Correlations between Racialized Stress, Self-care, and Leadership Self-efficacy among Black School Leaders in the Deep South

by

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Abstract

More than ever, the fight for equity has been felt by Black Americans who have been disproportionately affected by systematic inequalities in healthcare and social justice (Millett et al., 2020; Edmondson et al., 2020). It is impossible to ignore the impact that these inequalities may present for school communities, especially school leaders. The purpose of the study is to investigate correlations among self-care, racialized stress, and leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders who are leading despite the challenge of racialized stress. The study seeks to answer the questions: 1) to what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy; 2) to what extent does racialized stress predict self-care; 3) in what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy; 4) when testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediated racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy? The study proposes a cross-sectional explanatory design to explain correlations between self-care, racialized stress, and leadership self-efficacy using a quantitative approach. No statistically significant correlations were found, leading to acceptance of the null hypothesis. The quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

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To my children, Kingston and Phoenix, you are my *why*. Being your mother is my greatest blessing because I know that I do not deserve such amazing kiddos. Kingston, your creativity and compassion shine light into darkness. Phoenix, your self-assurance and honesty help to hold everyone, especially me, accountable. I am forever in awe of both of you—your intelligence and your zest for life make my heart smile. I love you both with everything within me!

To my mother, Dr. Gheta Grace, thank you for being a role model and showing me that this goal is attainable. Thank you for always supporting and loving me to the moon and back.

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MSCS	Mindful Self-Care Scale
PK	Pre-Kindergarten
PTSS	Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome
RBTSSS	Race-Based Traumatic Syndrome Scale
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SLSES	School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale
SPSS	Statistic Package for the Social Sciences

Chapter 1
Introduction

"Somehow we've weathered and witnessed / A nation that isn't broken /
But simply unfinished" –Amanda Gorman, The Hill We Climb (2021)

The value of Black life is a recurring assessment in this country. As a young adult Black woman leader in an Alabama public school system, I bear witness to the effects of the stress associated with leading while Black. Stress impacts how I think about and make sense of situations, which is foundational to being an effective and efficient leader. While watching Van Jones (2020), a commentator for CNN, struggle to articulate the racialized stress that encapsulates the Black community, I realized that others share my emotional responses to these stressors. It is collective stress that is transgenerational.

Jones' tearful response came on the heels of the 2020 presidential election when he was asked to share his feelings about the moment that CNN declared Joe Biden as the president-elect. His words were, "*Character matters. Telling the truth matters. Being a good person matters"* (Jones, 2020). He expressed the vindication of the election results for minority communities– describing both the ill-effects of the presidential seat for marginalized people under Donald Trump's leadership and the "*peace*" that the American vote represented in this election. His words and his tears expressed *hope*.

In my mind, I assume this to be the same *hope* enacted by our ancestors. The poems and novels of famous Black authors detail this *hope* as a shared dream that *we*, members of the Black community, must resiliently build from within ourselves. These authors and our ancestors are speaking of the efficacy, or confidence, necessary to meet the challenges of personal and professional stoutness. The assumption challenged me to seek members of the PK-12 leadership community and inquire about their experiences. These are the leaders of schools where messages

are sometimes culturally sanitized. These are the leaders of schools that are frequently given less and asked to do more. To explain, many PK-12 public schools receive less financial assistance, but the requirements for increasing student achievement are the same, which can be a disparaging feat when students face gaps in academics and opportunity. I began inquiring about others' perspectives from within my leadership circle. Then, I turned to research to find answers about ways to manage these racialized stressors and add to our personal and professional longevity. My reflexivity lies in this being an opportunity to improve the quality of my mental and physical health while demonstrating the passionate and purpose-driven work that I do in PK-12 education. I assume that others are equally motivated by the purpose of *hope* as a service leader for America's youth but also that these individuals recognize the need to take care of themselves, too.

Race Still Matters in America

Race aids in the granting of privilege and, sometimes, the denying of the same. In 2020, the novel coronavirus became an earth-shattering equalizer. Taking the lives of nearly 922,904 Americans (CDC, 2022), the novel virus was transmitted and claimed lives at alarming rates. It was a national emergency, the only historic rival being the 1918 pandemic. The Surgeon General urged Americans to join in opportunities to slow the curve. Later, governors passed mandates for periods of state-wide stay-at-home orders.

As countries worldwide faced the new challenges of navigating the pandemic, Americans bore witness to a significant crime centered on race. George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, was murdered in the streets of Minneapolis. A member of a system sworn to protect and defend killed Floyd. CNN maintains that onlookers saw a white officer place his knee on the neck of a handcuffed Black man--leaning into the position for 8 minutes and 46 seconds (Abdelaziz,

2021). Recordings of the incident sparked outrage as viewers could hear bystanders, and Floyd, pleading with the officer to minimize the force. Learning his alleged crime makes the scene even more disturbing. Floyd allegedly used a counterfeit $20 bill at a local convenience store. As the world is committed to minimizing the spread of a global pandemic, America is watching another senseless death enacted in the Black community. Tragic does not seem to be an adequate descriptor.

Stories such as these continue. There is the story of Ahmaud Arbery, a young Black man who was gunned down while jogging. The accusation of 'suspicion' was the driving force behind three White neighborhood locals who decided to take the law into their own hands. Breonna Taylor, a young Black woman, was shot and killed in her apartment during a no-knock warrant executed in the wrong building. These deaths occurred within months of one another and each during a global crisis.

From 2017 to 2022, a total of 1,025 Black Americans and 1,885 White Americans were shot and killed at the hands of law enforcement (Statistica, 2022). Note that these data are not indicative of the justification for using force. At first glance, the data does not seem to indicate a problem. However, the 2020 Census reports that the Black population totals approximately 41.1 million people or 14.2% of the American population. The white population accounts for about 204.3 million (Census, 2020) or 61.6% of the American population. Knowing these data reveals disproportionality in the death rates, as mentioned above.

Fast forward to January 6, 2021, when there is anarchy in the United States Capitol. Again, the country watched as the media shared the day's events. CNN, NBC, Fox News, and many other outlets shared images of chaos; people waving confederate flags, climbing the walls of the Capitol building, rumbling through sensitive documents, and propping their feet on the

desks of the country's highest officials. The angles of the cameras do not show the likeness of a majority of Black and Brown people; instead, many of the faces were those that fit the white racial identity group. Protesters were armed and threatening the lives of law enforcement in what CNN and other news reports have called a riot, an insurrection, and even a terrorist attack (Marshall & Lotz, 2022; NBC News, 2021). Protesters' efforts were geared toward halting the peaceful transfer of power from one president to the next. Records show five deaths that day (NBC News, 2021). While they rarely admit as much, the writers of history often take for granted the racial socialization that directs the narrative of racially motivated events. In fact, there are now several varying accounts that downplay the significance of January 6, 2021. Some refer to the day as a demonstration, others as a peaceful gathering. In the eyes of Black America, it is a whitewashed memory of an event that would have been starkly different should the faces have been people of color.

The vastly different stories of the murders of unarmed Black people and the Capitol Riot paint the picture of privilege and marginalization. The stories shed light on the lingering pain of centuries-long trauma surrounding Black culture in America, a story that sees glimmers of hope and mounding obstacles in the quest for equity amidst the fight for equality. There is another stage where this same fight is occurring--in America's public schools.

America's compulsory education laws help to guarantee that several of tomorrow's leaders are marking themselves as present in a public school. Public school employees bear witness to disproportionate achievement and opportunity gaps that have further widened with the pandemic. New challenges, such as ensuring a high-quality education during school closings and maintaining health, wellness, and safety as students return, require complex decision-making by school leaders. When coupling the necessity to address unfinished learning gaps because of the

unprecedented school closures, these new challenges can cause mental and physical exhaustion. Exhaustion is a physical symptom resulting from stress. Other symptoms may include chronic tiredness, sleepiness, headache, muscle soreness, slowed reflexes, and impaired decision-making.

Several researchers have previously focused on the effects of job-related stress and burnout on school leaders (Beausaert et al., 2016; Harmsen et al., 2018; Haydon et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2019). Stress and burnout have been linked to chronic absenteeism (Jones et al., 2019), increased employee attrition (Beausaert et al., 2016; Harmsen et al., 2018; Ray et al., 2020), and shortened longevity in leadership positions (Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Ray et al., 2020). It is no secret that effective leadership is an essential component for continuous school improvement. Effective leadership requires a strong sense of leader self-efficacy or the confidence necessary to meet the challenges of leadership tasks. It also requires creating a positive school culture and moving the school community toward the mission and vision. Black school leaders must also add the potential stressors of proving themselves to maintain the position and serving in schools that do not have adequate human and financial resources to improve academic achievement (Brown, 2005). Generally, public schools have disproportionate numbers of Black and Brown students, disproportionate amounts of state and federal funding, higher poverty levels, and increased teacher shortages (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

As the title implies, the final layer of the current study involves geographic location and its potential perpetuation of racialized stress. While structural racism exists in all of America, the Southern states historically document overt demonstrations of racism. The hands of progress move slowly in America, and as is argued, the rate of progress is reinforced by the orations of family history--and trauma--that are shared within the borders of Southern states. While it may be a game of blame, the Deep South has been impacted by generational poverty. These states

continually rank lower in academic achievement amongst their Black and Brown students. Therefore, the context of the study focuses on the racialized stress experienced by Black school leaders in the Deep South who work against the slow-moving hands of progress and the unwavering historical lens of indifference.

Stress may be conceptual, but it is real. Mental health awareness is necessary for the Black community, but it has been a stigma that halted our community's ability to address the issue adequately. The current study investigates the essential elements of caring for self as one effectively leads while Black. The study seeks to answer the questions: 1) to what extent does racialized stress predict leader self-efficacy; 2) to what extent does racialized stress predict self-care; 3) in what ways does self-care predict leader self-efficacy; 4) when testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leader self-efficacy?

Expansion of the topic allows opportunities to look at how racialized stress impacts mental health in all areas of the Black community—in the personal and professional lives of those within various careers, socioeconomic levels, gender identity, sexual orientation, and multiracial backgrounds. Exceptional attention will be given to the pandemic's effects and the racialized stress of colorism within and outside of the race.

Problem Statement

> "*But all our phrasing—race relations, racial chasm, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, even white supremacy—serves to obscure that racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscles, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth… You must always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the charts, the regressions all land with great violence, upon the body."*
>
> —Ta-Nehisi Coates*, Between the World and Me* (2015)

For some, the realities of life amid a global pandemic look strikingly similar to the normalcy of being Black or Brown in America. Being deemed an essential worker, subjugated to

masking in public, and disenfranchised by the system may have taken on a new meaning in 2020, but it is nothing new. The country has witnessed centuries of indifference imparted by prejudices and discrimination against marginalized people.

Black Americans sieve a history of more than four hundred years of indifference and can reasonably be considered the nation's first essential workers. Exclusion is a common theme in the Black community. Researchers, authors, and poets have called the enslavement of Black people America's greatest shame (Baldwin, 1963; Dyson, 2017; Kendi, 2017) –requiring members of the race to build the wealth of the Nation while being burdened with inhumane treatment. Black people are the only race in this Nation's history to experience generational enslavement with no hope of earning freedom (DeGruy, 2005). Illiteracy, physical abuse, sexual abuse, the separation of families, public humiliation, and death were among the punishments for attempting to escape this system of oppression (DeGruy, 2005; Kendi, 2017). Even when freed, Black families, especially those in the South, continued to be "essential" with many serving as sharecroppers and the constant reminder that they were not as deserving as the members of the White community (DeGruy, 2005; Frances-Winters, 2020). The race faces a surmounting amount of trauma with its foundation being structural racism enacted and embedded within the fabric of the Nation.

