

It Takes a Village: Investigating the Influence of Neighborhoods, Academic and Familial Support, and Racial Socialization on Academic Achievement.

INTRODUCTION

From the 1960's to present, research on African Americans have found that race related attitudes were associated with improved academic achievement (Stevenson, 1996). Nebellet et al. (2006) began to focus on racial identity and socialization in relation to college performance, however, studies have yet to focus their lens on the contemporary ecological factors that may influence racial attitudes and academic performance. Given previous work by Gonzales (1996), we see the environment a child dwells in subsequently effects their matriculation thru school. Moreover, given the historic and current social change movements such as the desegregation of schools, the Civil Rights and Black Power movements and black urban flight, along with the momentous policy changes such as the School Reform movement, No Child Left Behind, and the privatization of education system, there is a need to elucidate the influence of the fore mentioned on African American academic performance. Thus, the purpose of this study seeks to assess the relationship between racial composition of one's neighborhood, academic and familial support, and racial socialization messages on contemporary African American academic performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

R1: Is there a relationship between racial composition of neighborhoods and racial socialization?

R2: Is there a relationship between academic and familial support and racial socialization?

R3: Is there a relationship between racial socialization and GPA?



High School students being prepared for the future.

METHODS

Design: Cross sectional and correlational methods were employed. Surveys were used to assess the relationship between racial composition of one's neighborhood, academic/familial support, racial socialization, and academic performance.

Participants: 161 African American college students ages 18 and older from a Mid-Atlantic HBCU were sampled ($M = 21.18$, $SD = 3.8$)

Procedures:

- Upon attaining IRB approval surveys were conducted via classroom
- Participants were informed of the nature of the study and provided consent forms.

Measures: A 4 item scale was used to measure academic/familial support. Howard Stevenson's 1996 Scale of Racial Socialization – Adolescents (SORS-A) and Brown/Krishnakumar 2006 Adolescent Racial Ethnic Socialization (ARESS) scale was used to measure racial socialization. GPA was self reported



North Carolina Central University graduates. (2015). in Durham, NC

IMPLICATIONS

The findings from this study can add to the realm of research practice and policy by doing the following. 1) Investigating further the role of community and academic and familial support as it relates to academic performance. 2) Implementing the importance of cultural and ethnic pride for counselors and educators working with African American Students. 3) Addressing policies that aid in the advancement of enrollment and matriculation for African American students (i.e. integrating black professionals to high school class room and the creation of cultural emersion experiences for first year black students at PWIs.

RESULTS

Findings from the Spearman Rho correlation indicated as follows:

1. Racial composition of neighborhoods was related to racial socialization (racism awareness teachings)($r = -.15$ $p < .05$)
2. Academic and familial support was related to racial socialization (spirituality and coping, and ethnic pride). ($r = .17$ $p < .05$ and $r = .24$ $p < .01$)
3. Racial socialization messages such as cultural pride reinforcement was related to GPA ($r = .14$ $p < .05$)

Table 1. Correlation Matrix of Survey and Outcome Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 CGaTOT	1.00							
2 CGbTOT	.900**	1.00						
3 Racial Composition	-.028	-.102	1.00					
4 Howard Spiritual TOT	.165*	.115	.121	1.00				
5 Howard Cultural	-.90	-.070**	.107	.235**	1.00			
6 Howard Racism TOT	.089	.069	-.147*	-.019	-.281**	1.00		
7 Brown TOT	.239**	-.243**	-.044	-.047	.260**	-.145*	1.00	
8 GPA	.079	.065	-.059	-.018	.139*	.050	.094	1.00

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

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