

THE DYSFUNCTION OF EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL: AN ANALYSIS OF
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN WHITE HABITUS & ACADEMIC
DISIDENTIFICATION (BELONGING UNCERTAINTY)
AFFECTING STUDENTS OF COLOR
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my work to Johnny Wiley Sr, my loving and hard-working grandfather.

Through the years, you pushed me to be more than my peers, encouraged me to be better than my own expectations, and taught me how to fail but not be a failure. I am filled with joy knowing that I can finish this and make you proud. Though I am riddled with sadness knowing I was a few short weeks away from walking across that stage and seeing you grin from ear to ear. I know as I write this, you chuckle at me because I am still very emotional and very much so your grandson, your Pawpaw. And I pray that you enjoy your rest and watch me grow to be more than even your expectations. I'll strive to push our family together; I'll strive to be a positive light in your image. I know I could never fill your shoes, but I will never stop trying to wear them! You were always there in both the best and worst of times, and even though I didn't say thank you enough, know you will always be loved.

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I. INTRODUCTION

For decades, universities have maintained the function of producing conventional forms of knowledge within societies. Students of various backgrounds apply to and attend universities with many different expectations regarding their success and experiences. With diverse student populations, it is no surprise that most universities maintain systems of capital, intangible intellectual currency, that help students navigate higher education and assist in obtaining their academic degrees (Bourdieu 1993). Students with greater access to this 'cultural capital' systemically have an advantage when seeking occupations that require higher-educational degrees (Bourdieu 1993). Unfortunately, American post-secondary education has historically advantaged white students while excluding students of color, primarily black students (Moore 2007). Theorist Pierre Bourdieu established a vast collection of work devoted to explaining how cultural understanding severely impacts human interaction and social mobility within social institutions & modern societies (Bourdieu 1993.) In his work, Bourdieu maintains that an individual's ability to move through social spaces within society successfully can depend on their quality of symbolic & cultural capital. Specifically, he explains that capital is a key factor in reproducing inequality within a society. As capital is shared, the outcasts fall further and further behind in understanding and resources within the social spaces provided by the dominant group.

Scholars have examined how students of color are disadvantaged in higher education. They have brought in concepts from race theory, including Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, who developed a theory of color-blind racism. This theory is crucial to this study as Bonilla-Silva's work helped usher in a new form of contemporary race research. His

work concentrates on how contemporary racism, while more subtle than in the past, still affects racial minority groups. Both Bourdieu's and Bonilla-Silva's concepts have been used in research to explore how observable characteristics and acquired knowledge could determine how students of color feel and result in isolation from their academic peers, unfit for success within academia, and disconnected from the academic and social structure (Franklin 2019, Okello 2020, Shim 2020).

My research examines if racialized experiences within post-secondary education and the means students have at their disposal before attending university affect a student's chance at success within the institution. Additionally, this research will assess the impact of students' many social expectations across campuses, including students' assumptions regarding a "post-racialized" world, while trying to uncover patterns of nuanced racial experiences that ultimately differentiate student outcomes. I conducted binomial logistic regression tests to determine if black students' college outcomes are marginally affected by White Habitus. The tested variables that are part of this model are as follows: prejudice, social capital, cultural capital, white habitus, and self-efficacy. (This research is based on data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen, a project designed by Douglas S. Massey and Camille Z. Charles and funded by the Mellon Foundation and the Atlantic Philanthropies.)

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research utilizes two theoretical concepts. The first is Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital. The second is Eduardo Bonilla Silva's color-blind racism. Bourdieu's capital expands on the concept of monetary capital to explain how things other than money can affect one's power in society. Bourdieu (2012) explains that, in addition to economic (monetary) capital, other forms of capital serve as non-tangible resources used for social exchange, whether it be ideas such as knowledge or clout acquired by predetermined societal norms and values.

Pierre Bourdieu and Habitus

Habitus describes that spaces function from three aspects of capital, "symbolic," "social," and "cultural" capital (1993). Symbolic capital is, at its simplest level, capital one gains through social recognition, often expressed in terms of honor or prestige. Anything from physical creations like clothing and cars to social conceptions such as credit score and race can be symbols. The cultural class maintains these symbolic constructions that created the values through a hierarchy of interests and evaluating said interests. For example, a credit score is a socially constructed system in America. It maintains a "living" financial structure that helps identify the value of an individual's wealth and propensity to understand wealth. A credit score is symbolic interest because it is federally reified by banking systems and systems of social clout and personal worth. A credit score symbolizes individual wealth, idealistically assigning actions and values to individuals within social classes with particular values set by intertwining social patterns.

That being said, credit scores function as symbolic capital by allowing those with higher access to more (in this example, economic) capital.

Symbolic capital is expressed as a symbolic representation of cultural capital (the symbols are understood and communicated within the values of culture). Bourdieu explains that individuals are predisposed to behave within their cultural boundaries generationally as culture is primarily learned in early-life socialization (2012). Values are internalized and incorporated unconsciously by actors and are further carried into social spaces, reifying cultural capital. Specifically, the dominant culture within society will be able to identify and reproduce their culture easiest as the dominant classes of a social hierarchy will have the most access to forms of action. This hierarchy results in a cycle of power developed by the dominant classes who solidify non-tangible ideas through passive culture (i.e., people having ignorance towards their history), often leading to the silent oppression or forceful submission of other cultures and classes predisposed to other values (cultures) during early socialization. Similar to symbolic capital, cultural capital's values are differentiated by the function they serve and by the ability to acquire and share knowledge. In contrast, symbolic capital critically evaluates that knowledge and ranks it within a hierarchy favoring dominant ideals through inclusion and subjecting others to exclusion.

In addition to his work on capital, Bourdieu introduces the concepts of habitus and field. Habitus is explained as each space within a society has transmittable norms and values identified by overarching structures maintained by organized ideals created and policed by a dominant class. Bourdieu explains that structured spaces enable critical dispositions in the early stages of socialization, furthering the development of individual

and dominant group possession (1973). Furthermore, these structured spaces foster the practice of forming ideas into actions. This idea is a fundamental aspect of habitus as it attempts to explain the function of transforming practical knowledge into a sense of practice. These concepts are made possible through the dimensions of habitus and its conjunction with Bourdieu's capital.