Fear and faith are common themes in the written work of famous Black authors and poets (Dyson, 2017). Fear is descriptive of the race's lack of acceptance, indifference, and mistreatment. There is also a background of faith and reliance on religion to restore society (Frances-Winters, 2020). Faith led many members of the Black community to believe in the things unseen and hope for better days in the future. The mantra of resilience, despite the fear, speaks through the poetry of James Weldon Johnson in the 1900s, Langston Hughes in the

1920s, and Maya Angelou in the 1950s. It continues with many others, most recently with Amanda Gorman in the 2020s. Ironically, the struggle of the Black community to achieve equality in America has evolved very little through the decades. In schools, this continues to look like Black kids attending schools that are segregated by socioeconomic zoning (Bonilla-Silva, 2022; DiAngelo, 2018), which can result in fewer high-quality teachers and widening academic gaps (Brown, 2005).

The Proverbial Mask in Black Communities

Race is an uncomfortable yet necessary conversation. The perceived or real silencing of those conversations requires many members of the Black community to wear a proverbial mask. The mask, as learned during the pandemic, is to protect against the spreading of pathogens. However, it quickly became a political target because the mask stifled the ability of individuals to engage in social interactions and breathe without interference. The mask also limited the freedom of choice. In stark opposition, the proverbial mask in the Black community does not protect the individual wearing it. Instead, it is used to silence voices. The proverbial mask stifles the ability to fully engage in social interactions without a reasonable amount of caution and, in some of the more extreme cases, to literally breathe and embrace the freedoms awarded to Americans.

Race is an Uncomfortable Conversation

In recent years, diversity and acceptance have become conversations in the workplace in a stride towards equity. Robin DiAngelo (2018) is a White author who challenges racism in her book, "*White Fragility: Why it is so hard for white people to talk about racism*." She says that racism has been the most complex social dilemma since the country's founding (DiAngelo,

2018). There is power in the ability to control the worldview of Whiteness and protect self-image (DiAngelo, 2018).

America has entered a racial injustice reawakening. At the same time, authors like Clint Smith (Blake, 2021) provide a harsh reminder. When interviewed in 2021, Smith shares, "Slavery was not that long ago; we are just made to believe that is as historic as dinosaurs and cavemen" (Blake, 2021). Previous research has described the lived experience of Black people to be "fatiguing" (Frances-Winter, 2020; Krull & Robicheau, 2020) and likened it to a "battlefield" (Frances-Winters, 2020; Krull & Robicheau, 2020). In other words, navigating the struggles of racism in America is equivalent to a continuous battle. It weighs on the physiological and psychological health of the individual.

The Concept of Self-Care

Race talk is uncomfortable, and the proverbial mask is becoming harder to wear. Past strategies have consisted of self-silencing and attempting to ignore racial issues. The problem is that these strategies do nothing to manage or ameliorate racialized stress. Weathering generations of racial injustices is emotionally taxing and can even lead to psychological or physiological issues. While the efforts of 2020 have taken a strong start, it is only reasonable to assume that a longstanding problem like racism will take longer than a couple of years to remediate. As we wait, many members of the Black community must find ways to cope with or manage the racialized stressors to be personally resilient. Self-care is a relatively new concept that places value on finding activities that preserve mental and physical health.

Effective leadership is essential in transforming low-performing schools (Northouse, 2019). The task requires mental and emotional fitness (Sussman, 2018). However, according to previous research, many school leaders may not practice adequate self-care. Ray et al. (2020)

conducted a study to learn more about school principals' well-being and self-care practices. Findings revealed that members of the principal workforce frequently overwork and report exhaustion as early as mid-school year. Several respondents indicated missing meals throughout the school day, failing to take refocusing breaks or use the restroom, engaging in multitasking, and spending less time with family. Proper self-care was a challenge for these school leaders. The findings shared by Ray et al. (2020) are also echoed in other researchers' work. The point is that school leadership can potentially create obstacles for proper self-care. Perceived stress and poor well-being are among the factors forcing many aspiring administrators to exit the position in five years or less (Hansen, 2018; Kruger et al., 2005).

The pandemic presents new and unprecedented challenges for all school leaders. School closures, school re-openings, partial school reclosures, maintaining health and wellness for the learning community, blending online and traditional learning experiences, and closing the ever-spreading academic and opportunity gaps were just a few of the elements spurring leadership. These initiatives would have generally spanned a decade, but they were forced to happen almost instantaneously from March 2020 to the present. Growth mindset and solution-oriented thinking are valuable skills for today's school leaders–many of whom are facing decision fatigue. The weight of these responsibilities and the possibility of varying amounts of racialized stress may make it difficult for Black school leaders to remain efficacious. Yet, every day, Black school leaders find ways to manage stress and fatigue to make a difference in an educational system that requires, but resists, change.

Purpose Statement

This current study aims to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leader self-efficacy for Black school leaders. Participants are those school leaders who self-

identify as being exposed to and impacted by racialized stressors. These school leaders hold leadership certificates and actively work in the PK-12 setting. Positions include assistant principal, principal, coordinator, director, specialist, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. The survey was available to any school leader willing to participate; however, the geographical subregion of focus was the Deep South—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

The psychological responses to ongoing encounters of racism include disbelief, disappointment, frustration, defensiveness, sudden changes in mood, and resentment (Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Sue, 2004). In a study that focused on racial battle fatigue amongst Black school leaders, Krull and Robicheau (2020) surveyed 39 principals to gather their lived experiences regarding racialized stressors. The data indicate that 80% of the Black school leaders in the study identify the above psychological stress responses in their professional environments. Even without the factor of racism or racialized stress, Black Americans have a greater prevalence and earlier onset of disability, chronic illness, and inflammation (Simons et al., 2018; Williams, 2012).

Managing these stressors can lead to burnout—which can lead to anything from less efficacious leaders to leaders who prematurely exit the profession. Previous literature suggests that intentionality in self-care promotes leader self-efficacy (Hallinger et al., 2018). There is a need to investigate the mindset shifts, such as those achieved through intentional self-care, and how they may help leaders improve their practice. It is important to note that this study does not serve to suggest that self-care should be a remedy for the stress experienced by racism. Instead, self-care is investigated as a coping mechanism for Black school leaders as America continues the work of ultimately triumphing in the strive toward racial equity.

Conceptual Framework

Jones (1997) proposed a multidimensional model of racism. According to the model, racism is normalized in American culture, and minority ethnic groups experience racism on three levels—individual, institutional, and cultural. Individual racism impacts a person in a particular context, where the individual feels inferior based on membership in an ethnic identity group. Institutional racism is systemic; oppressive policies and procedures perpetuate this form of racism. Cultural racism maintains Whiteness as the dominant racial socialization. These three levels collectively comprise the racialized stressors described within this study.

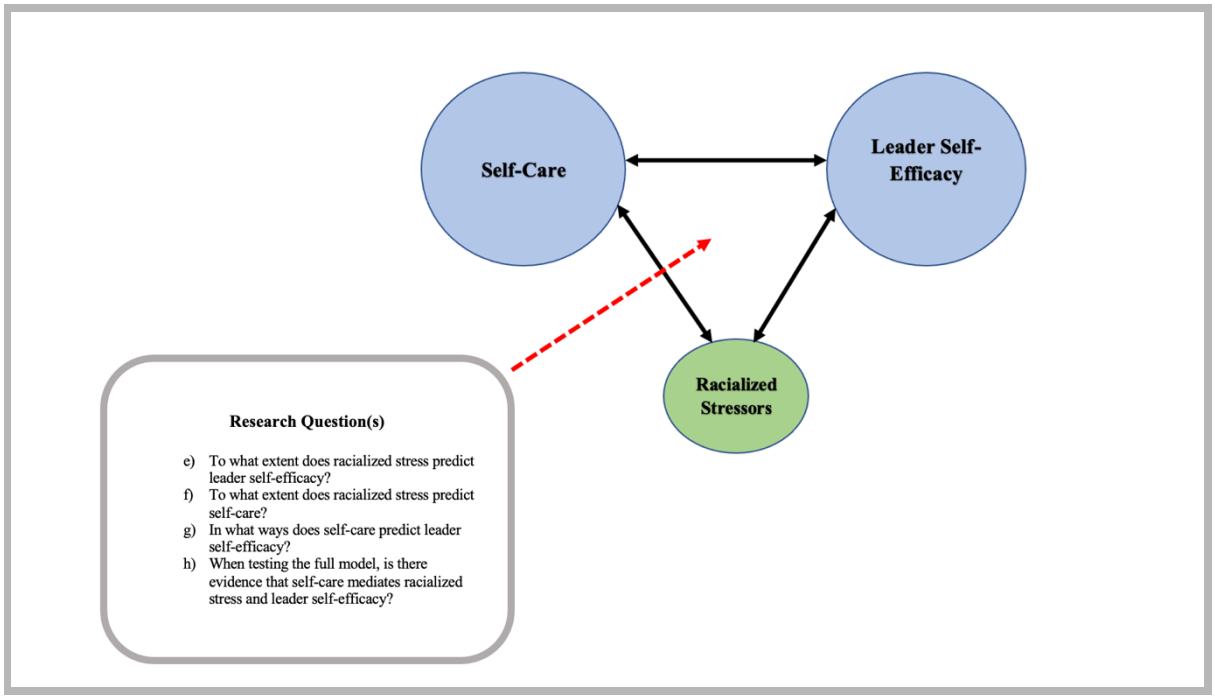
Harrell (2000) expanded Jones' conceptualization by identifying six categories of racialized stress. The six categories for racialized stressors are racism-related life events, vicarious racism experiences, daily racism microaggressions, chronic contextual stress, collective experiences of racism, and transgenerational transmission of group trauma. Each is described in greater detail during the review of the literature.

Stress, while real in its perception, is conceptual. Strategies can be implemented to reduce its effects on an individual's mental and physical health. It is here that Harrell's (2000) conceptualization and the current study meet to address Black school leaders. Deepening the understanding of racialized stressors and self-care may identify the connection to improvement in leader self-efficacy. In Chapter 5, recommendations will also be made for improving the self-care practices of current and future Black school leaders.

The conceptual framework explains this purpose as a search for correlations among self-care, racialized stress, and leader self-efficacy. The study investigates the correlations between racialized stress and leader self-efficacy, as mediated by self-care. The gray area reveals a research opportunity. To what extent does racialized stress predict leader self-efficacy? To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care? In what ways does self-care predict leader self-

efficacy? When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates the model for racialized stress and leader self-efficacy? Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

Figure 1 *Conceptual Framework*



Research Questions

The overarching research question pertains to using self-care as a mediator of racialized stress for improved leader self-efficacy. To best arrive at the evidence for this mediation, it is important to ask the following:

- To what extent does racialized stress predict leader self-efficacy?
- To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care?
- In what ways does self-care predict leader self-efficacy?
- When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leader self-efficacy?

Research Design

Understanding the correlation of self-care as a potential mediator of racialized stress is essential in connecting to leader self-efficacy. While self-care is only a coping mechanism, benefits may lend to professional longevity and a greater sense of mental and physical health. This study uses quantitative methods to search for correlations between self-care, racialized stress, and leader self-efficacy. The following paragraphs summarize the survey protocol, the recruitment strategy, and the plans for data analysis.

Cross-Sectional Explanatory Research Design

Participants completed questionnaires that required approximately 25-30 minutes. The questionnaire was created using three instruments as inspiration. Those instruments are 1) Cook-Cottone and Guyker's (2017) Mindful Self-Care Scale; 2) Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale; and 3) Carter et al.'s (2018). Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale. The instrument for this questionnaire captures participants' conceptualization of racialized stress, their ideas of self-care, and their self-reported leader self-efficacy. The questionnaire addresses self-care practices with the assumption that these are used as coping mechanisms for occupational and racialized stressors.

Participants were recruited using social media platforms (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) and listservs. Specifically, the call and the questionnaire were shared with PK-12 administrators in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina using each state's employee listserv. Ideal participants were those who 1) self-identify as Black, 2) work primarily in a PK-12 public school setting in the Deep South, and 3) serve as a school leader with a minimum of assistant principalship. The goal was to have a return of at least 100 questionnaires. The goal was

to recruit diverse individuals in age, gender, position, and years of experience in leadership, as this variety added to the richness of this study.

