicting academic motivation (n = 84)

Variable	B	SE B	β
Awareness of Racism	.023	.480	.005

Note $r = .005$; $r^2 = .000$; $p = .962$

Results of null hypothesis two. The second null hypothesis stated that there was no statistically significant predictive relationship between the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation as measured by the AMS. Results of this study indicate failure to reject the null hypothesis. Tests of three-priori hypothesis were conducted using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level of $.0167$ per test ($.05/3$). Inspection of the simple linear regression indicated that the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic was not a significant positive predictor of academic motivation $F(1, 82) = .002$, $\beta = .005$, $R^2 = .000$, $p =$

.962. This indicates that the self-reported racial-ethnic component of awareness of racism, as measured by the REIS, does not accurately predict African American high school students' self-reported academic motivation, as measured by the AMS. Specifically, this indicates that African American high school students may or may not be academically motivated when they are aware of racism. The scatterplot confirms the null hypothesis shows no relationship.

Results for Research Question Three

Null hypothesis three states there is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation, as measured by the AMS. Since three bivariate correlations were conducted, a Bonferroni-corrected alpha level of $\alpha = .017$ was used to determine significance.

Assumption Testing

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether academic motivation could be predicted from the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity. The null hypothesis testing showed that the regression coefficient (slope) was equal to 0. The data was screened to for violations of assumption prior to analysis.

Linearity. The scatterplot (Figure 3) of the embedded awareness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation indicates that the assumption of linearity is not tenable.

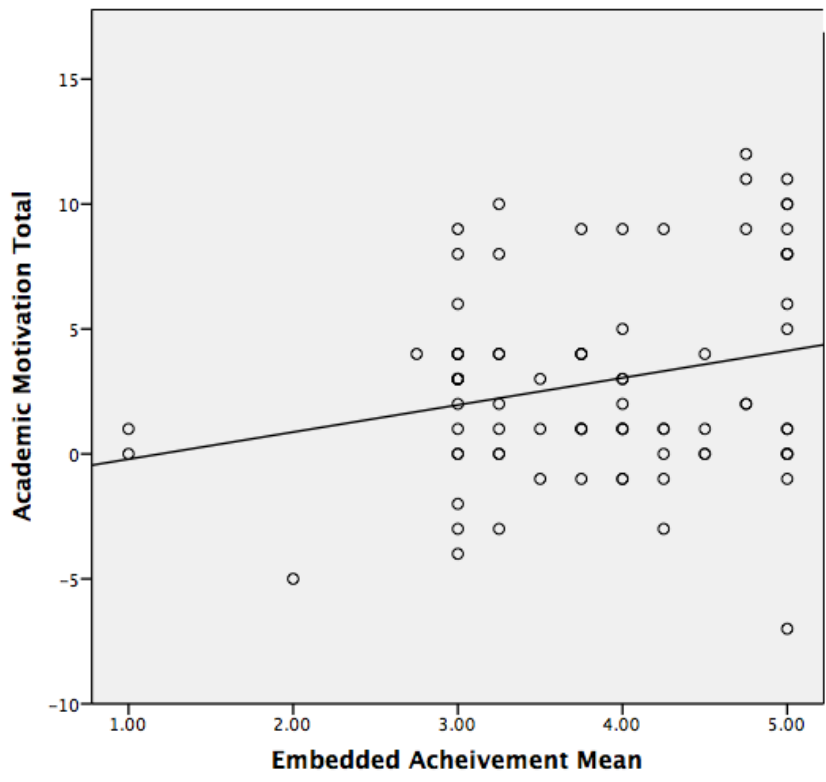


Figure 3 - Scatterplot of independent variable and dependent variable

Normality. The assumption of normality was tested via an examination of the scatterplot of the REIS embedded achievement and AMS (Figure 3). The scatterplot data appears to be normally distributed

No significant outliers. There are no significant outliers (Figure 3).

Results summary assumption testing. The embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity has not met all assumption testing. See Table 10 for the results of the assumption testing for research question three.

Table 10

Results of Assumption Testing for Research Question Three

Assumption	Result
Linearity	Assumption not violated
Normality	Assumption not violated
No Significant Outliers	Assumption not violated

Hypothesis Three Testing

Descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics for the simple linear regression are presented in Table 5. Descriptive statistics was collected for the simple linear regression for 84 participants after removing surveys from 9 students who did not identify themselves as African American and from 3 students who did not complete the entire survey. There were no significant outliers.