Bourdieu's 'field' is a theoretical concept expounded later in his career as the development of his theory of practices (Bourdieu 1980). Though it is not utilized to the extent of Bourdieu's habitus, 'field' is a concept for investigating social functions and the mediation of power. 'Field' is a hidden, underlying, yet overarching institutional aspect of individual and group action highlighting patterns of interests and struggles that shape the realities of its actors (1997). These patterns sometimes work in clusters or flow beyond groups, organizations, and institutions but always produce a relational effect from the actors (Bourdieu 1991). Bourdieu situates 'fields' (patterns of struggle and conflict) as the link to practice through the organizing principles it provides. Both material and symbolic capital are vital to exploring social practices as they can highlight aspects of "power" by illuminating who can dictate what norms exist in these spaces. Whoever dominates these processes creates the values and reproduces their cultural norms (capital), creating a set of interests and systemically encouraging others to seek the benefits. The actions and practices are the formation of power and delineate how resources (and access to these resources) are the hidden guide to most social orders. An example of this is the field of art. While art is subjective, the "field" of art has an objective. It serves to find the pieces that distinctly fit the dominant form of expression set by centuries of world-renowned artists, art critics, and common admirers of a

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva and Color-Blind Racism

Bonilla-Silva (1996) created a racial framework addressing and analyzing how contemporary forms of racism exist and function within our modern society. Bonilla-Silva utilizes Bourdieu's Social Space and Symbolic Power to explain that a system of hierarchy and oppression has been maintained through different means to create and maintain systemic power for a dominant group of citizens in the U.S. (1996). His research utilized American economic practices, the historical oppression of blacks, and qualitative interviews of white Americans to illuminate dominant perspectives of the current social hierarchy and distribution of resources to create a theory of racism in a "post-racial" society (1996,2003). In his research, Bonilla-Silva defined color-blind racism as the erasure of historical context and the contemporary formation of racial delusions (1996). Bonilla-Silva developed four central frames of color-blind racism. Bonilla-Silva's four frames are "Abstract Liberalism," where Whites use ideas like "freedom of choice" to rationalize racial inequality; "Naturalization," where Whites suggest that segregation is a natural biological fact instead of an actualized racialized framework and form of social isolation; "Cultural Racism," when whites explain racial inequality by placing the blame on the negative or pathological values of minority cultures; "Minimization of Racism," the disregarding of any claims that the American social hierarchy negatively impacts minorities experiences and life chances by devaluing these issues by arguing that racism is no longer a reality. In these tenets, Bonilla-Silva

highlights how dominant discourse regarding race is highly stigmatized and rooted in false narratives resulting in an ideology of color-blind racism negatively affecting minority groups in the U.S.

Further, Bonilla-Silva explored how white people have maintained social power without resorting to overt racism by examining white habitus in *“Racism without Racists”* (2003). The concept of white habitus can be defined as a social space that has been structured through symbolic and cultural capital (i.e., norms, values, interests) by the dominant racial group. To better understand the social space of white habitus, Bonilla-Silva interviewed white American citizens to see how they understood their identity and group habits like self-segregation while gauging their attitudes in a racialized world. He reported on color-blind racism and how white people utilize color-blind ideology to maintain power and navigate race-related situations while avoiding historically racist views. It is essential to understand that white habitus is created and reinforced by hypersegregation, ultimately affecting the proximity of whites to people of color. Physical isolation conditions whites' social views and produces norms creating solidarity within whiteness. By hardly ever interacting with people outside their racial group, whites interpret themselves as non-racial and their isolation as usual and 'fine' (Bonilla-Silva et al. 2006). This ideology is common in white spaces and has developed an ever-growing racialized hierarchy of standards and norms in "public spaces" (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

These ideas of Bonilla-Silva serve as a racial framework extending Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field. The dominating forces of white supremacy in America created a system of cultural norms, limited resources, and highly valued symbolic

attributes to determine what is acceptable in particular spaces. This research explains how racism is a core component of today's social hierarchy.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural Capital and Students

Redford, Johnson, and Honnold used Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital to demonstrate how systemic effects like social clout, finances, and information limit students' life chances (2009). For my research, Bourdieu's cultural capital is used to explore how systemic effects, like whites' gatekeeping of information and status, limit the life chances of people of color, emphasizing students in post-secondary education. However, Breinholt and Jaeger's research maintains that cultural capital does not correlate directly with student performance; their data reported that cultural capital is measured through socially defined skills rather than projected narratives teachers give to students (2020). Although those researchers take this approach to capital, I contend that the concept of cultural capital supports that onlookers decipher and interpret an individual's social status and capabilities, which supports the idea that cultural capital can mediate student performance through socially available resources. Other research has found positive correlations between socioeconomic status and academic achievement (Bodovski 2010). This correlation distinguishes students who have parents from higher levels of socioeconomic status by setting higher educational and social expectations for their children (Marcucci 2019).

Symbolic and cultural capital are key components of socioeconomic status as they are directly related to class and racial values and interests. This connection highlights the racialized hierarchy in America, which limits information to different social groups via education, participation in government elections, and access to the collective population.

Therefore, limiting skills taught by family members inherently creates a power dynamic through which whites value their symbolic interests (i.e., paying for tutors, academic extracurriculars, volunteering) and under-value minority parents' symbolic interests (i.e., allowing part-time jobs, babysitting siblings, sports) to develop a covert racialized structure; appropriately “educated” versus “uneducated.” This power dynamic is required to create a working caste system of capital. Whoever controls the symbolic capital taught in schools, the capital that is translated into our everyday lives of popular culture and information, controls the interests that are valued in these said spaces. The cultural capital research conducted to ascertain the systemic effects of capital by Redford et al. managed to quantitatively analyze the theorized effects of cultural capital on student outcomes through Dr. Lareau's work on parenting styles (2009). These parenting styles are "concerted cultivation" and "accomplishment of natural growth." The concerted cultivation parenting style is determined by parents' involvement in their student's lives, simplified as a planned day-to-day schedule. The accomplishment of natural growth is defined by parents' laissez-faire parenting style, allowing the student to grow without much structure (Lareau 2003). Redford et al.'s results show that concerted cultivation parenting styles positively correlate with student success and socioeconomic status, highlighting that distinct capital is a requirement for success (2009). It is important to note that race was slightly correlated with concerted cultivation parenting styles within this research, informing the reader that all races can benefit from this success. This work suggests that race is still correlated with parental involvement and affects socioeconomic status and educational outcomes (Hardaway and Mcloyd 2009, Redford et al. 2009).