Definition of Terms

- Leader Self-Efficacy: refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to carry out necessary leadership behaviors, such as delegating, making decisions, and motivating others to accomplish common goals (VantageLeadership, 2022).
- Macroaggressions: blatant, explicit acts of racism that target members of a racial or ethnic group (Neblett, 2019).
- Microaggressions: brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America, 2014; Sue & Spanierman, 2020).
- Race: a social construct developed by dominant groups to categorize people by physical characteristics (Bonilla-Silva, 2022).
- Racialized stress: disproportionate, internalized stress that generates due to real or perceived threats for Black or Brown people (Harrell, 2000; Krull & Robicheau, 2020); leads to increased psychological or physiological illnesses (Frances-Winters, 2020).
- Racism: involves one group having power to enact systematic discrimination through institutional policies and practices (Bonilla-Silva, 2022; Jones, 1997).
- Self-care: any action that allows an individual to attend to and maintain good physical and mental health (Myers et al., 2012; Ray et al., 2020). Additional factors for self-care include adequate sleep, physical fitness, exercise, proper hydration (Ray et al., 2020) social support, and spirituality (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

Delimitations

- The study includes those individuals whose demographic data indicates self-identifying as Black school leaders from a Deep South state—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, or South Carolina.
- The participants surveyed were actively serving in a PK-12 leadership position as assistant principal, principal, coordinator, director, specialist, assistant superintendent, or superintendent.
- Data collection for the study took place between March 2023 to July 2023.

Assumptions

- Linearity. The relationship between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy is linear.
- Homoscedasticity. There is a normal distribution of leadership self-efficacy among Black school leaders with a constant variance between self-care and racialized stress.
- Independence. Black school leaders can remember and accurately provide their perceptions of stress during encounters of individual and collective racism.
- Normality. Leadership self-efficacy and self-care are evenly distributed among Black school leaders who experience racialized stress.
- General Assumption. Participants in the study answered the questionnaire openly and honestly.

Significance of the Study

The psychological responses to ongoing encounters of racism include disbelief, disappointment, frustration, defensiveness, sudden changes in mood, and resentment (Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Sue, 2004). In a study that focused on racial battle fatigue amongst Black school leaders, Krull and Robicheau (2020) surveyed 39 principals to gather their lived

experiences regarding racialized stressors. The data indicate that 80% of the Black school leaders participating in the study identify each of the above psychological stress responses in their professional environments. Even without the factor of racism or racial stress, Black Americans have greater prevalence and earlier onset of disability, chronic illness, and inflammation (Simons et al., 2018; Williams, 2012).

The study investigates the correlations between racialized stress and leader self-efficacy, as mediated by self-care. The gray area reveals a research opportunity. To what extent does racialized stress predict leader self-efficacy? To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care? In what ways does self-care predict leader self-efficacy? When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates the model for racialized stress and leader self-efficacy?

Dissertation Roadmap

The remainder of the study is organized into four chapters. Chapter 2 presents the relevant literature for racialized stress, self-care, and leader self-efficacy. The chapter synthesizes the information to provide trends in practices and procedures used to evaluate the phenomenon of racialized stress and self-care as a coping mechanism. Chapter 3 provides the research design and the methodology for the study. The chapter includes a description of the procedures, the instruments, and the determination of sample participants. An analysis of data is presented in Chapter 4, followed by a conclusion in Chapter 5. Recommendations for future research are also presented in Chapter 5. The appendix is the final section and contains all tables, figures, and the instrument used to conduct the study.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Race still matters in America. To explain, consider the business fable of the Chicken and the Pig. Imagine the conversation between the two, and the topic is their respective contributions to a future breakfast. The chicken can lay an egg, which will be a meaningful contribution. However, the pig must sacrifice its life to produce bacon or ham.

Some businesses use the Chicken and the Pig fable to frame organizational commitment. The chicken is involved in the industry, while the pig is fully committed. However, in *Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America* (2017), Dyson positions the chicken and the pig as a possible frame for racism in this country. The chicken has the advantage of only being involved, while the pig represents minorities—and in the case of this analysis, Black America. It becomes a little easier to consider the lens of the pig—who worries about the day the bacon is expected for breakfast and which fellow pig may be asked to provide this contribution. Some members of the Black community have similar worries about this physical and mental sacrifice, even if it does not mean actually giving one's life. Even small gestures like being dismissed, disrespected, or scorned can make Black people taste their own bitter limits (Dyson, 2017). Race continues to restrict freedoms in America, and these restrictions may cause varying amounts of stress.

Black culture is entangled in racialized stress in response to systemic racism (Hope et al., 2020; Sellers et al., 2003). Stress, however, is a conceptualization, and the effects can be managed (Schussler et al., 2018) through coping mechanisms. The review of literature for this study centers on the conceptualization of racialized stress, the ability to manage this stress through self-care, and the self-reported leadership efficacy of Black school leaders.

Racism is a System

A connecting theme in the literature is America's persistent and pervasive problem with racism. It has been described as the most complex social dilemma in the country's history (Baldwin, 1963; DeGruy, 2005; DiAngelo, 2018; Dyson, 2017; Kendi, 2017). Access to health care (Abedi et al., 2020), housing, education, and employment (Williams, 2012) all illustrate that quality of life can be impacted by racial membership.

When it comes to the topic of racism, most will readily agree that it is prevalent in American society. Where this argument usually ends, however, is on the question of its intent. Specifically, did racism appear as an overt or covert act? Some are convinced that racism can be defined simply as an overt act of racial discrimination, as DiAngelo (2018) describes the commonly accepted definition of racism within America's White culture. Others maintain that racism is the belief that people differ along biological and genetic lines (DeGruy, 2005) and the implication of intent does not destigmatize the act of racism (Dyson, 2017; Harrell, 2000). Racism is not simple; instead, it is complex and structured to maintain its continuity.

Racism is a system or an interconnecting network that provides varying levels of privilege and oppression. Since all of the definitions of racism tie back to prejudice, discrimination, and oppression (Baldwin, 1963; Jones, 1985; Kendi, 2019), it is necessary to explore these attributes to better understand systemic racism.

Prejudice is a pre-judgment of another person based on the social group(s) to which the person belongs (DiAngelo, 2018). Research on the topic of implicit bias reveals that everyone harbors an attitude of prejudices and that all people unconsciously create stereotypes when interacting with others. These biases are evident among school-age children and may develop as

early as toddler years (Morris & Perry, 2017) and continue to manifest well into life. Failure to acknowledge these implicit biases is a problem with self-awareness.

If all individuals display prejudice, it becomes vital to look at discrimination and how this factor lends to racism. Discrimination is the act of intentionally excluding a person or a group of people (Baldwin, 1963; DeGruy, 2005; Dyson, 2017; Harrell, 2000). Discriminatory acts are not always motivated by race and ethnicity, but when one of these factors does serve as the motivator, it is known as racial discrimination (Hope et al., 2020). Again, note that anyone–regardless of racial identity–can exclude another. Simply put, anyone can be discriminatory, and everyone demonstrates prejudices. So, why is racism not universally assigned to all racial identities? Why is racism generally seen as a marker of prejudice and discrimination from members of the White community bestowed on minorities? Can minorities not be racist as well? The answers to these questions lie in the final complexity of racism, which is oppression.

Oppression is the power to deny rights to a group of people based on racial identity (Baldwin, 1963; Jones, 1985; Williams, 2012). Racism requires a combination of prejudice, discrimination, and oppression. The three combine to produce the power to include or exclude. DiAngelo (2018) shares that this power of inclusion is primarily determined at the hands of White, middle-and-upper class men. Although this power is not equally shared in the White community, even those Whites who fall into the lowest socioeconomic status receive more power than minorities (DiAngleo, 2018; Dyson, 2017). Blacks are, therefore, symbolically "stamped from the beginning," as Kendi (2017) describes within the text written under this title. Unfortunately, using race as the determinant for acceptance or denial is deeply rooted in American society.

Let's not make it about Race!: Exploring the Necessity to Include Race in Context

Conversations of race and racism are difficult–this is especially true when coupled with the aversive belief (Dyson, 2017; Kendi, 2019) that racism ended when the shackles were released from the wrists and ankles of Black people (DeGruy, 2005). Racism extends beyond White and Black racial groups; yet, racialized stress in the Black community is the concept explored within this review of the literature. The following accounts are rooted in the historical lens of racism in America, as presented by many researchers who study the influence of racism within the Black community.

It has been established that racism is a system (Baldwin, 1963; Kendi, 2019) and that power maintains the ability to utilize racism for inclusivity or exclusionary purposes. It is time to consider how racism perpetually involves itself in almost every facet of civilization. It does so through the policies that uphold American society (Kendi, 2019) and the associated group meanings (DiAngelo, 2018; Edmondson et al., 2020; Simons et al., 2018) assigned within this society. Many call this racial socialization. Analyzing the concept of race makes it easier to adequately explain socialization.

Race is a visible attribute that means nothing beyond the associations that society attaches to it. Being born with brown skin, white skin, or any variation in between is biological (Williams, 2012) and holds no true meaning. However, race becomes real as a social construct (Baldwin, 1963; DeGruy, 2005; Dyson, 2017; Frances-Winters, 2020; Kendi, 2019). Society builds meaning and creates differences (DiAngelo, 2018).

According to Frances-Winters (2020), race is a social construct developed by dominant groups to categorize people by physical characteristics. DiAngelo (2018) agrees that race is an evolving social idea that maintains racial inequities. She says that "*to understand race relations*

today, is to push through social conditioning and grapple with how and why racial group membership matters" (p. 11).

It is impossible to dismiss racial socialization, which positions one racial group above all others. In American society, the dominant racial group is White. In the book *White Fragility: Why it's so hard for White people to talk about racism*, DiAngelo (2018) further describes the social construct of race and its hold on society as:

> Race will influence whether we will survive at birth, where we are most likely to live, which schools we will attend, who our friends and partners will be, what careers we will have, how much money we will earn, how healthy we will be, and even how long we expect to live (p. 5).

A body of research about children and race demonstrates that White children develop a sense of White superiority as early as preschool (Clark & Clark, 1950; Derman-Sparks et al., 2006; Morris & Perry, 2017). The White frame "is so internalized, so submerged, that it is never consciously considered or challenged" (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 34). Books, films, laws, policies, and many other images in mainstream media show White culture as superior. DiAngelo (2021) and Baldwin (1963), while decades apart in their work as sociologists, agree that society always moves toward Whiteness and away from the perception of people of color. Take, for example, the color of the band-aid, which was, until 2020, only available in a peach-toned nude. The peach tone closely matches the skin of White members of society, but it was touted as a skin-colored band-aid. The same can be said for many other products. White superiority controls the interpretation of almost everything, even the way that history is remembered because White people are often the cultural narrators (Dyson, 2017).

Racial Socialization

Racial socialization is the process whereby individuals within racial identity groups come to know their strengths, understand the world in which they live, and position themselves to thrive. Schools, literature, and the media often give an incomplete and intentionally misleading view of who Blacks are as people (DeGruy, 2005). The writers of films and those who work in journalism are our cultural narrators; many of these cultural narrators are White (Dyson, 2017). They tell the stories that shape our worldviews (DiAngelo, 2018). Each outlet provides a lens for how individuals view and interact with others. Each also serves as a means of racial socialization (DeGruy, 2005; DiAngelo, 2018; Dyson, 2017), whether intentional or not.

Racial socialization, and the meaning associated with racial identity, make it difficult to escape race voluntarily. Jones (1985) describes the existence of color as a distinguishing feature of group identity--rendering it almost impossible for Black people to relinquish psychological ties with the "mother" culture. Being generalized based on race reinforces something problematic for people of color--the continual focus on their group identity (DiAngelo, 2018).