Analysis. A simple linear regression was carried out to ascertain the extent to which the embedded achievement component of racial ethnic identity can predict academic motivation. No correlation was found between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation scores ($r = .241$). The regression equation for predicting the dependent variable of academic motivation could not be created. There was sufficient evidence to fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity ($M = 3.812$; $SD = .894$) does not significantly predict academic motivation ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 4$), $F(1, 83) = 5.070$, $p = .027$. Table 4 provides a summary of the regression analysis for the variable predicting academic achievement. Accuracy in predicting academic motivation could not be determined.

Results of hypothesis three. The third hypothesis stated that there is no statistically significant predictive relationship between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation, as measured by the AMS. Results of this study indicate a failure to reject the third null hypothesis. Tests of three-priori hypothesis were conducted using a Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level of .0167 per test (.05/3). Inspection of the simple linear regression indicated that the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity was a not significant positive predictor of academic motivation $F(1, 82) = 5.070, \beta = .241, R^2 = .058, p = .027$. This indicates that the self-reported embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity, as measured by the REIS, does not significantly predict African American high school students' self-reported academic motivation, as measured by the AMS.

Table 11

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variance Predicting academic motivation (n = 84)

Variable	B	SE B	β
Embedded Achievement	1.080	.480	.241

Note $r = .241; r^2 = .058; p = .027$

Summary

Overall, the racial ethnic components of connectedness and embedded achievement were found to be weak predictors of African American high school students' academic motivation. Assumption testing was conducted for each of the three variables. The assumptions of linearity and normally distributed values were violated for the awareness of racism component of racial-

ethnic identity, and linearity was violated with the embedded achievement component. The conclusions and implications of the study are discussed next.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine if racial-ethnic identity components of connectedness, embedded achievement and awareness of racism had a linear relationship with academic motivation in African American high school students. Racial-ethnic identity was measured using the REIS and the AMS was used to measure academic motivation. The disparity in academic motivation between African American and European American students continues to be a problem (NAEP, 2015, Rocques & Paternoster, 2011). Oyserman et al. (2007) found that African American students that were highly connected to their racial-ethnic group better perceived the value of their education, and the student was then more likely to have positive academic experiences. Unfortunately, a gap still persists between African American and European American students. This study examines which components of racial-ethnic identity correlate with academic motivation of African American high school students using three bivariate correlations.

Hypothesis One

A bivariate correlation was used to evaluate the first research question of this study, which concerned the relationship between the connectedness component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. Connectedness was found to be a significant predictor of academic motivation for African American students. A weak but significant relationship was found among the variables ($r = .278$). Results from the study support the hypothesis that African American high school students were more likely to possess academic motivation if the student was identified as being connected to their African American racial-ethnic identity ($p = .011$). Previous work by Bridgeland et al. (2010) supports this finding by confirming that some students

dropped out of high school because there was not a connection between the student's life and their goals for the future. This provided evidence that African American students need to feel a strong connection to the school community and feel that what they are learning has value.

Carson (2009) further explores connectedness among African American students, noting that African Americans felt responsible for encouraging academic achievement for their college community and feelings of collectivism helped to develop these beliefs. African American students are motivated to learn, but this motivation is often negated by negative messages perpetuated by the school system, media, and society. Li (2012) extended these findings by confirming that there must be a balance between academic and social characteristics in conjunction with a supportive environment in order to increase intrinsic motivation and develop goals. This finding further supports the self-determination theory of motivation. Deci and Ryan (2002) argue that for a person to be motivated, their three basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) must be met. Results of hypothesis one found that meeting the basic psychological need of relatedness helps African American high school students to feel motivated academically.

Hypothesis Two

An additional bivariate regression was used to analyze the second hypothesis, which tested the relationship between the awareness of racism component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. However, no relationship was found between these variables ($p = 0.962$). Conflicting research in this area suggests that this finding may be incorrect. Research supports the literature that awareness of racism predicts academic motivation (McSwine, 2010; Pizzaloato et al 2008; Mandura, 2008; Shockley & Frederick, 2010; Decuir-Gimby et al. 2012). This study found that the awareness of racism component of African American racial-ethnic identity is not a

significant predictor of academic motivation. Nevertheless, Pizzaloato et al. (2008) noted the importance for African Americans to develop an internally and ethnically grounded self to despite negative stereotypes. This also supports Deci and Ryan's (2002) SDT, which indicates that when a student feels competent in conjunction with autonomy and relatedness, they will be academically motivated. SDT can support the assumption that when African American students are aware of racism and yet feel competent despite social barriers, they will be more academically motivated. Although this study does not support the current research, teachers and curriculum developers can help support an awareness of racism by using culturally relevant curriculum and make sure that the history of African Americans is well represented in the education of all students to increase academic motivation and ultimately support African American students' feelings of competence.