White Spaces in Higher Education

Bourdieu's concepts of 'field' and 'habitus' explained how white spaces have been constructed over time and persist through systems of power and domination (Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2007; Bonilla-Silva, Embrick, and Goar 2006; Moore 2020; Moore and Embrick 2020). Based on Bourdieu's theories, white space research illustrates how white structural dominance uses ideological themes to construct and reproduce white structural power throughout history (Bonilla-Silva 2003). Contemporary research emphasizes how white dominance has evolved to maintain social power (or capital) without being overtly racist (Burke 2011; Brunnsma et al. 2019; Brunnsma, Won Kim, and Chapman 2020; St Louis 2021; Messner 2000; Moore 2020).

Wendy Moore extended this research beyond public spaces to different institutional forms, primarily higher education (2007). By examining three critical sources at a U.S. law school, she explained how explicitly racist white behaviors are directly connected with the institution's racial discourse and color-blind ideology. Additionally, she explored how white dominance within university spaces reinforces racial hierarchies (or hegemony) by producing norms and behaviors aligned with color-blind ideology and U.S. law. Moore interprets Gramsci's "Hegemony" as societal production/progression due to the elite's conspicuous economics that allows for easier social oppression by creating a consent-coercion dichotomy for individuals. This dichotomy establishes that there is always a power hierarchy where either consent or coercion is the main form of manipulation or communication from those in power. Moore's research maintains that these behaviors are not internalized expressions of animosity but tacit reproductions of power. Therefore, it is essential to understand that

institutional power and white infrastructural dominance have an explicit connection maintained by a racialized hierarchy, shaping behaviors and norms of everyday individuals under a color-blind lens. When Moore explored racial discourse within universities, it was expected that the dominant ideology across campus was color-blind racism (Moore and Bell 2017). Consequently, the research establishes how universities tacitly support explicitly racist or threatening actions on campus grounds and follow a "free-speech" guideline that asserts that white students and their explicitly negative forms of racial expression should not be oppressed. This concept aligns with the color-blind racist ideology that white people can be oppressed despite the reality of a white-dominated society. This rhetoric, alongside other "anti-race talk" rhetoric, continues to be widely reported to exist within the university (Moore and Bell 2017).

Racialized Experiences and the Effects of Navigating Education

African American students in post-secondary education experience multiple adverse effects from entering white spaces. Black students who deal with negative racialized experiences moving from one white space to another white space are more likely to experience negative symptoms affecting their performance (Soto, Dawson-Andoh, and Witherspoon, 2016; Sheehan et al., 2019). As explained in the previous section, the university is a white space and is a means for white social mobility (Wacquant 1989, Moore 2007, Moore and Bell 2011, Moore and Bell 2017). African American students often enter these spaces with the expectation of inclusive environments to cultivate knowledge. However, African Americans' experience within their first year of university, their identity, beliefs, and expectations of a university, in general, become negative (Chavous et al. 2017.)

Research done by Ellis and his team explains that within these spaces, black students experience microaggressions in the form of micro assaults and intentional or unintentional aggressive communication as "phenotypic" others (2019). They expand micro-assaults into two categories, micro-insults (an intentional or unintentional form of communication that shares negative depictions of another) and micro-invalidations subtly demeaning others' identity, experience, or historical background (Ellis et al., 2019). This shared experience is due to the many negative encounters this group of students experiences in social settings, extracurricular activities, and the classroom (Ellis et al., 2019). This invalidation of students' lived experiences could negatively impact their engagement with university life, negatively affecting their desire to achieve. The research found that the experiences of black students in college showed that African American students sensed these negative interactions with faculty and non-faculty (Ellis et al. 2019, Mills 2020). In their research, J. M. Ellis, C. S. Powell, C. P. Demetriou, C. Huerta-Bapat, and A. T. Panter (2019) concentrate on the negative experiences that first-generation students face in their universities. They discuss the experience of one student who expressed how one of their professors implied that their parents did not have the tenacity to achieve an academic degree and that they should be proud to be in college. (Ellis et al., 2019) This concept aligns with racist delusions that black and white people are segregated not because of systemic racism but segregated based on minority failures (Bonilla-Silva 1996).

Cabrera (2012), in their study of "Exposing Whiteness in Higher Education," makes similar findings. They find that students also assume that minorities do not desire to work hard and achieve their goals (Cabrera 2012). These peer assumptions form

microassaults stemming from misinformed reactions from students of color sharing their experiences. These peers are not bound by professionalism or contract, meaning they have no structural or institutional priorities to try to understand the perspectives of students of color. Cabrera reported that black students experienced peer condescension regarding their level of intellect and their parents' capital. In another study, Erica Morales looked into microaggressions on college campuses (2012). Morales also found that systems of microaggressions affect students of color in academic settings. Some of these aggressions included non-black students and professionals insinuating that black people in post-secondary education were loud and aggressive or always looked mad regardless of whether they were or not.

Furthermore, much research is examining college campuses' physical environments and spaces. For example, Ada Robinson-Perez found that black male students experience microaggressions in the form of fear on college campuses (2021). These microaggressions led black males to self-isolation and an increase in social distance from their white counterparts. Mills highlights the lack of representation of African Americans in higher education (2020). These lived experiences are critically affecting black students. Within contemporary critical race studies, Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF) has been a staple in multicultural dialogue. Researchers have found many issues within this concept that affect black people's outcomes (Okello 2020; Smith, Hung, and Franklin 2011; Franklin 2019). RBF is an effect of African Americans striving to maintain a positive public perception by conforming to white standards in white spaces. Due to RBF, African Americans must maintain conformity by not speaking out about their experiences to please white anxiety. As a result, these students risk exposure to

many more negative assumptions about their character, intentions, and backgrounds. Specifically, Smith, Hung, and Franklin warned about the worrying effects of Mundane and extreme environmental stress (2011). "M.E.S.S." is represented as a part of the general everyday black experience while striving for upward mobility. Okello found that even black faculty face these racial pressures within the university, explaining that blacks must reshape public opinions about themselves or face ostracization (2020). To do this, African Americans must position themselves in public situations to "disrupt" public discourse about black bodies and culture. The issue is that this starts the cycle from the beginning, where black participants in college life endure extreme pressures that have a high probability of altering their mental, physical, or social health. These cycles ultimately affect Black students' aspirational goals and academic outcomes.