Most people would not choose to be socialized into racism and white supremacy. Unfortunately, no one is given a choice (DiAngelo, 2018). There are variations on how these messages are conveyed and how much an individual internalizes those messages (DiAngelo, 2018, 2021), but nothing can completely exempt the messages. Researchers encourage grappling with the manifestations of racial socialization and how it impacts daily life (DeGruy, 2005; DiAngelo, 2018; DiAngelo, 2021; Dyson, 2017; Frances-Winters, 2020). Racial socialization sets Americans up for repeat racist behaviors and interactions. We inevitably see through a racial lens; on some level, race is always at play (DiAngelo, 2018). The question is how racism manifests, not if.

How does racism manifest?

Evidence shows that the desired direction is always toward Whiteness and away from being perceived as a person of color (DiAngelo, 2018; Dyson, 2017). DeGruy (2005) agrees with the mention of passing–which refers to an individual having skin light enough to be mistaken as White–in her research of Black trauma. The idea of moving toward Whiteness indicates a level of privilege that comes with achieving the status. “Once the rationalizations for inequality are internalized, both sides will uphold the relationships” (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 22).

DiAngelo (2018) shares that upward mobility is the great class goal in the United States, and the social environment gets tangibly Whiter the higher one climbs. White identity often serves as a factor that subjugates Black identity (Dyson, 2017). Here, it is necessary to reexamine oppression, the subsequently asserted privilege, and how the power of oppression through privilege limits minority racial groups.

Whiteness evolves and is endlessly inventive. It is most effective when it makes itself invisible and appears neutral, human, and American (Dyson, 2017). Whiteness, therefore, is embedded within the laws that serve as the foundation of politics. Whiteness was a factor at play at the Constitutional Convention in 1787. The question, as it has been recounted through history, was how to best categorize the enslaved person–as representation (a person) or taxation (property) (DeGruy, 2005). The conversation presented perfect timing for abolishing slavery, allowing a formerly enslaved person to become a man. Instead, slavery remained legal under the Constitution (DeGruy, 2005; Kendi, 2017).

Whiteness was a factor in the Virginia Code of 1705, commonly referred to as the Casual Killing Act. The law protected White men who used excessive force against enslaved people (DeGruy, 2005). A similar bill remained effective in Jackson, Mississippi, until 1985.

Whiteness is apparent in the mention of *The Good Ole Days*, which is a powerful and demonstrative construct for people of color (DiAngelo, 2018). Sociologists Dyson (2017) and DiAngelo (2018) share that returning to former days draws on deeply internalized foundations of White entitlement. The rallying cry, "Make America Great Again," used as the basis for electing Donald Trump as president in 2016, shows racism's persistence. All systems of oppression are adaptive; they can withstand and adjust to challenges and still maintain inequality (Bonilla-Silva, 2022; DiAngelo, 2018).

Jones (1997) proposed a multidimensional model of racism. According to the model, racism is normalized in the American culture, and minority ethnic groups experience racism on three levels—individual, institutional, and cultural. The model describes individual racism as prejudice or discriminatory acts against a member of a minority ethnic group. These two variables were introduced earlier in the review of the literature. The model lists institutional racism as perpetuating discriminatory policies and procedures that further marginalize minority racial groups. Racial socialization describes cultural racism or the belief that one culture is superior, and all others are inferior.

The Racism Experience: "All Men are Created, but are Not Equal"

The values of freedom, equality, and prosperity are all connected to the American Dream, which alleges that anyone can succeed with hard work (DiAngelo, 2018). Yet, Black Americans sieve a history of more than four hundred years of indifference. It is history that includes variations of exclusion—from the brutal enslavement of ancestors to redlining policies that objectify individuals based on the color of one's skin. Exclusion is a reminder that the American Dream is not readily attainable for all, as work ethic alone is not the determinant of an

individual's ability to succeed (DiAngelo, 2018). In fact, Baldwin (1963) suggests that the American Dream has been a nightmare for many members of the Black community.

Chattel slavery is a topic that many will cringe to read, recollect, or discuss in modern-day America. While it is true that chattel slavery formally ended in 1865, it is a history that cannot be ignored and one that serves as a stimulus for trauma in many Black families. Slavery is, too often, akinned to indentured servitude. Indentured servants work under the guise of earning freedom once the debt is paid in full. The reality, in America, is that Black people were born into slavery, and their children's children were born into slavery--bound in a life of dehumanizing servitude for generations (DeGruy, 2005).

So, what was American Chattel Slavery, and why is it important in this conversation? Chattel refers to a movable item of personal property, and it is widely known that slaves were bought and sold on a regular basis. However, the trauma of American Chattel Slavery is woven into much more complex traumatic experiences. These aspects include 1) the inability to purchase or work toward freedom; 2) the knowledge that one's children will be born into "generational enslavement" (DeGruy, 2005, p. 34; Kendi, 2017); 3) the creation of laws to make it illegal to receive an education or to even marry, which made it easier to abuse women and children; and 4) the breeding of slaves as a form of reproductive slavery (DeGruy, 2005). Chattel slavery's foundation of racial inferiority became so deeply ingrained that slaves began acting like slave masters. From this mimicry comes the foundation for the practice of colorism, the lack of trust amongst fellow members of the same race, and the frequent installment of harsh and brutal punishments (DeGruy, 2005) that some Black people inflict on one another.

Enslavement experiences were unspokenly traumatic, and no psychological attention was provided to those directly impacted by these horrors. What is known is that traumatized

individuals adapted their attitudes and behaviors to simply survive (DeGruy, 2005). The result is unhealed, multigenerational trauma with effects that are seen even in modern-day America.

Origins of Racialized Stress

For people of color, life stress must also consider the unique stressors acquired based on racial experiences (Harrell, 2000). Unique stressors include multigenerational trauma, macroaggressions, and microaggressions.

Racialized Stress: Multigenerational Trauma

Trauma is a term that describes injuries resulting from violent events or experiences. DeGruy's (2005) research explores the potential trauma that lingers in Black communities because of slavery. Critics will argue that members of the Black community can no longer connect to the experiences of slavery and that claiming to be traumatized by slavery-related events is a far-reaching claim to perpetuate perceptions of racism. Yes, slavery did end over a century ago, but the orations of pain, despair, hope, and prayers for deliverance are shared through Black culture (Kendi, 2019) as a form of Black socialization (DeGruy, 2005; Frances-Winters, 2020). Trauma even informs how Black people raise their children (DeGruy, 2005; Dyson, 2017). Families share experiences and stories, as both a warning and a source of pride (DeGruy, 2005). The warning is that White superiority does exist and is continually present in American society. As Dyson (2017) shares, White people may be able to avoid the conversation of race but Black people must educate themselves and their children on how to navigate a White world.

DeGruy (2005) coined the phrase, "post-traumatic slave syndrome," to conceptualize the intergenerational racism experienced within the Black community (p. 104). Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome describes the multigenerational trauma that results from centuries of slavery and the

continued oppression of institutionalized racism today. Dyson (2017) agrees that Black intuition is passed down from generation to generation in the cellular memory of our vulnerable Black bodies.

The ancestors of slaves potentially carry the weight of another source of stress, known in the literature as survivor syndrome. Survivor syndrome presents in second and third generations as stress, self-doubt, aggression problems and psychological and interpersonal problems with family members and others (DeGruy, 2005). Survivor syndrome leads an individual to question why he, she, they were spared the despicable horrors of the traumatic event. Equally notable is the amount of pressure associated with being the survivor. Consider the phrase, “I am my ancestor's wildest dreams.” It suggests that the survivor, or the descendant of the slave, must accomplish remarkable feats as an ode to the suffering of our ancestors. The pressure to be successful may be stressful.

Racialized Stress: Macroaggressions and Microaggressions

Multigenerational trauma is one unique stressor; racism can also be experienced as macroaggressions and microaggressions. Macroaggressions are blatant, explicit acts of racism that target members of a racial or ethnic group (Neblett, 2019). An example of a macroaggression is the televised murder of George Floyd in May 2020. Similar macroaggressions were experienced in the 1960s with the assassination of Medgar Evers and later Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Kendi, 2017). All three macroaggressions sparked a collective reaction within the Black community, and protests ensued in dismay of the racist acts. Nobles (1976) asserts that a common thread running through all African cultures and their Black American derivatives is the notion of group identification or "we-ness." The concept of we-ness is also evident in Mwangi et al.’s (2018) study on racial macroaggressions on college campuses,

where participants report “seeing [themselves] reflected in the murders of Black men and women” (pp. 461) which increases anxiety upon hearing reports of violence in the media. Edmonson et al. (2020) add that some Black employees may “call in Black” (p. 248) or take a day off from work after witnessing or experiencing racially motivated trauma. Black people empathize with victims of brutality and hold onto the fear that it could have been them or someone they know (Frances-Winters, 2020).

Microaggressions are “everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 10). The most detrimental forms of microaggressions are usually delivered by well-intentioned individuals (DiAngelo 2021; Sue, 2010). Racial microaggressions are salient and divisive (Edmondson et al., 2020; Williams, 2012); the effects are described as a “million little cuts,” (Sue & Spanierman, 2020).

Sue (2010) describes racial microaggressions and derivatives that match the basis for the current study. These include 1) being mistaken for the maintenance or cafeteria staff instead of being recognized as an administrator, 2) White teachers employing deficit-thinking models and teaching lower-level skills to a classroom of minority students, and 3) harsher discipline enacted on minorities, especially Black and Brown male students. Common microaggressions that also surface within the Black community are the need to “work twice as hard for half as much” (Frances-Winters, 2020) and the need to “prove any claim of racism” (Harrell, 2000). As Harrell (2000) explains, “The process of questioning one's observations and perceptions, replaying a situation in one's mind over and over again, attempting to explain it to others, and entertaining alternative explanations can be stressful above and beyond the original experience (p.45).”

It is not uncommon for members of minority racial groups to feel questioned about their experiences with racism. The questioning comes with the requirement of 'proof' that the incident has occurred or a justification of feelings and emotions if the experience was not personal. The requirement to provide proof or to continuously relive personal or vicarious experiences can be emotionally taxing (Harrell, 2000).

Frances-Winter's (2020) *Black Fatigue: How racism erodes the mind, body, and spirit* was written to share the stories of Black people who are emotionally burdened by living and working in spaces that diminish their existence. Fear exacerbates stress. Minorities experience genuine fear when in locales that may lead to racial profiling and the dire consequences that may result (Frances-Winters, 2020). DiAngelo (2018) describes a similar uncomfortable experience for White people who enter settings that are majority-minority. The difference is that White people can enter those settings at will (DiAngelo, 2018). In contrast, Black people are almost always subjected to adjusting to the discomfort of being in the majority White space (Dyson, 2017). The fear may elicit emotions that resemble “having your guard up” or “anger” (Frances-Winters, 2020). Consider the microaggressive phrase, “the Angry Black Woman,” which labels the vigilant individual who must constantly watch for and sometimes respond to invisible threats.

Microaggressions are commonplace in diverse workplaces and environments; these instances cannot be disregarded as irrelevant (Edmondson et al., 2020). Mwangi et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study across several US college campuses to investigate the interplay between the United States’ racial climate and the racial climates of those college campuses. The researchers found that Black college students discussed race as being associated with fear when

amongst non-Black members of the campus or college town and described how microaggressions were creating a campus climate that promoted racialized stress.

Racialized Stress and Its Conceptualization

Racism is so ingrained in Western culture that it will likely never end (DiAngelo, 2018; Dyson, 2017; Feagin, 2006; Williams, 2012). By extension, the minority's resulting internalized stress also finds its place in literature. Racialized stress is the response to racism-related acts– whether those acts be intentional or unintentional.

Frances-Winters (2020) defines racialized stress as the constant grapple with real or perceived threats associated with disproportionality based on one's racial group identity. Racialized stress results from the trauma experienced by racism (Harrell, 2000) and the ongoing experiences of macro-and microaggressions. Racialized stress may cause humiliation, shame, rage, confusion, or hurt (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

Multiple racial group identities can experience racialized stress. DiAngelo (2018) described the White response to racialized stress as "anger, fear, and guilt." These feelings can occur when a White person has a solo entrance into a space inhabited by more than a few people of color and range to when White people are asked to recognize their connection to racism.