Hypothesis Three

A final bivariate correlation was used to evaluate a third hypothesis, which examined how the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity predicts academic motivation. There was no significant relationship between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity on academic motivation ($p = .027$). Although this study did not find a significant relationship between the two variables, the research shows that there is sufficient evidence suggesting that embedded achievement positively correlates to academic motivation (Strimc-Pawl & Leffer, 2011; Benjamin, 2007; Williams & Byran, 2013). African Americans have a tumultuous history, but have been able to strive and be academically successful. Strimc-Pawl and Leffer (2011) found that African Americans value family and education. The value of education shows that African Americans have embedded achievement. Embedded achievement may be hindered because of the lack of connection that African

American students have in the current academic educational structure (Maryshow et al. 2005; Cokley & Chapman, 2008). The presence of embedded achievement among African American students is further supported by the findings of Benjamin (2007), who found that African Americans embrace the fact that education is the primary route to increasing economic status. In conjunction with the previous study, William and Byran (2013) found that African American parents have high academic expectations for their children, which supports a value of embedded achievement. According to the Kinder Institute of Urban Education at Rice University (2013), 90% of African Americans surveyed indicated that success in life required post-secondary education, which was higher than any other racial group. This study clearly supports the finding that African Americans value education. Despite the fact that this study did not support the research, the literature supports that African American students have embedded achievement.

Conclusion

There is a significant education disparity between African American and European American high school students (NAEP, 2015). The research shows that there is a relationship between racial ethnic identity and academic motivation (Oyserman et al., 2003; Seller, Chavous & Cook, 1998; Spencer, Noll, Stolzhus & Harpalina, 2001). The results of this study indicated a weak significant positive relationship between connectedness and academic motivation. A study conducted by Whales and Noel (2011) supports this finding, as they found substantial empirical evidence that identification with African American racial-ethnic identity promotes academic motivation. The research suggests that despite negative stereotypes, African American students have that ability to be academically successful when their basic needs are met, in accordance with self-determination theory (Moore-Thomas, 2009; McSwine, 2010; Maryshow et al. 2005). Historically, African Americans have used education to respond to oppressive circumstances

(Johnson-Blake, 2010; Buchard, 2010). This supports the idea that a strong racial-ethnic identity encourages academic motivation. Additionally, the African American community possesses strong educational achievement orientation (Perry, Steele, Hilliard, 2003; Sanders, 1997). Overall, African American racial-ethnic identity can promote academic achievement and motivation (Oyserman et al 1995; Spencer 1999; Whaley, 2003).

In addition to African American racial-ethnic identity predicting academic motivation, SDT posits that in order to be academically successful, students must have their basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness met (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The researcher proposes that teachers can promote racial-ethnic identity of African American students in order to increase academic motivation. Promoting racial-ethnic identity would ensure that African American students have their basic psychological needs met, and subsequently promote academic motivation. Studies support the idea that when students' racial-ethnic identities are embraced, it is supportive of academic motivation (Oyserman et al 1995; Spencer 1999; Whaley, 2003). In addition, African Americans who are academically successful have developed a sense of community that supports African Americans to be academically motivated despite negative stereotypes. Along with community, Spencer et al. 2001, found that when students had a positive sense of self (racial-ethnic identity as an African American), they achieved more academically. This negates Ogbu's (2003) theory of academic disengagement of African American students due to the burden of "acting white." Academic disidentification or lack of academic motivation is not a racial-ethnic norm in the African American community (Spencer et al. 2001). In order for African American students to have their basic psychological needs met in accordance with SDT, it is clear that Afrocentric education and socialization should play a significant role in the education system. Whaley and McQueen (2004) found that an

Afrocentric socialization program improved academic performance of African American students. These researchers (2010) extended their findings by conducting another study that discovered that when African Americans were provided with explicit, culturally based interventions, students had positive views of African American identity.

Due to the fact that African American students may need to feel connected to their communities and schools, African American students make a distinction between learning and performing (Cokely, 2003). In other words, African American students may not perceive school as a place for learning, and disidentification may stem from lack of connection to African American racial ethnic identity.