Black Students' Outcomes and Academic Achievement

Student grades and graduation rates are direct and explicit means of measurement of achievement in higher education. Likewise, academic failure can be discerned by records of failing grades and drop-out rates. However, these measurements are part of a more extensive set of social factors that affect student academic outcomes and success. African American students undergo a particular experience dissimilar to most other demographics of students in analogous academic settings. The factors that African American students face due to navigating predominantly white spaces, which consequently discourage African American students' success. For example, Seanna Leath and Tabbye M. Chavous' research on how academic motivation affects African American students find that academic authority figures (i.e., professors, lab instructors, teaching

assistants) have specific expectations of how African American students participate in their classes (2018). In addition, African American males and females monitor their behaviors to reject identity narratives subjected to them by the stereotypes of white students and faculty (Silver 2019). Some of the narratives were the "cool guy" narrative. This narrative positions African American males as the quiet cool guy who is reserved but still a part of the group, although not many people talk to them. Another narrative is the "Entertainers". These people find themselves at the center of social spaces mimicking the tokenization process. To be a token in a space is another effect of RBF; the subject is not isolated in essence as they are often seen inside social dynamics but isolated in their role. In these spaces, students are faced with elements of white habitus by default. The stereotypes, assumptions, and subjugation all compound on African American students, interfering with their confidence and ability to succeed.

Another factor that affects academic achievement is self-efficacy, which can be understood as how much an individual believes they can complete a specific task or perform in a particular manner (Dutta et al., 2020). Some psychological researchers suggest that a prominent "achievement narrative" exists within higher education and is a crucial identifier of student success (Zavala and Hand 2017). Juan Battle and Darla Linville (2006) add that the "achievement narrative" has been understood to segregate successful students from unsuccessful students by explaining how self-motivation is a barrier to academic success. Their research primarily concentrated on how same-gender attracted youth had consistently positive attitudes towards school regardless of other significant factors that affect school attitudes, like race (Battle and Linville 2006). Though the research is dated, it identified self-motivation as a critical factor in academic

success; contemporary researchers have extended the nuances of achievement motivation and academic success beyond broad academic generalizations. As Howard suggests, spaces within higher education often associate academic success with prescribed characteristics such as laziness, hard-working, or smartness, with each quality salient to a particular demographic (2003).

Furthermore, students' own beliefs in themselves before college determine successful outcomes (Starr and Leaper 2019). In higher education, social habitus adversely affects student perceptions and performance, affecting self-efficacy. Student success characteristics are often associated with positive and negative prescribed cultural identifiers, with most positive characteristics aligning with white American identities and negative characteristics with most racial minority identities.

In educational settings, negative assumptions associated with black students echo Bonilla-Silvas' color-blind racism research speaking to the covert stereotypes placed on racial categories within American society. Additionally, Battle and Linville explained that attitudes towards school among students of color could not be determined only by broad identifiers such as race, but when weighted with other social identifiers (i.e., sexual orientation, socioeconomic status), attitudes towards school can be assessed with more substantial confidence (2006). These attitudes influence students' understanding of themselves by either self-identifying with higher education or dis-identifying with higher education (Griffin 2002). Furthermore, a sense of belonging could be advantageous for students in evaluative contexts, especially if students have social connectedness in their academic setting; their sense of belonging provides them the space to associate their notion of self with their academic performance (Walton & Cohen 2007). This topic has

been frequently researched to explain the phenomenon, but most research highlights the correlation of dis-identification with academic failures and student isolation (Okello 2020; Smith, Hung, and Franklin 2011; Franklin 2019). Several disciplines have studied academic achievement research, but sociology has had minimal extensions of this research. Deniece Dortch (2016) qualitatively assessed self-efficacy's role in achieving doctoral degrees by three black women at a PWI. Dortch found that these women utilized social and cultural resources to navigate through the racial battle fatigue present at their university. If these women did not have the knowledge or emotional capacity to adjust to negative experiences, their achievement narrative might have drastically altered. The "achievement narrative" assures that particular groups can successfully participate in educational spaces, which can alter other individuals' sense of belonging and success.

When students feel like they have agency and control in their educational endeavors, this perceived ability benefits their notion of self and academic performance. As previously discussed, "achievement narratives" play a significant role in how institutions and organizations make sense of academic outcomes and assessments (Zavala and Hand 2017). Depending on the assessor, African American students are often generalized and stereotyped in their "narratives," leading to an altered sense of self. This altered state of identity can change how African American students relate themselves to their educational settings. Griffin discusses the notion of disidentification among Black and Hispanic students who have performed poorly and how they disassociate themselves from their educational environments as a way of survival (2002). These Black and Hispanic students might feel like no matter how much effort they put into their academic performance, their "narrative" has already been set, and their expectations are

predetermined. These assumed "achievement narratives" are observable from the initial stages of setting-up classroom dynamics, such as instructors having specific academic expectations of students with African-American-sounding names (Anderson-Clark et al. 2008). This relationship can bleed into other negative factors that African American students experience, such as student isolation. Students' lack of connectivity to factors like their peers, instructors, or environment can affect how they complete evaluative tasks (Walton and Cohen 2007). When students have positive notions of self-efficacy in their academic settings (i.e., universities or specific undergraduate programs), they have more security in their environment (Höhne and Zander, 2019). So, for African American students that navigate racially homogenous settings, it is crucial for academic outcomes that there be opportunities and mechanisms to help these students connect to their larger environment.

Achievement narratives, self-efficacy, student isolation, and academic failure affect how successful African American students perform and participate in their academic settings. These social factors often play off of each other and can, more often than not, affect African American students' concept of achievement motivation. These factors become more alarming when minority students move from one predominantly white space to another and witness negative experiences that alter their academic performance (Soto, Dawson-Andoh, and Witherspoon, 2016; Sheehan et al., 2019). Student outcomes are institutional goals, yet a large demographic of minority students experience a type of cultural lag that does not seem to be mediated by many institutional bodies.