Racialized stress is an anomaly for White people because great efforts are taken to protect against these internalized stressors. To illustrate, Sue (2004) described a field test for a study in which he randomly approached White strangers and asked, "What does it mean to be White and why (p.764)"? Some respondents answered the question by saying that Whiteness does not affect life, while others become visibly irritated, angry, and defensive (Sue, 2004). These emotions, according to DiAngelo (2018), arise to protect white fragility, or the response that works to

“reinstate white equilibrium” and “return racial comfort.” A sense of Whiteness's invisibility is motivated by the denials of the advantages associated with being White (Sue, 2004).

Conversely, differences are readily identifiable amongst minority racial groups. In the same field test, Sue (2004) asked members of Black, Asian American, and Latinx identities the same two questions— “What does it mean to be (a person of color) and why”? Most participants provide details about their realities and the related stressors. Some describe how painful of an experience it is to be one of only a few people of color in their schools or neighborhoods. Some even describe the stress associated with placing their children in danger by being in a predominantly White space. Each day, minorities “navigate the roiling racial waters of daily life (p.12) ” (DiAngelo, 2018). The daily navigation of racism causes unique, racial stressors (Hope et al., 2020; Sellers et al., 2003).

Racialized stress in minority cultures is associated with varying severities of distress (Neblett, 2019). In the multidimensional *Conceptualization of Racialized Stress*, Harrell (2000) proposes that there are six ways in which racialized stress can be experienced. Chronic-contextual stress, collective experiences, transgenerational transmission, racism-related life events, vicarious racism experiences, and daily racism microaggressions.

Chronic-contextual stress is a source of stress that manifests from environmental or social structures. Chronic-contextual stress includes building liquor stores in minority neighborhoods, unequal living conditions, and out-of-date textbooks in minority schools (Harrell, 2000). Collective experiences are sources of stress that generate from group-level racism. Collective experiences happen as an observation of racism, and an example can be the television of overtly racist acts–like the killing of unarmed Black people. These televised collective experiences are dehumanizing as they are often replayed over and over, forcing the

racial group to continually re-experience the event (Dyson, 2017) to reignite the associated stress that comes with those experiences.

Transgenerational transmissions are a source of stress that consider the unique historical context of diverse racial groups. Transgenerational transmissions of stress are equivalent to the multigenerational trauma that appears in DeGruy's (2005) research. The premise of DeGruy's (2005) work centered on a single question, "How many times does a person have to see and hear about others like him or herself being physically and psychologically brutalized to be impacted?" Since a single episode can cause an impact, the stress associated with transgenerational or multigenerational transmission must be taken seriously.

Racism-related life events elicit stress that is related to significant, time-limited experiences. The experience has a clear beginning and end (Harrell, 2000) and is unlikely to occur daily or weekly. A racism-related life event may be an experience of being stopped by a police officer who demonstrates unreasonable force. Many Black men recount these negative experiences (Bonilla-Silva, 2022; Dyson, 2017).

Members of the Black community seem to share a collective shame and collective humiliation (DeGruy, 2005), indicating that racism can be vicarious. Vicarious racism experiences do not happen through personal experience; rather, these experiences involve another member of the racial group–perhaps one's family, loved ones, or a complete stranger (Harrell, 2000). These vicarious events can still create anxiety, danger, vulnerability, anger, and sadness (DeGruy, 2005; Harrell, 2000). Daily racism stressors are microaggressions.
The problem is that the stress of racism lies not only in any one specific incident. It also lies in the resistance of others to believe or validate the reality (Dyson, 2017; Harrell, 2000) or significance of one's personal experience. Michael E. Dyson (2017) writes of this invalidation in

Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America, saying, “Perhaps one of the greatest perks of being white in America is the capacity to forget at will. The gaslighting effect goes wild, and Black folk are made to feel crazy for believing something they know to be true (p.45)”.

Common stressors for members of the Black community include feeling the need to prove oneself, concerns or experiences being minimized or dismissed, being responsible for educating others on our oppression, navigating policy and the powers that be, analyzing emotions and processing microaggressions, living amid White privilege and the abnormalization of Black culture, and being asked to be a Black expert (Bonilla-Silva, 2022; DeGruy, 2005; Dyson, 2017; Frances-Winters, 2020).

For the Black community, racial socialization and the inevitable experience of racial oppression may be processed in multiple ways. Some will adapt to racial socialization and demonstrate a likeness to White culture. These individuals may process microaggressions without considering these microaggressions to stem from unintentional acts of racism. Others may oppose racial socialization and elicit insurmountable Black pride. These individuals may be unapologetic in their quest to make real the experiences of Blackness. At the same time, other members of the racial group have trouble processing White as right, yet do not fully embrace the idea of Black pride. The common thread along this spectrum is racialized stress.

The current study does not serve to prove that racialized stress is or is not real. Instead, the study rests on the conviction that the phenomenon may be real for some members of the Black community. If an individual believes racialized stress to be real, then the stressor resonates within some aspect of the individual’s lived experience. Real or perceived becomes less of an argument when participants self-identify as having experienced racialized stress.

How one processes and copes with it may be different, but the presence of the stressor is a truism that has long been a conversation amongst psychology researchers. The deduction is that some people are incredibly resilient in the face of these racialized stressors, while others experience debilitating physical, mental, and social effects.

Psychological, Physiological, and Emotional Stress Responses

In 1964, Black Civil Rights Activist Fannie Lou Hamer (2020) famously shared, "*I am sick and tired of being sick and tired.*" Hamer's comment suggests that there may be an alignment between racism and the psychological and physiological ailments experienced in the Black community (DeGruy, 2005). Research has since proven that racialized stress does have a connection to the psychological, physiological, and emotional factors of minorities (Hope et al., 2020; Neblett, 2019; Sellers et al., 2003). In other words, Black community members may experience mental and physical health issues resulting from racialized stress.

The psychological responses to ongoing encounters of racism include disbelief, disappointment, frustration, defensiveness, sudden changes in mood, resentment (Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Sue, 2004), and hypervigilance (Frances-Winters, 2020). Physiological responses to racism relate to higher instances of health care concerns that lead to chronic illness and early mortality. Krull and Robicheau (2020) surveyed 39 Black principals to gather their lived experiences regarding racialized stressors in the workplace. The data indicate that 80% of the Black principals experienced a range of psychological responses, similar to those listed above. The principals also noted physiological representations of the stressors, as some participants reported elevated blood pressure and irregular heart rates.

Black Americans have a greater prevalence of an earlier onset of disability, chronic illness, and inflammation (Simons et al., 2018; Williams, 2012). The prevalence of these health

concerns is unrelated to socioeconomic status, as education and income are not mitigators for the disproportionality in health and wellness (Baldwin, 1963; Dyson, 2017; Frances-Winters, 2020). Even educated Black people are sicker and die younger than their educated White peers (Frances-Winters, 2020). Health disparities result in a lower life expectancy for Black people (Edmondson et al., 2020) when compared to other racial groups. A body of research links health disparities to racial weathering, resulting from racism and racialized stress.

Weathering refers to constant exposure to racial microaggressions (Simons et al., 2018). The weathering perspective asserts that the necessity to internalize racism and racialized stressors may impact the cellular makeup of individuals. It is an idea that correlates with the assertion of multigenerational trauma proposed by Harrell (2000) and DeGruy (2005). Researchers have found that weathering has various impacts on physical and mental health.

Neblett (2019) shares that chronic worrying accelerates aging. According to the study results, encountering racism leads to higher stress levels, which causes cells to age more rapidly. These results suggest that some social toxins, such as racism and racialized stress, can disproportionately affect Black people at cellular levels.

Simons et al. (2018) also sought to better understand the impact of weathering and the relationship between systemic racism and inflammation among Black Americans. The work focused on understanding racialized stress holistically–even from the cellular level. Data were collected from questionnaires, residential patterns, interviews, and blood samples to examine participants' cytokines. Questionnaires asked about the frequency of verbal abuse from racial insults or racial slurs. At the same time, residential patterning allowed researchers to review residential zoning to determine the level of neighborhood segregation. Findings reveal that racial hassles make life more stressful for Black Americans, and the effects impact the levels of anxiety

and depression felt by members of the race (Simons et al., 2018). Exposure to discrimination and segregation during the juvenile years predicted adult inflammation and amplified the inflammatory effect of adult exposure to racialized stressors (Simons et al., 2018). These findings support the weathering perspective's assertion that racialized stressors are more significant predictors of the health of Black Americans than socioeconomic status or any other health risk behaviors (Simons et al., 2018). Results also indicate that stress is a mediator between race and mental health (Simons et al., 2018).

Sellers et al. (2003) conducted a mixed methods study investigating the possible relationships between racialized stress and mental health. Questionnaires were administered to 555 young Black adults. These questionnaires allowed participants to expound on their lived experiences through an interview. Results from this study indicate a relationship between stress and mental health. Ultimately, racialized stressors can potentially increase the levels of anxiety and depression experienced by members of minority racial groups (Sellers et al., 2003).

COVID-19 brings a new challenge to the physiological and psychological health of Black Americans. Several researchers have examined how health care disparities have impacted the Black community amidst the global pandemic. Abedi et al. (2020) investigated racial and social-economic disparities in association with COVID-19 concerning race, health, and economic inequality in the United States. Data were collected from 369 counties in seven largely affected areas. The findings highlight that race, especially amongst the Black community, is a risk factor for contracting, becoming seriously ill, and facing higher mortality rates due to a COVID-19 infection. Abedi et al.'s (2020) study provide evidence of racial, economic, and health inequalities in counties impacted by higher death rates.

Millett et al. (2020) also investigated the impact of COVID-19 on Black communities. Results indicated that the majority Black counties were disproportionately impacted by Covid–reporting cases at 90% in some counties with a death rate of nearly 49%. These data are opposed to a report of 81% in the majority White counties with a 28% death rate. Millett et al. (2020) also show that deaths were disproportionately higher in Black rural and small metro counties.

Objections may arise concerning these data and the impacts of weathering on the Black community. The question remains: Is racialized stress a true connection to mental and physical health? Perhaps this can best be answered from the research of Dermendzhiyska (2019), who seeks to understand mental and physical pain better. Dermendzhiyska (2019) experimented to measure the brain waves of individuals who experience a controlled social rejection. Participants who felt the most emotional distress also had the most pain-related brain activity. Being socially rejected triggered the same neural circuits that process physical injury. Why does this happen? Social relationships keep humans alive; social rejection, therefore, serves as a threat that challenges existence (Dermendzhiyska, 2019).

Stress Management and Self-Care

Despite an oppressive history, the Black community carries an exceptional display of resilience and adaptability (DeGruy, 2005). Stress and coping theories generally suggest that adaptational outcomes of individuals can be linked to stress exposure and various mediating factors (Harrell, 2000). Since the injury resulting from racialized stress occurs in multiple ways, individuals may also need to heal in various ways (DeGruy, 2005).

The narrative identity theory suggests that all humans operate with a level of self-awareness and that humans are compelled to make sense of our lives. Making sense of life

requires integrating life experiences into internalized and ever-developing stories of the self with a reassembled past, perceived present, and imaged future (Singer et al., 2013). The narrative identity theory serves as a conceptual framework for self-care to improve self-awareness and, consequently, the effects of the racialized stress response.

Self-care is a practice that allows an individual to attend to and maintain good physical and mental health (Myers et al., 2012; Ray et al., 2020). Self-care practices are unique to each individual, but there is consensus among the literature that the most effective self-care practices include a mindfulness approach to ensure adequate sleep, physical fitness, exercise, proper hydration (Ray et al., 2020), social support, and spirituality (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

Frances-Winters (2020) finds that many Black people rely on religion as a primary way of dealing with racialized stress. Additional self-care measures mentioned in both Frances-Winters (2020) and DeGruy's (2005) research include a focus on extending social support to include healing circles that validate Black experiences.

Make no mistake; self-care does not cure racialized stress nor is it an acceptable strategy to pacify minority communities. Instead, self-care can serve as a means of managing the amounts of stress and the subsequent mental and physical responses that may result when faced with racialized stress.