In addition to the African American racial-ethnic identity supporting academic motivation, research has also shown that African American students still had high educational expectations regardless of their neighborhood environment (Chavous et al. 2003; Chavous et al. 2008; Cunningham, 1999). This is not to say that teachers and the school environment do not play a role in the academic success of African American students. It is important that teachers work to reduce and ameliorate the prejudice and discrimination that African American students experience, because this likely contributes to those students performing poorly or dropping out of school (Mattison & Aber, 2007). African American students need to perceive their school environments as fair in order for them to believe that education will pay off in the future (Brown & Jones, 2004). This further supports the importance of teachers' roles in the academic outcomes of African American students.

Overall, the research shows that supporting students' racial-ethnic identity positively impacts academic achievement (Chavous et al., 2003; Oyserman et al., 2001, 2003; Spencer et al., 1997, 2001). These findings have considerable implications for school policy and pedagogy.

African American students need to feel connected, which will provide them with a sense of community that will in turn influence academic motivation (Oyserman et al. 1995). Embedded community must also include skills to successfully navigate European American society without destroying African American values to sustain academic success (Carter, 2006). In conjunction with explicit in-school interventions, African American students' awareness of racism should continue to be developed through family socialization in order to continue to develop academic motivation. To eliminate the achievement gap, racial socialization interventions that promote academic excellence of African racial-ethnic identity should be implemented within the school system (Whaley & McQueen, 2004). Positive teacher relationships and high expectations are additional factors that further support academic motivation (Cokley, 2003; Spencer et al., 1997).

Implications

Studies have shown that racial ethnic identity positively impacts academic achievement and motivation (Chavous et al., 2003; Oyserman et al., 2001, 2003; Spencer et al., 1997, 2001). Dominant social perceptions of African Americans, as well as racism in schools, adversely affect students' academic motivation (Brown & Jones, 2004; Mattison & Aber, 2007). This study has added to the body of literature showing how racial-ethnic identity positively impacts academic motivation or achievement by examining the relationship between racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation. Teachers and policy makers must support African American students by understanding biases that exist in pedagogy, as well as in school policy. Teachers must also examine their own prejudices and receive culturally relevant training and support to help African American students feel connected. This may help eliminate disengagement from school and learning, as African American students will experience less dissonance between values at home and at school. In addition, African American students will be better able to develop a healthy

sense of self when curricula are culturally relevant. Overall, African American students will feel more connected to their schools and communities when their culture and racial-ethnic identity is represented in the educational system.

Limitations

The first limitation involves a possible threat to the reliability of the dependent variable, the embedded achievement component of the REIS. The embedded achievement subscale meets reliability requirements for a subscale, with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.65 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). However, the Cronbach's alpha score is lower than typically preferred for instruments (George & Mallery, 2003). The lower Cronbach's alpha score for this variable may account for the lack of a statistically significant relationship between the embedded achievement component of racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation as predicted by the literature.

Another limitation of this study involves a threat to external validity. This study did not control for gender, socioeconomic status, or high school grade level. Some of the literature refers to gender differences regarding academic motivation among African American students (Cokely et al., 2011). Also, this study did not address socioeconomic status, since 85% of the students at this school receive free and reduced lunch.

Finally, another threat to external validity may be present. This study included a limited convenience sample of 84 students, which satisfied the minimum requirements (Green, 1991). This study might have yielded stronger correlations using a larger sample. The sample also was a homogeneous convenience sample, which may have impacted the results. The findings of this study are limited based on the lack of randomization. The results of the study cannot be generalized to larger groups due to the use of a population of students enrolled in a summer

school program. Additionally, the data was collected during a short academic window and did not capture all students at the school.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although many studies have previously examined the effects of racial-ethnic identity and academic achievement or motivation, more information is needed to address the achievement gap between African Americans and European Americans. Additional studies are needed to examine African American racial-ethnic identity, and specifically how it contributes to academic achievement and motivation. Further studies are also needed to explore the opposing view that African American culture negatively impacts academic achievement and adversely affect African American student motivation.

This study also used a correlational analysis, which examines relationships among variables. Future research should examine the cause and effect interactions between racial-ethnic identity and academic motivation in conjunction with predictive relationships. Such future research would help to determine why African American students are not as academically successful as European American students in the traditional school setting.

This sample was also limited to high school students in one area of the country. Future research should be regionally diverse and focus on different age ranges in order to explore how racial-ethnic identity impacts different age groups. Additionally,, longitudinal studies should be conducted to see how African American racial-ethnic identity grows over time and how that affects academic achievement and motivation based on academic experiences. This study could also be replicated in different regions of the United States to see if the study would yield similar results. Finally, future research could also focus on the development of a measure to assess

traditional school structures and how effective these structures are at meeting the needs of diverse learners.