IV. GAPS IN LITERATURE

Researchers have found that student habitus affects student outcomes in college spaces (Moore 2007). Therefore, a college campus culture directly influences student engagement and retention. However, there have been limited studies that have tried to quantitatively broaden the scope of academic motivation research that could assess academic outcomes that covertly shape the experience of most students. Finally, the face of college campuses has dramatically changed, forcing institutions to assess new ways to teach students effectively, especially as more first-generation and minority students strive to overcome academia's demands. This research is a preliminary work for future understanding of black student failure in PWIs. The culmination of social and cultural capital within higher education isolates the lived experiences of minority students, negatively intervening with the students' outcomes. My research addresses the lack of quantitative research regarding race and academic outcomes by utilizing a quantitative longitudinal analysis of the effects of RBF and white habitus on black students, filling a gap by applying the psychological tools of academic motivation to the sociological extensions of habitus.

Throughout the literature, academic achievement and self-efficacy are found to be directly related to student pre-dispositions and used as a predictor of academic failure. Specifically, student outcomes research concentrates on psychological research differentiating between successful and unsuccessful students (Dutta et al., 2020). Within sociology, academic success research concentrates on the effects of academic failure and qualitatively assesses the attitudes of students who experience failure (Dortch 2016). However, the literature fails to discuss the different racial experiences ethnic minorities

face on predominantly white college campuses and then control for those experiences to see if college Habitus or RBF affects academic performance. Additionally, this gap leaves room for specific race research that analyzes how minority students, specifically Black students, are impacted by American institutions' social and cultural capital.

V. RESEARCH GOALS

This study will use data surveyed from the N.L.S.F. to observe trends of self-efficacy, social and cultural capital, white habitus, and racialized experiences to analyze its predicted effects on graduation among black students. Additionally, responses of Asian, Hispanic, and White students were also tested against the initial model to determine which effects are unique to black students' outcomes.

My study examines the relationship between graduation with self-efficacy, prejudice, white habitus, and academic failure. The study will run five binomial logistic analyses, one for the initial comparison of all minorities against white students to see if there is significant difference in graduation rates then one for each racial group with the independent variables. The binomial logistics regression tests will be used to estimate the probability of academic success when self-efficacy, white habitus, prejudice, social capital, and cultural capital are all held at a constant for each racial group while maintaining a focus on African American students.

The pre-existing research suggests that the data will reveal a significant relationship between variables. For example, white habitus will predict adverse effects on black students' graduation, and cultural and social capital will predict positive effects on black students graduating.

H1: White Habitus accounts for the majority of variance when determining black student graduation rates.

H2.a: Social capital will predict positive estimates of black student graduation rates.

H2.b: Cultural capital will predict positive estimates of black student graduation rates.

VI. METHODOLOGY

All data from this research comes from the N.L.S.F., the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen, a project designed by Douglas S. Massey and Camille Z. Charles and funded by the Mellon Foundation and the Atlantic Philanthropies. The N.L.S.F. follows a cohort of first-time freshmen at selective colleges and universities through their college careers. It sampled approximately equal numbers of Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians at each of the 28 participating schools. The baseline survey consists of face-to-face interviews that compiled detailed information about the neighborhood, family, and educational environments students experience before entering college. The total number of baseline interviews for the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshman was 3,924. For the study, 1,151 African American students were obtained, 959 Asian, 916 Hispanic, and 998 White students. The N.L.S.F. follow-up surveys were obtained in four waves, equaling a total of five data sets. One hundred thirty-one cases were missing from the analysis.

The survey assesses their attitudes, aspirations, and motivations at entry. In addition to the initial surveys, follow-up surveys were conducted via telephone interviews in the Spring of each academic year to gather information from the same students about their social, psychological, and academic experiences on campus. Combining retrospective data captured in the baseline survey (pre-college) with prospective information compiled in years 1 through 4 (Wave 1-4 = Freshman-Senior), Massey & Charles created a longitudinal database stretching from childhood through college graduation. This design provides a basis for linking pre-college experiences to behaviors and psychological states emerging in the course of higher education and for sorting out

the direction of causality between determinants and outcomes. In addition, those dropping out of college or transferring to another institution are followed, interviewed, and retained in the survey to avoid building selection biases into the sample.

This dataset is ideal for this study as Massey and Charles developed the N.L.S.F. to provide a comprehensive dataset to test different theoretical explanations for minority underachievement in higher education. Specifically, the longitudinal data set allows this research design to explore non-cognitive measures, such as motivation and social and cultural capital, and analyze the effects of direct measures, such as graduation rates for black students.

“Rather than prejudging the validity of any single point of view,” Massey and Charles "sought to develop a broad database capable of testing each conceptual model, assessing its explanatory power, and specifying the circumstances under which it might apply. Specifically, the N.L.S.F. sought to measure the academic and social progress of college students at regular intervals to capture emergent psychological processes hypothesized by investigators such as Steele and Ogbu while measuring the degree of social integration and intellectual engagement suggested by Tinto and to control for pre-existing background differences with respect to social, economic, and demographic characteristics" (2003).

I selected six variables and created four dummy variables from this data set, one dependent dichotomous variable, Graduation, five independent ordinal variables, Self-Efficacy, Prejudice, Social Capital, Cultural Capital, and White Habitus, and four dummy variables to code for ethnicity; A=Asian, B=Black, H=Hispanic, W=White. The dependent variable and variable of interest is graduation. Graduation data was drawn from two principal sources: offices of the registrar at the 28 colleges and universities in the N.L.S.F., and the National Student Clearinghouse (N.S.C.), a nonprofit organization providing post-secondary and secondary student degrees, diplomas, and enrollment verification. By analyzing and cross-checking these references over two years (2005-

2006), the N.L.S.F. team collected factual graduation data for 3,914 out of 3,924 total students. The variables constructed include an "overall graduation" variable (overall), an "on-time graduation" variable (gradtime), and a variable (gradcode) indicating 14 different paths taken by the N.L.S.F. students in pursuit of a bachelor's degree. The variable gradtime was used for this study to predict the expected outcomes from college degree plans (4 years). The gradtime variable was coded 0 = none graduate 1 = graduate.