It is also important to add that some people live in constant states of crisis. In a sense, these individuals become addicted to stress. These individuals live in a perpetual cycle of conflict (DeGruy, 2005). The contents of this study are not for individuals who have entered this cycle. Instead, the study focuses on the racialized stress that may be felt in spurts within the workplace.

Self-Care through Mindfulness

Kabat-Zinn (2003) defines mindfulness as "the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of each experience moment by moment (p.146)." Mindfulness is a proactive form of self-care aimed at promoting an individual's physical health while reducing the effects of anxiety, stress, and other mental health issues. Mindfulness was initially introduced as a holistic treatment for individuals dealing with chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). In the discussion of mitigating racialized stress responses (Lomas et al., 2017), mindfulness may also serve as a productive strategy.

Lomas et al. (2017) reviewed the empirical literature on mindfulness meditation and mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). The authors provide a systematic review of empirical studies that share the impact of mindfulness on mental health, well-being, and the job performance of educators. Findings indicate that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have a positive impact (Lomas et al., 2017). The review supports an optimistic appraisal of mindfulness for educators regarding improving mental and physical health—as demonstrated by reduced symptoms of illness and improved sleep.

The Rationale for the Black School Leaders' Incorporation of Self-care

School leadership is a demanding profession that frequently requires multitasking and making complex decisions. Ray et al. (2020) conducted a study to learn more about school principals' well-being and self-care practices. The self-care practices highlighted in the survey were sleep, nutrition, hydration, and exercise. A sample of 473 practicing Arkansan administrators, mostly White (n=431), found that many members of the principal workforce overwork to the point of exhaustion. "*School administrators [as compared to the general population] are working longer hours, sleeping less, rarely exercising, sacrificing time with*

loved ones, and missing out on engaging in activities outside of their job that bring them meaning and joy" (Ray et al., 2020, p. 442).

By focusing on the job's daily demands, school leaders overlook the deeper problem of attending to their own mental and physical health. In open-ended responses from the same study (Ray et al. 2020), participants wrote about the obligatory requirements of leadership that took time away from family and friends. Many respondents also mentioned irregular sleep and infrequent meal patterns, as "skipping lunch" was a common reply. In contrast, school leaders who reported an intentional focus on self-care also reported the ability to perform within the leadership position at the highest level (Ray et al., 2020). In other words, these school leaders reported a possible correlation between self-care and leadership self-efficacy.

Krull and Robicheau (2020) examined the perceptions of Black school principals in K-12 schools. A total of 39 principals were asked to identify coping mechanisms after having dealt with racialized stressors in the work setting. Answers ranged from relying on personal spirituality to self-silencing and ignoring. Ignoring the microaggressions was not a sufficient means of processing and coping (Krull & Robicheau, 2020), reiterated by participants who reported experiencing poor health and irregular sleep patterns due to racialized stress. Findings also indicated that racialized stress diminished the self-confidence of Black leaders, and that self-doubt is profoundly present when the standards to which Black school leaders are held do not match the standards held for their White colleagues (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). More than half of the 39 principals interviewed indicated that microaggressions interfered with their ability to lead effectively (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

In response to critics of self-care as a means of mediating racialized stress in the Black community, DeGruy (2005) asserts:

> While it is obviously simplistic to believe that diet and exercise will cure all that ails us [Black people], it is true that these factors can have an inoculating effect when we are emotionally assaulted. These factors help us to maintain our balance, and the more balance we have in our lives, the less likely we will be to react emotionally, and the longer we can remain calm. (p.172)

Leadership Self-Efficacy

The TED Talks of Rita Pierson (2013) and Linda Cliatt Wyman (2015) find their way into many college programs and professional learning spaces. The respective topics of *Championing Every Child* and *Leading Fearlessly*\ pull at the heartstrings of listeners who are drawn into stories where accomplishing student success seemed like a hopeless feat. Listeners learn of the economic disadvantages of the students, the underfunding of schools, and low state assessment scores. Somehow, the story ends with a miraculous turn-around for school success. Several success stories have this same beginning. The thread that binds these two stories, along with a host of other stories told and untold, is efficacy. Neither Pierson nor Wyman mentions the word efficacy in their talks. Yet, both speakers spoke of increasing the level of confidence amongst students and teachers. These leaders worked to cultivate self- and collective efficacy within the learning communities.

Self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's individual capabilities (Ware & Kitsastas, 2011). The concept was introduced by Bandura (2000), who shared that individuals' thoughts and beliefs play a role in the ability to successfully tackle challenges. Bandura & Locke's (2003) study found the following:

> Efficacy beliefs affect whether individuals think in self-enhancing or self-debilitating ways, how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of difficulties, the

quality of their well-being and their vulnerability to both stress and depression, and the choices they make at important decision points. (p. 89)

Bodies of research focus on efficacy and its cultivation within students, teachers, and leaders. Self-efficacy is said to be collective efficacy when supported at all levels. As Hannah et al. (2008) conceptualized, a forward-moving model of collective efficacy inspires collective agency and later collective performance. The obvious, yet invisible factor behind collective efficacy, is the school leader.

Confidence develops psychologically and is a belief in ability (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). A good argument can be raised with respect to whether or not those beliefs equate to effective practice. However, for this study's purpose, school leaders are self-reporting leader self-efficacy.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) further explored leader self-efficacy, which is the leader's belief in his, her, or their capabilities to successfully lead the organization through the challenges that arise. Among the challenges for school leaders are the requirements for continuous improvement of student achievement, maintaining a positive climate and culture, good stewardship of school resources, and being culturally responsive in leadership and discipline. In 2020, the unprecedented challenge of the pandemic became an infallible factor on the list. Efficacious leaders are not a desire; they are a need.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) investigated the indirect relationships between leader self-efficacy and student learning. Data included the responses of 96 school principals, 2,764 teacher leaders, and student achievement scores for three consecutive years. Findings indicate that leadership practices are influenced by leaders' self-reported leader self-efficacy. In other words, these leaders were confident in their abilities to enact the skills necessary for leadership.

Confidence provides the foundation to persist in the face of challenges. Confidence and a healthy relationship with self, then, become the outlets on which all other leadership-related skills rely. Leithwood & Jantzi (2008) explain:

> Leader self-efficacy beliefs have direct effects on one's choice of activities and settings and can affect coping efforts once those activities are begun. Such beliefs determine how much effort people will expend and how long they will persist in the face of failure or difficulty. The stronger the self-efficacy the longer the persistence. (p. 501)

Belief is a powerful aspect. Not only does belief shape our evaluatory system, it also shapes our expectations. Belief strongly influences how we think, act, and feel (DeGruy, 2005).

The Power of Belief and The Black School Leader

The literature review has painted a picture of racial socialization and the varying amounts of racialized stress that may result. It is difficult to consider a narrative where the internalized beliefs and systems of racism do not impact the marginalized individual. So, to say that leader self-efficacy is neutral–amid these deeply embedded social structures–is to disregard the meaning that society places on race.

Frances-Winters (2020) speaks of the emotional toll required for Black people to succeed in corporate America. DeGruy (2005) echoes the fears and doubts that burden Black people, especially at the point of decision-making that may contradict the socialization of Whiteness. DiAngelo (2018) enters the conversation with the White innocence that Black people encounter when we move too abruptly against the norms of society. Considering all these accounts, imagine the potential internal battle that Black school leaders face when dealing with the emotions and racialized stress connected to vicarious racism experiences like the televised killing

of Floyd. The cumulative effect of these factors could be devastating to self-esteem and beliefs in one's self-efficacy (DeGruy, 2005).

Black school leaders do not lack confidence; instead, this confidence is often challenged by societal and workplace microaggressions (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). The effect of racial microaggressions "pointed to various forms of personal anguish, distress, and exhaustion" (Krull & Robicheau, 2020, p. 304). Black school leaders would benefit from opportunities that provide strategies for improving physiological and psychological health (Edmondson et al., 2020).

While it is acknowledged that all members of the Black community may not perceive racialized stress in the same ways, it is almost impossible to escape the racial identities assigned through socialization (DiAngelo, 2018; Dyson, 2017). Noting the potential physiological and psychological impacts, it has become increasingly important to study the possible correlations between racialized stress, self-care, and self-reported leader efficacy among today's Black school leaders.

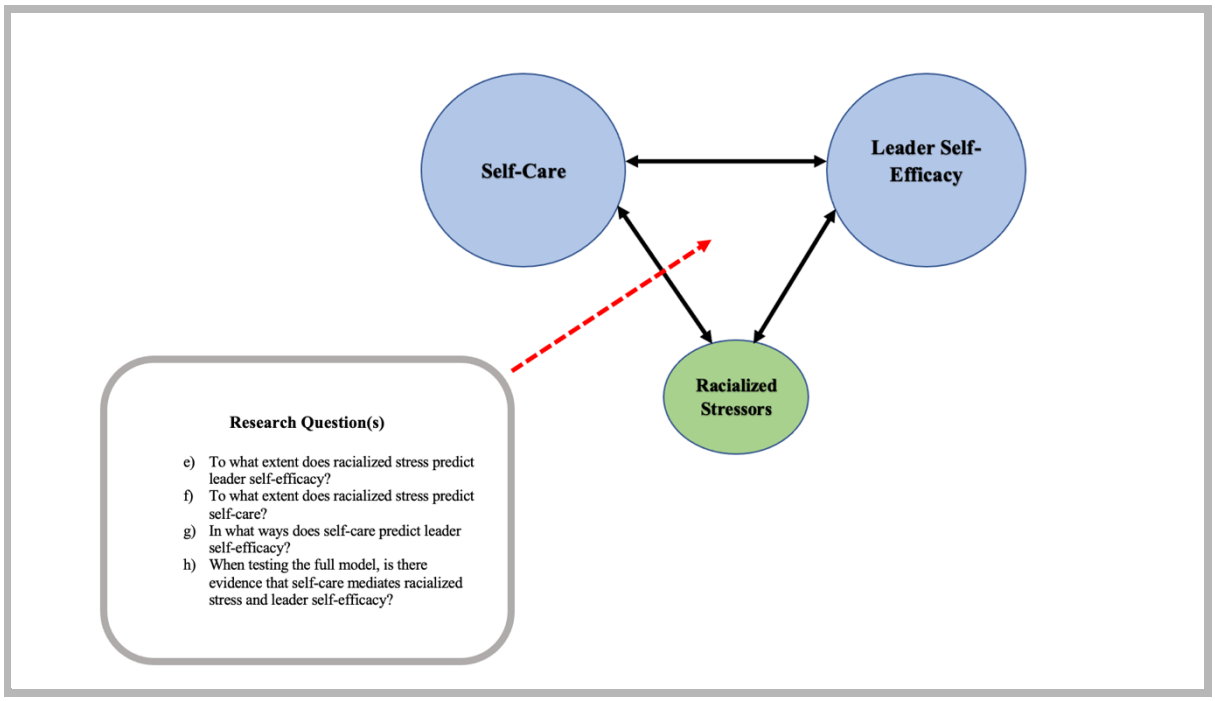
Chapter 3
Method

Understanding the experiences of Black school leaders is an important aspect in the phenomena of racialized stress and its potential connection to leadership self-efficacy. While self-care is only a coping mechanism, there may be benefits that lend to professional longevity and a greater sense of mental and physical health. The study evaluates the correlations between self-care, racialized stress, and leadership self-efficacy using a quantitative approach. The contents of this chapter summarize the survey protocol, the recruitment strategy, and the plans for data analysis.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this current study is to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders. The study investigates the correlations that may exist between self-care practices and leadership self-efficacy while considering the impacts of real or perceived racialized stressors. The overarching research questions are 1) to what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy; 2) to what extent does racialized stress predict self-care; 3) in what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy; 4) when testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy?

Conceptual Framework and An Explanation of Research Questions



1. To what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy?
2. To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care?
3. In what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy?
4. When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediated racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy?

Hypothesis and Null Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis: The quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

Hypothesis: The quality and frequency of self-care practices improve leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders and serve as an effective coping mechanism for the conceptualization of racialized stress.