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Appendix A

**Opt-Out Parent Letter
Student Survey**

July 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son/daughter, along with other high school students enrolled in your child's school, has been invited to participate in an educational research study about academic motivation and ethnic identity development. As part of the study, students will take a 20-minute survey during the school day. Your student's responses will be anonymous; meaning, your student will not include his or her name on the survey.

The Institutional Review Board at Liberty University has approved the study. The results will be used by Meliane Hackett, a student at Liberty University, to write her doctoral dissertation.

Participation is **voluntary** and **will not affect** your son's/daughter's grades.

If you decide that **you do not want your student to take the survey**, please sign and date this letter and have your child return to their teacher or your son or daughter may just leave the survey blank on the day it is administered.

If you have any questions about the research study or wish to review the questionnaire, please contact Meliane Hackett at

Thank you for helping us learn more about students' educational experience.

Sincerely,

Meliane Hackett M.Ed
Doctoral Candidate, Administrative Leadership
Liberty University

I DO NOT WANT MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY:

Sign

Date

Appendix B

Dear Teachers,

Please let me begin by thanking you in advance for taking the time from your extremely busy schedule to administer this survey to your students. My name is Meliane Hackett and I am working on my doctoral dissertation in administrative leadership. I am conducting a study to determine how racial-ethnic identity impacts academic motivation of African American high school students. This study could possibly provide government agencies and school districts with data to develop culturally relevant teaching practices. I anticipate this research may provide educators with academic motivators of African American students that could possibly increase student achievement.

One week prior to taking the survey, you will receive copies of the opt-out letter to distribute to the students (see attached). This is a voluntary study and students who return the opt-out letter may not participate in the study. Please encourage students to take the survey seriously and to answer all of the questions.

Please provide students with the surveys and demographic questions and return the surveys in the self-addressed envelope provided once students completed the survey. Please call, text or email me with any questions or concerns. Again, thank you so very much for your time.

Thank you

Meliane Hackett

Appendix C

Directions

Today you will be participating in a survey. This survey will look at academic motivation and racial ethnic identity. The information you provide will be **confidential**. This means your information and answers will **not** be shared with anyone. The answers on this survey **will have no effect on your grade in this class**. You may participate if you did not return your opt out form. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes. Your answers are important and will be used to make educational decisions. It is important to try to answer all of the questions. There are demographic questions and two surveys that you will be asked to complete. On both surveys, the higher numbers indicate you agree with the statement and the lower numbers indicate you do not agree with the statement. Does anyone have any questions? If you have questions during the survey raise your hand and ask your teacher. Thank you for your participation. The researcher appreciates you. You may begin your survey now.

Thank you,

Mrs. Hackett

Appendix D

SCORING THE AMS**Key for AMS High School version -28 items**

Item	Type/domain/orientation of motivation
2, 9, 16, 23	Intrinsic motivation – to know
6, 13, 20, 27	Intrinsic motivation - toward accomplishment
4, 11, 18, 25	Intrinsic motivation - to experience stimulation
3, 10, 17, 24	Extrinsic motivation - identified
7, 14, 21, 28	Extrinsic motivation - introjected
1, 8, 15, 22	Extrinsic motivation - external regulation
5, 12, 19, 26	Amotivation

Calculations

To calculate a participant's score on the AMS, the mean response for each of the sub-scales was found. These means varied between 1 and 7. The means were then inserted in the following formula, which was used to calculate a self-determination index, which was taken as the participant's academic motivation score. The formula had been adapted from Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, Briere, Senecal, and Vallieres (1992).

$2\{(\text{know} + \text{acc} + \text{stim}/3)\} + \text{idem} - \{(\text{intro} + \text{reg}/2) + 2\text{amo}\} = \text{Academic Motivation}$. know = intrinsic motivation to know; acc = intrinsic motivation to accomplishments; stim = intrinsic

motivation to experience stimulation; iden = identification; intro = introjected regulation; external regulation; amo = amotivation.

This formula gives scores ranging from -18 (very little self-determination/ academic motivation) to +18 (extreme self-determination/ high academic motivation). Highest level of self-

determination: $2((7+7+7/3)) + 7 - ((1+1/2) + 2*1)$

Appendix E

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 16, 2016

Meliane Hackett

IRB Approval 2459.051616: The Impact of Racial-Ethnic Identity of African American High School Students on Academic Motivation

Dear Meliane,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,