Prejudice was obtained by the perception of prejudice on the participants' college experiences in waves 2 & 4. The variable sought to answer If the student felt uncomfortable around their professor, other students, or the classroom setting. Specifically, "how often, if ever, have students in your college classes ever made you feel uncomfortable or self-conscious because of your race or ethnicity?". "How often, if ever, have any of your college professors made you feel uncomfortable or self-conscious because of your race or ethnicity?". The variable constructed was titled "prejudice."

The variables for Cultural and Social capital were formed via index and then recoded 0 - 4 strongly agree to strongly disagree to fit the normalized dataset. Massey and Charles asked about specific periods in each participant's life to acquire cultural capital. The two categories the researchers chose were six years old and thirteen years old. They asked the participants four questions to gather information when they were six years old and seven questions when the respondent was thirteen years old. These questions were presented as, "Parent(s) took R to zoo or aquarium" & "Parent(s) took R traveling abroad." This variable is used to ascertain cultural engagement before joining a college or university and then developed through each wave over the four years. The variable constructed was titled "culcap." To acquire social capital, the researchers chose three-

lifetime categories; age six, age thirteen, and age eighteen and twenty questions for participants to respond to. One question asked, "Parent(s) talked to R's friends." The questions for this variable help develop the respondent's social surroundings and social groups before entering college and throughout each wave of the longitudinal study. These two variables are invaluable as they represent the measures that this research design predicts will result in statistically significant results. The variable constructed was titled "social."

Massey and Charles measured Self-Efficacy by recording the respondent's responses to six questions throughout the five waves. One of the questions asked if participants believed they "Do not have control over life." Other questions asked were, "Good luck is more important than hard work," "Something stops me from getting ahead," and "Certain I can make plans work." All questions for this variable were recoded to 0 - 4, strongly agree to strongly disagree, to normalize all data. The variable constructed was titled "effic."

White Habitus was obtained via U.S. News and World Report, America's Best Colleges, 2001-2002 and 1998-1999. This research design observed the percentage of white students on a college campus to obtain the variable used to identify white habitus. As the literature explained, white habitus is simply the tacit behaviors of the dominant racial group in America in social spaces (whites). The inability of college administrations to address the overwhelming social and cultural dominion whites have over college institutions suggests primarily white campuses function through white habitus. In other words, PWIs would be considered a white space that maintains white habitus across all U.S. colleges.

VII. RESULTS

First, a two-step binomial logistic regression was held to determine if there really is a difference in graduation rates for blacks and whites within PWIs. Below are the first steps of the model statistics.

H1.1A TABLE: HOSMER AND LEMESHOW TEST

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	.000	2	1.000

H1.2A TABLE: OMNIBUS TESTS OF MODEL COEFFICIENTS

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step	85.532	3	.000
Block	85.532	3	.000
Model	85.532	3	.000

H1.3A TABLE: MODEL SUMMARY

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R	Nagelkerke R
1	3894.306a	.025	.036

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 4 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

The models above explain that the model for H1 fits (sig = 1.000) and explains about 3.6% of the variance in the graduation model. Additionally, the output for the models showed that there is a significant difference between black students while held against white students' graduation rates. Table 1A explains that for every unit increase in white students graduating, there is a .418 reduction in black students graduating. This information is expected based on previous literature denoting that African American students often are excluded in campus social spaces leading them to have less access to resources.

TABLE 1A: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC REGRESSION ETHNICITY MODEL

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
ASIAN (1)	-.084	.478	.920
BLACK (1)	-.873	.000	.418
HISPANIC (1)	-.415	.000	.661

Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.

Additionally, Asian students were not significant while held against white students making the model unfit to predict Asian students' outcomes. Although Asian students were not significant, Hispanic students were significant compared to white students at .000, denoting there is a .661 reduction in Hispanic graduates for every unit increase in white graduates. These dummy variables are not actually predicting variables until I add the independent variables to the second step of the model.

HI.1B TABLE: HOSMER AND LEMESHOW TEST

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	13.027	8	.111

HI.2B TABLE: OMNIBUS TESTS OF MODEL COEFFICIENTS

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step	174.597	5	.000
Block	174.597	5	.000
Model	260.129	8	.000

HI.3B TABLE: MODEL SUMMARY

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R	Nagelkerke R
1	3719.710a	.075	.108

b. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

*TABLE 1B: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC
REGRESSION ETHNICITY
COMPARISON MODEL*

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
ASIAN (1)	.059	.632	1.061
BLACK (1)	-.667	.000	.513
HISPANIC (1)	-.414	.000	.661
<i>PREJUDICE</i>	-.070	.006	.932
<i>WHITE HABITUS</i>	.004	.000	1.004
<i>CULTURAL CAPITAL</i>	.021	.000	1.021
<i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i>	.037	.003	1.038
<i>SELF-EFFICACY</i>	.015	.293	1.015

Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.

The information on Table 1B shows the significance of five variables. Black students, Hispanic students, white habitus, cultural capital, and social capital all proved to be significant while held against white students in the model. Most important for this student is the effects of Black students with the held variables. The model shows, with every independent variable held constant, for every increase in white students' graduation, black students experience a reduction of graduation rates by .513.

Secondly, another binomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain the effects of Self-Efficacy, Prejudice, Social Capital, Cultural Capital, and White Habitus on the likelihood that participants will graduate. The linearity of the continuous variables concerning the logit of the dependent variable was met as no continuous variables were utilized in this test. Based on this assumption, all variables are independent and agree with linearity. The omnibus test of model coefficients all resulted as significant.

Therefore, the report denotes that the model is statistically significant in predicting graduation. Ten standardized residual outliers with a value of ± 3 standard deviations were removed from the analysis of black students.

TABLE H2.1A: HOSMER AND LEMESHOW TEST

Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	8.132	8	.421

TABLE H2.1B: OMNIBUS TESTS OF MODEL COEFFICIENTS

	Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step	53.912	5	.000
Block	53.912	5	.000
Model	53.912	5	.000

TABLE H2.1C: MODEL SUMMARY

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	1157.052 ^a	.058	.079

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

When run with Black students, the logistic regression model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(5) = 59.479$, $p < .0005$. The model explained 8.7% (Nagelkerke R²) of the variance in graduation rates and correctly classified 62.8% of cases. Sensitivity was 93.2%, specificity was 15.0%, positive predictive value was 63.2%, and negative predictive value was 41.5%. The binomial regression's purpose is to estimate the probability of an event occurring with and without independent variables. As presented in table 2, without the variables, the model correctly predicted 61.1% of the effect size

correctly. But once the independent variables were added, the model increased by a rate of 1.7%, totaling 62.8% estimated model probability.