H1: An inverse relationship exists between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

H2: A linear relationship exists between racialized stress and self-care for Black school leaders.

H3: A linear relationship exists between self-care and leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

H4: When testing the full model, self-care will partially mediate the effects of racialized stress on leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

Research Design

Qualtrics software was used to structure a questionnaire on self-care practices, school leaders' self-efficacy, and perceived racism. The questions are a collection of three valid instruments. Those instruments are 1) Cook-Cottone and Guyker's (2017) Mindful Self-Care Scale; 2) Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale; and 3) Carter et al.'s (2018) Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale.

There is intentionality in the organization of survey questions. First, participants share data about self-care practices. Next, participants share data for self-reported leadership self-efficacy. Finally, participants share data related to racialized stress. Organizing the survey in this manner allows participants to share their self-care practices and leadership self-efficacy independently of the emotions that may arise from recalling experiences with racialized stressors. The expected time commitment for completing the survey is 25 minutes. The survey can be completed using any digital device (e.g. mobile phone, laptop, tablet). The following paragraphs briefly introduce the three instruments and the rationale for selection.

Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS)

Self-care is a practice that allows an individual to attend to and maintain good physical and mental health (Myers et al., 2012; Ray et al., 2020). In 2017, Cook-Cottone and Guyker

developed the Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS). MSCS quantifies self-care according to six factors: physical care, supportive relationships, mindful awareness, self-compassion and purpose, mindful relaxation, and supportive structure (Cook-Cottone & Guyker, 2017). Sample questions include an opportunity for participants to review the last seven days, sharing the participants' intentionality to water intake, proper nutrition, and social and emotional networking, among other practices. The MSCS captures this information with 33 Likert scale items. Each question starts with the prompt, "*how many times or how often…*," and the scale is written as never = 0 days, rarely = 1 day, sometimes = 2 to 3 days, often = 4 to 5 days, and regularly = 6 to 7 days.

From its conception, MCSC was an instrument meant to be practical–guiding participants to evaluate and later improve self-care. Cook-Cottone and Guyker (2017) started with 120 actionable scale items. These items were narrowed by sharing the survey with graduate psychology students, who reviewed the survey for readability, clarity, and construct. Twenty-two items were removed following the initial review. The remaining 95 items were sent for an expert review, which resulted in the removal of an additional 14 items. An analysis of data, using the confirmatory factor analysis, further narrowed the survey items. The scale is valid for assessing practices that support positive self-care (Cook-Cottone & Guyker, 2017).

School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES)

Leadership self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their ability to carry out necessary leadership behaviors, such as delegating, making decisions, and motivating others to accomplish common goals (VantageLeadership, 2022). As leading researchers in the field of leadership self-efficacy, Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) explain leadership self-efficacy as a belief in personal capabilities. These capabilities lend to the ability to develop, maintain, and cultivate a school culture that is positive and one that demonstrates good stewardship of school resources. In

fact, these researchers proclaim that leadership self-efficacy is one of the major contributors to transformational leadership.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) developed an instrument to measure leadership self-efficacy. It consists of a 134-item principal survey and a 104-item teacher survey. Based on length and the instrument's inability to independently capture the self-reported leadership self-efficacy of school leaders, Leithwood and Jantzi's instrument is not being used for this study. Rather, Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES) is used to measure the self-reported data.

SLSES collectively details a variety of school leaders, including principals, headmasters, and other school administrators. In a review of the literature, Petridou et al. (2013) found that previous self-efficacy scales were limited to principals. Notable contributors to that literature include Tschannen-Moran and Gareis who developed an 18-item principal self-efficacy scale in 2004.

A team of experts in the field and pilot testing helped to narrow the items of the SLSES. The instrument originated with a pool of 53 items. Five items were removed for content and clarity; an additional 19 items were removed following a confirmatory factor analysis. The resulting instrument asks school leaders to rate their confidence in seven leadership areas. Those leadership areas are creating an appropriate structure, leading and managing the learning organization, school self-evaluation for school improvement, developing a positive climate that manages conflicts, evaluating classroom practices, adhering to community and policy demands, and monitoring learning (Petridou et al., 2013). Responses are provided on a five-point Likert scale. Confidence is reported as 1= not at all confident, 2= not confident, 3= somewhat confident, 4= confident, and 5 = very confident.

Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale (RBTSSS)

Research has proven that racialized stress has a connection to psychological, physiological, and emotional factors among minorities (Hope et al., 2020; Neblett, 2019; Sellers et al., 2003). Minorities face unique stressors acquired based on racial experience (Harrell, 2000). These unique stressors are encapsulated in the possibilities of experiencing multigenerational trauma, macroaggressions, and microaggressions.

Several instruments exist as a measurement for racialized stress. Serious consideration was given to Landrine and Klonoff's (1996) Schedule of Racist Events 18-question instrument, which serves to capture a participant's experience with racism over the respective individual's lifetime. The limitation of this instrument is that participants are asked to recall and quantify experiences with racism (e.g. the experience happened less than 10% of the time, 10-25% of the time, etc.) from birth to the present day. The limitation prompted a search for a scale that better meets the needs of this study.

The Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale (RBTSSS) is an instrument designed to assess the emotional and psychological stress reactions to experiences of racism and racial discrimination (Carter et al., 2018). The RBTSSS allows participants to select a specific experience with racism and share the recollection of reactions immediately after the event and the most recent reactions. A one-month timeframe describes the categorization '*immediately after the event,'* while *most recently* describes thoughts and reactions when completing the survey.

The RBTSSS builds on the literature of Jones (1997) and Harrell's (2000) multidimensional models of racism. According to Jones' (1997) model, racism is present on three levels–individual, institutional, and cultural. Harrell (2000) expanded Jones'

conceptualization by identifying six categories of racialized stress. The six categories are racism-related life events, vicarious racism experiences, daily microaggressions, chronic contextual stress, collective experiences of racism, and transgenerational transmission of group trauma. RBTSSS deepens each of these models by seeking to understand how the three levels of racism (Jones, 1997), experienced across any of the six categories (Harrell, 2000), may harm minorities who face encounters with racism and racial discrimination (Carter et al., 2018). RBTSSS measures seven factors, including depression, intrusion, anger, hypervigilance, physical health, self-esteem, and avoidance. Each of these factors has the potential of impacting leadership self-efficacy.

Participants

Participants are school-based leaders in the Deep South. These leaders actively hold positions that range from assistant principal to superintendent of schools. The term *active* references those leaders who currently serve in these positions in public schools in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, or South Carolina. Leaders are invited to participate regardless of their years of leadership experience, as this resulting data may lead to prospective areas for future research (e.g. researching graduate preparation programs if data shows that new leaders have a more positive correlation between self-care, leadership efficacy, and racialized stress). The desire is to capture data from a range of leaders–some who are early in their careers and others who are veterans.

The Deep South is the context due to its historical connection to structural and institutionalized racism, as well as the lingering possibility of exacerbated impacts of politically motivated racial microaggressions in these states. Using the Deep South as a context does not imply that racialized stress is not experienced in other regions.

Data Collection Procedures

Participants were recruited using social media platforms (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) and Listservs. Specifically, the call and the questionnaire were shared with PK-12 administrators in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina using each state's employee Listserv. Ideal participants are those who 1) self-identify as Black, 2) work primarily in a PK-12 public school setting in the Deep South, and 3) serve as a school leader with a minimum title of assistant principal. Individuals who do not meet these criteria, and those who fail to answer all parts of the survey, will be removed from the data pool. The expectation is to have a return of at least 100 questionnaires (n= 100 participants).

Using Social Media for Recruitment

Recruitment through social media is a growing practice due to its convenience and the ability to engage in mass communication (Darko et al., 2022). While there are clear benefits to recruiting through social media and digital sites, there are also disadvantages. The disadvantages include challenges with informed consent, protecting the privacy of participants, intrapersonal interaction between the researchers and participants, confidentiality (Dhar et al., 2018), and access. Access to social media recruitment requires that participants have a digital device, Internet services, and a social media account on the platform of the researcher's choosing. Without these measures, a viable prospective participant may never see the advertisement or call for the study.

One best practice for navigating these challenges is to select more than one social media site for advertisement (Darko et al., 2022). As Darko et al. (2022) explain, Facebook and Twitter can be used to recruit a mixture of both younger and older audiences. Both sites allow the

creation of private groups and opportunities to follow other members, which can assist in narrowing the viewing audience.

Data Analysis

Data are analyzed using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. OLS is a model that helps to minimize the sum of squared errors between the predicted values and the real values. The analysis focuses on potential correlations between leadership self-efficacy as the dependent variable. The first model shows leadership self-efficacy as a possible correlation between the control variables of age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The representation for this model is "Leadership Self-Efficacy ~ Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

The second model shows leadership self-efficacy as a possible correlation between the independent variable of self-care when controlling for age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The representation for this model is "Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Self Care + Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

The third model shows leadership self-efficacy as a possible correlation between the independent variable of racialized stressors when controlling for age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The representation for this model is "Leadership Self-Efficacy ~ Racialized Stressors + Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

The fourth model shows leadership self-efficacy as a possible correlation between the independent variables of self-care and racialized stressors when controlling for age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The representation for this model is "Leadership

Self Efficacy ~ Self Care + Racialized Stressors + Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

Finally, the fifth model shows leadership self-efficacy as a correlation between leadership self-efficacy and the combined effects of self-care and racialized stress as independent variables when controlling for age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location. The representation for the model is "Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Self Care X Racialized Stressors + Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

In summary, the five regressions will explore the correlations between the following models.

DV ~ IV + Control Variables

1. Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Control Variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).
2. Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Self Care + Control Variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).
3. Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Racialized Stressors + Control Variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).
4. Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Self Care + Racialized Stressors + Control Variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).
5. Leadership Self Efficacy ~ Self Care X Racialized Stressors + Control Variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location).

If highly correlated, the variance inflation factors (VFI) will be checked for multicollinearity.

Assumptions

- Linearity. The relationship between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy is linear.
- Homoscedasticity. There is a normal distribution of leadership self-efficacy among Black school leaders with a constant variance between self-care and racialized stress.
- Independence. Black school leaders can remember and accurately provide their perceptions of stress during encounters of individual and collective racism.
- Normality. Leadership self-efficacy and self-care are evenly distributed among Black school leaders who experience racialized stress.
- General Assumption. Participants in the study answered the questionnaire openly and honestly.

Chapter 4
Results

The current study investigates the correlations that may exist between self-care practices and leadership self-efficacy while considering the impacts of real or perceived racialized stressors. The purpose is to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders. A cross-sectional explanatory research design provides the structure for observing and explaining variables. The objective of the design is to collect information from multiple people and offer an interpretation of their shared experience. There were no external requirements for the participants, meaning that participants were not obliged to modify any of their self-care routines or leadership practices. Instead, only information about current self-care practices, routines, leadership self-efficacy, and memorable racism encounters is reported. The quantitative approach uses a Qualtrics survey to collect data from 104 school leaders. All participants self-identify as Black and hold positions, ranging from assistant principal to assistant superintendent, as school leaders in the Deep South. Chapter 4 provides a detailed review of the results and an acceptance of the null hypothesis. The quality and frequency of self-care practices do not mediate racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy.

Participants

Participants are Black school leaders from Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina public schools. A total of 107 Qualtrics surveys were returned between March and July 2023. Two survey responses were deleted due to incomplete data. These potential participants only completed the first informed consent question. An additional survey response was deleted because the participant listed the state of residence as Texas—leaving 104 completed surveys in the dataset. The software known as IBM's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 29, is utilized for data analysis.

Data cleaning prior to the analysis involved removing the three incomplete surveys, relabeling variables for clarity, and computing new variables for reverse scores and for the mean of subscales. A question in the physical self-care survey asks participants to share the number of days of sedentary behavior, and the question required a reverse code. This reverse code appears in the dataset as a new, different variable with the label, "*reverse score_pc_sedentary*."