This test closely analyzes the outcomes of black students in white habitus. Therefore, the only full report will be of the African American students' model, though all tests are available in the appendix.

TABLE 2B: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL BLACK

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
<i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i>	-.004	.638	.964
<i>CULTURAL CAPITAL</i>	.023	.028	1.023
<i>WHITE HABITUS</i>	.010	.000	.990
<i>SELF-EFFICACY</i>	.034	.164	1.034
<i>PREJUDICE</i>	-.030	.408	.971

a. *Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.*

Of the five predictor variables, only two were statistically significant: cultural capital and white habitus (as shown in Table 2B). For each unit increase in the independent variable, cultural capital, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of 1.030. For each unit reduction in the independent variable, white habitus, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of .859.

The same binomial logistic regression model was used for Asian students, $\chi^2(5) = 27.003$, $p < .0005$; Hispanic students, $\chi^2(5) = 51.236$, $p < .0005$; and White students, $\chi^2(5) = 27.003$, $p < .0005$. The four models with respect to ethnicity meet all logit assumptions.

TABLE 2A: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL ASIAN

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
<i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i>	.042	.115	1.042
<i>CULTURAL CAPITAL</i>	.026	.033	1.026
<i>WHITE HABITUS</i>	.003	.006	1.003
<i>SELF-EFFICACY</i>	.014	.639	1.014
<i>PREJUDICE</i>	-.036	.562	.964

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.

There were no significant predictors within the model with the Asian population.

Although the model fit, the variables are not significant enough to inform this research of any predictions.

TABLE 2C: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL HISPANIC

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
<i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i>	.043	.081	1.044
<i>CULTURAL CAPITAL</i>	.021	.041	1.022
<i>WHITE HABITUS</i>	.005	.001	1.005
<i>SELF-EFFICACY</i>	-.019	.513	.981
<i>PREJUDICE</i>	-.179	.001	.836

Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.

Hispanic students' data resulted in three significant variables. These variables were prejudice, white habitus, and cultural capital. For each unit increase in the independent variable, cultural capital, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of .1.025. For each unit increase in the independent variable, white habitus, the odds of

graduating increase by a factor of 1.005. Last, for each unit reduction in the independent variable, prejudice, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of .520.

TABLE 2D: SUMMARY OF VARIABLE SIGNIFICANCE | BINARY LOGISTIC REGRESSION MODEL WHITE

	B	Sig	Exp(B)
<i>SOCIAL CAPITAL</i>	.108	.000	1.115
<i>CULTURAL CAPITAL</i>	.015	.253	1.015
<i>WHITE HABITUS</i>	.004	.016	1.004
<i>SELF-EFFICACY</i>	.057	.072	1.059
<i>PREJUDICE</i>	-.052	.560	.949

a. *Variable(s) entered on step 1: Prejudice, WhiteHabitus, Parental Involvement in Formation of Social Capital/Source Table B2, Parental Involvement in the Formation of Cultural Capital/Source Table B2, R's Self-Efficacy/Source Table B12.*

Finally, White students' binomial logistic regression test reported two variables as statistically significant, white habitus and social capital. For each unit increase in the independent variable, social capital, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of 1.112. For each unit increase in the independent variable, white habitus, the odds of graduating increase by a factor of 1.003.

The findings suggest that we accept the null hypothesis by default for H1: This model does have significance, but the variables obtained do not account for the negative effects of variance in white habitus to determine graduation rates in black students.

Additionally, the findings suggest that we reject the null hypothesis for H2: The model is significant in predicting that black students who have more cultural capital will have higher odds of graduation.

VIII. DISCUSSION

The binomial logistic regression model highlighted two predicting variables as statistically significant in predicting graduation. The relationship between white habitus and cultural capital on the dependent variable produces compelling findings. The literature on white spaces depicted white students and faculty members as perpetrators of white habitus, tacit benefactors (Ullucci 2011). A vital component of this white habitus is the monopoly on symbolic interests and the gatekeeping of social spaces, per Bourdieu. Although the literature did not follow white student outcomes, the model compared white students with minority students in primarily white higher education institutions. It is important to identify this distinction between white and black students to exemplify how universities systemically reinforce white institutions with white capital. The interaction between white habitus and graduation was expected. Within this model, Primarily White Institutions have a slightly negative effect on African American students' graduation rates. This provides some insight into the construction of American universities. Primarily signifying that African Americans are impacted by the habitus of PWIs. Additionally, it could be inferred that racial battle fatigue seems to have some form of interaction here. These black students possibly encountered microaggressions from faculty and students, ultimately dissuading the student from identifying with the university or missing enough institutional deadlines to affect their collegiate standing. Consistent with Moore's (2017) findings, white habitus reproduces white spaces on U.S. campuses that significantly affect black students' graduation rates. These findings align with the literature on color-blind racism, explaining that institutions within America function to reach specific groups of people.

Interestingly, when cross-analyzing the data with the other ethnic groups, all groups had a positive correlation with white habitus except for a slight reduction in black students. This cross-analysis could lead the research to ask an important question, is this model best fit for predicting the outcomes of black students? As the 8.7% (Nagelkerke R²) variance score showed, while this model reports that these independent variables have significance in predicting graduation, the specific constants held may have less of an impact on graduation rates in black students compared to other variables not assessed in this model.

The regression model results highlighted another connection: black students with higher levels of cultural capital tended to have better rates with graduation. This relationship indicates that African American students who acquire capital throughout their lifetime may be better equipped to succeed in college. This aligns with the literature suggesting that if a student has the self-efficacy to succeed, their chances of succeeding increase. Cultural capital is depicted by no race but has racialized interests, meaning that African American students can acquire knowledge and resources, apply them in practice, and ultimately positively affect their outcomes. An interesting proposal could ascertain the cultural symbols and systems that black students have access to and determine if it is beneficial in helping them achieve a college degree. Though promising, my model does not discriminate against "types" of cultural capital, informing the literature that this research needs to be extended to qualitatively assess how capital is exchanged in minority cultures and then determine if it affects student outcomes.

This reality echoes Bonilla-Silva's claims that whites believe their success is due to a natural process instead of transference of cultural knowledge and isolation of that

knowledge to specific spaces. At the same time, blacks' failure is seen as a lack of personal responsibility or worth (2003). These cultural interactions are mainly determined when African American students assimilate to these cultural concepts by entering white spaces. When in these spaces, the day-to-day effects of color-blind racism may limit the resources available to the student.

Moreover, although blacks are accepted in most white spaces today, historical group isolation leads blacks to rarely be present in these spaces until they have entered higher education (Brunsma et al., 2020). Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital would lead us to understand that people who were raised to be a part of the dominant culture would have a more manageable experience in those spaces, like higher education (2012). This assumption relies on the idea that people born and raised as a part of the dominant culture know to a certain extent, how to ascertain status, clout, and more.

Furthermore, the results indicated that Hispanic students' experiences of prejudice have an adverse effect on graduation rates, while prejudice had no significance in black students. While not surprising, these findings reveal that further research needs to be addressed, specifically outlining the literature and expectations of Hispanic students' outcomes.

Lastly, the other variables denoted in the logistic model were insignificant. Although the data shows insignificance, the literature suggests associations between self-efficacy and prejudice with student success. Given that all variables in this model reported having fit in the model, the data assumes that other unknown variables must interact with these independent variables to moderate student success. The study did not extend research beyond the initial model. However, the reason could suggest that reports

of self-efficacy and prejudice need to be controlled by other non-cognitive measures to determine variable strength within the research model. Perceptions of prejudice could be a possible factor that significantly affects self-efficacy, given that both were in this model and significant. It is important to remember that prejudice aligns with M.E.E.S, which causes strain on a student's performance and could possibly lead to the failure to graduate. Additionally, financial capital could also play a crucial role in a student feeling prepared or capable of succeeding in college. Though financial capital was not obtained, socioeconomic status and class behaviors could explain a great deal of variance in the right model.

IX. LIMITATIONS

In conclusion, the dataset has some notable limitations that need to be stated. The data from the N.L.S.F. was collected 20 years ago between 1998 - 2002. Therefore, many variables may have impacted students' responses, dispositions towards specific questions, and data collection methods depending on what national events occurred at the time. Primarily, the social and cultural capital variables were determined using an outdated methodology. The capital variables were obtained using their parents' capital, although Bourdieu says, according to my research, that habitus is an ever-learning and ever-growing social phenomenon. This means that students obtain capital while in high school, transitioning to college, during college, and even after. Revealing that the cultural and social capital variables are missing out on crucial information about student's perception of themselves in the state of the world. Secondly, the data may have some issues with generalizability as the data may not fit the American population of today. Especially due to the nature of the student population sample; the N.L.S.F may disproportionately graph an affluent population. Although there was one HBCU in the data, most of the student population in the research attended a public research university with tenured faculty, ultimately affecting the quality of capital and resources students had at their disposal. Additionally, the student population from each school was not distinct in the dataset. In fact, the data utilized for white habitus is limited in its application because school ethnic make-up was separated as a percentage by race by year, limiting the confidence in this variable. Lastly, this data was collected pre-President Obama, which could be argued as a significant point in American history for the institutional growth of black Americans and the growth in negative sentiments in white conservatives. The election of President

Obama could be argued as a shift in black American students and their self-efficacy to succeed.

X. CONCLUSION

This study's purpose was to assess if racialized experiences in college and access to knowledge truly alter the outcomes of black students. I found that African Americans are affected by white habitus, but not to the extent that variance can discriminate against the results, providing me with another question. "What determinants can be used to assess white habitus?" The second purpose of the study was to examine the significance of social and cultural capital on black student graduation rates. This data suggests that the more cultural capital black students have at their disposal, the better their chances of graduation will be. The dominant White culture of the United States has continued to reify the idea that we exist in a "post-racialized world (Bonilla-Silva 2003).

My research suggests this is not necessarily the truth, at least while regarding academic achievement. The initial "post-racial" assumption seems to be in direct conflict with the literature and statistical methods in this study. People of color continue to experience marginalization, even in spaces where the goal is to provide conventional forms of knowledge to all students, regardless of their racial or ethnic background. To combat this, students' educational opportunities need to be explored further. Specifically, there needs to be reform in school redistricting legislation. This can help students who historically attend lower socioeconomic schools acquire more capital and could help with student enrollment during their transition to college. Additionally, to address the disparity between whites and blacks, HBCU's need financial and social support. These spaces could be a cultural safe haven for minority student. Although my data did not have adequate information about HBCU's, the possibilities for future studies persist. Furthermore, Black students' "type" of cultural capital may affect academic success in

PWIs and interact with other unknown variables to produce negative experiences for African American students (Morales 2014; Ragland Woods et al., 2021). Further qualitative or mixed-method research should be explored to determine if there is a difference in the type of cultural capital different racial groups develop and how that knowledge impacts students in white spaces. Lastly, incentives such as financial aid award programs designated for students with lower socioeconomic status should be implemented at most large universities to better fit their students' needs. These suggestions and the advocacy for African American faculty and diversity champions within higher education can help black students see more success in the future.

The American higher education system perpetuates academically strenuous environments for students of color (Mills 2020). My results indicate that students with greater access to this specific cultural 'capital' systemically have an advantage when seeking occupations requiring higher-educational degrees. My research results, although aligned with literature, shows how complex campus life is. Every aspect of college life from faculty representation to how involved the student is on campus. Yet, the variance in student success outcomes cannot be pinned to one issue. Therefore, I offer some suggestions to better help students of color navigate spaces that are culturally new to them. Universities and colleges across the United States must actively address the pervasiveness of cultural/racial dominance and provide students of color spaces on campus that support and share their shared knowledge and culture. American universities should address this issue by developing policies to encourage multicultural spaces. These spaces could support students in their quest for knowledge and positively affect campus retention rates and safety while supporting students' goals to achieve a bachelor's degree.

As the U.S. grows, more and more students of color will take their chances at reaching financial freedom through the ivory tower. It is up to research and administrators alike to address the shortcomings of racial isolation and tacit social segregation.

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