The new labels for variables provide clarity. For example, a variable with an original label of, "Q4_MSCS" was relabeled to read, "PC_Exercise." The new label indicates that the question was in the physical self-care subscale of the Mindful Self-Care Scale, and the question related to the frequency of exercising for 30 to 60 minutes per day. The remaining new variables were created by using the means of each subscale. To generate these variables, the mean scores of items were calculated for the subscales of each of the three instruments.

The study explores the context of school leadership in the Deep South. As stated in Chapter 3, the historical connection of structural and institutionalized racism in the Deep South may lead to exacerbated impacts of politically motivated racial microaggressions in these states. Using the Deep South as a context does not imply that racialized stress is not experienced in other regions. While the "Deep South" is evolving to include or exclude certain areas, many participants from Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina identified their residence as "Deep South." When asked, "Do you consider your current school or school system to be in the Deep South," 98.1% of participants answered "yes."

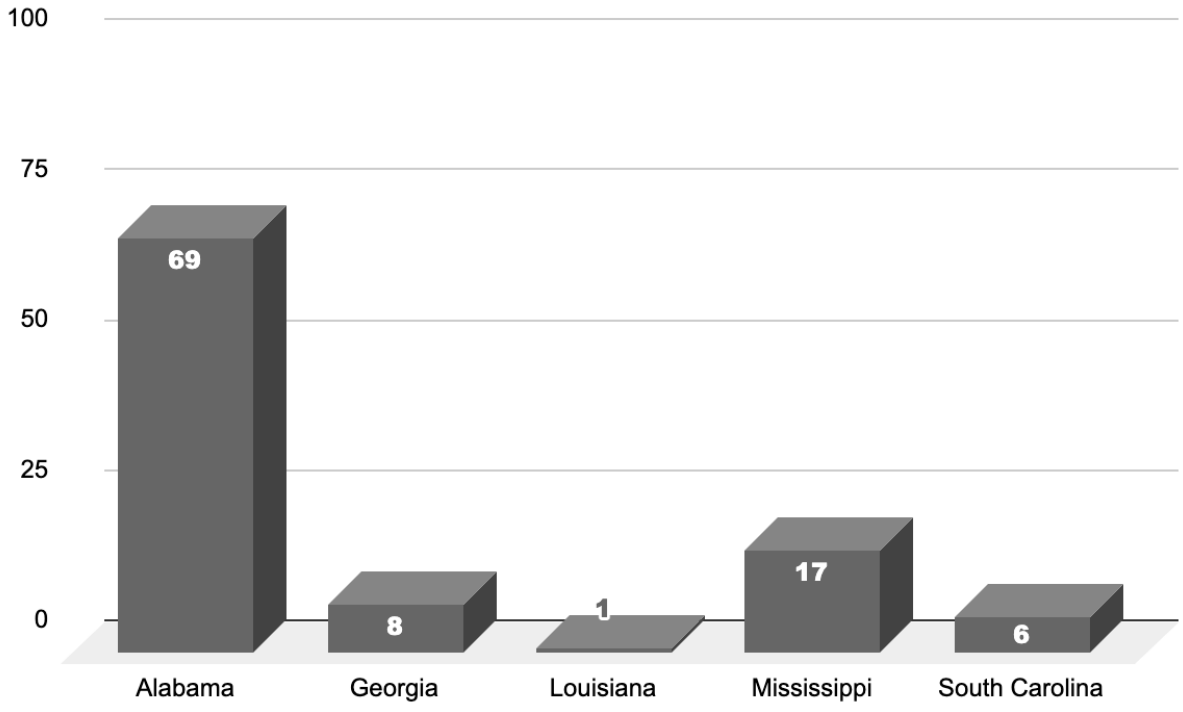
Table 1

Frequencies of Demographics for Socioeconomic Status, Community, and Location

Variable	N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
SES	104	-	1	3	1.07	.32	.10

	Low SES	99	95.2%	-	-	-	-	-
	High SES	3	2.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	Unsure	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
Community		104	-	1	3	2.66	.69	.48
	Suburban	13	12.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	Urban	9	8.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Rural	82	78.8%	-	-	-	-	-
Deep South		104	-	1	3	1.04	.28	.08
	Yes	102	98.1%	-	-	-	-	-
	Maybe	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 2 *Participants' Demographics by State*



Participants also identified their race, ethnicity, gender, and age range. A total of 104 participants (100%) are Black or African American, and 103 are Not Hispanic or Latino (99.0%). One participant identifies as Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino (1.0%). Sixty-five participants (62.5%) listed their gender identity as "woman," and 39 participants (37.5%) listed their gender identity as "man."

The ages of the school leaders vary between 25 and 65 years old. Out of the 104 participants, four are aged 25-29 (3.8%), eight are aged 30-35 (7.7%), 39 are aged 36-40 (37.5%), 26 are aged 41-45 (25.0%), 14 are aged 46-50 (13.5%), nine are aged 51-55 (8.7%), three are aged 56-60 (2.9%), and one is aged 61-65 (1.0%). Descriptive data are present in Table 2 for race, ethnicity, and gender. The age range is represented in Table 3.

Table 2

Frequencies of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Race		104	-	3	3	3.00	.00	.00
	Black	104	100.0%					
Ethnicity		104	-	1	2	1.99	.09	.01
	Hispanic	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	
	Not Hispanic	103	99.0%	-	-	-	-	
Gender		104	-	1	2	1.38	.49	.24
	Man	39	37.5%	-	-	-	-	
	Woman	65	62.5%	-	-	-	-	

Table 3

Frequencies of Age Ranges for Black School Leaders

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Age Range		104	-	1	8	3.79	1.38	1.89
	25-29	4	3.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	30-35	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	36-40	39	37.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	41-45	26	25.0%	-	-	-	-	-
	46-50	14	13.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	51-55	9	8.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	56-60	3	2.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	61-65	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-

The study includes participants with leadership positions from assistant principal to assistant superintendent. At the school level, there were 19 assistant principals and 32 principals who returned surveys. From the school district level, there were eight supervisors, 14 directors, 15 coordinators, and two assistant superintendents who returned surveys. There were also 10 surveys returned by specialists, and four surveys returned from positions outside of those identified as a selection. Of the four surveys listed with the role of "other," one was an Assistant Director, and three were Chief School Financial Officers.

Finally, the participants were asked to share their years of experience in education, years of administrative experience, and the length of their tenure in their current position. Many participants have at least 11 years of education experience—including time spent in the classroom and in an administrative role.

The administrative experience of participants ranges from 0 years (less than 1 full year in a school leadership position) to 30 years. Most participants have between 0 to 10 years of experience. The specific years of experience are 0-5 years (n=32), 6-10 years (n=52), 11-15 years (n=13), 16-20 years (n=6), and 26-30 (n=1).

There are 70 participants who have been in their current school leadership position for 0-5 years, 28 participants for 6-10 years, four participants for 11-15 years, one participant for 16-20 years, and one participant for 26-30 years. Out of the total number of participants, 50 hold a master's degree, 36 have an education specialist degree, 15 have a doctoral degree, and two hold a degree that was not included in the selection. One participant listed their degree as "associate degree in technology," and two other participants did not describe their degree type. Table 4 provides specific details on the positions and experience levels of participants. No table is provided to share the degree types.

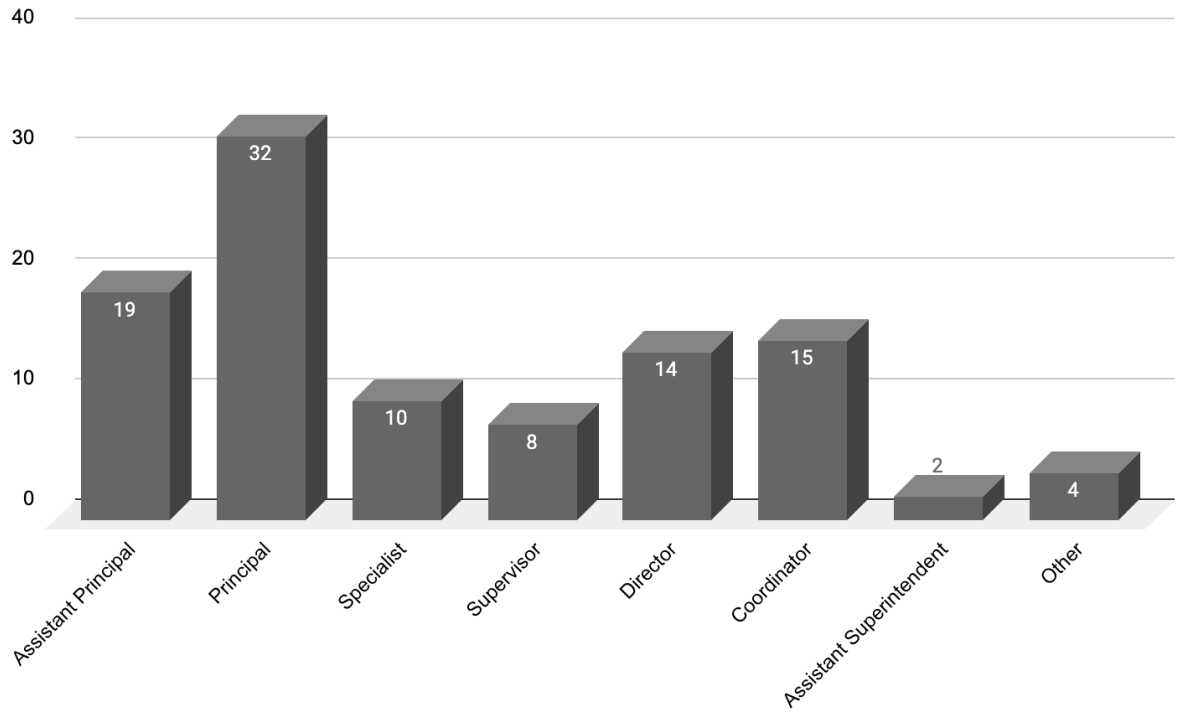
Table 4

Frequencies of Demographics for School Leadership Positions and Years of Experience

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Position		104	-	1	9	3.41	2.13	4.52
	Assistant Principal	19	18.3%	-	-	-	-	-
	Principal	32	30.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	Specialist	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Supervisor	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Director	14	13.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	Coordinator	15	14.4%	-	-	-	-	-
	Assistant Superintendent	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	Other	4	3.8%	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Experience		104	-	1	8	3.88	1.24	1.55
	0-5	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	6-10	10	9.6%	-	-	-	-	-
	11-15	29	27.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	16-20	34	32.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	26-30	10	9.6%	-	-	-	-	-
	36-40	1	1.0%					
School Leader Experience		104	-	1	6	1.97	.91	.82
	0-5	32	30.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	6-10	52	50.0%	-	-	-	-	-
	11-15	13	12.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	16-20	6	5.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	26-30	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 3

Participants' Current Positions



Data Collection

To be eligible for the study, participants met the following criteria: 1) identify as Black or African American, 2) reside in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, or South Carolina, and 3) hold a position as a PK-12 public school leader ranging from assistant principal to superintendent. Invitations were sent through Listserv to employees in all of the aforementioned states with the exception of Alabama where a Listserv was not accessible. A total of 3,504 invitations were sent to school leaders by email. Six email response inquiries resulted from the Listserv invitations. Two of the emails were to provide regret for not being able to participate. The other four emails were for additional information about anonymity, the use of results, and the survey navigation. Please note that neither Listservs nor school districts' websites provided

any information regarding the race and ethnicity of school leadership. When sharing the recruitment call, the survey link was sent to all leaders who have active email addresses. Follow-up emails were shared in two-week intervals between March 11 and July 4, 2023.

Alabama's school leaders were contacted using a newsletter shared by the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS), the state's premier school leadership organization (Wilson & Sanders, 2023). The IRB-approved information sheet, the research recruitment flyer, an informed consent document, and a direct link to the Qualtrics survey were all present in the newsletter for potential Alabama school leader participants. Recruitment calls were shared with CLAS on March 10, May 12, and June 9, 2023. Two emailed inquiries about the study were received based on the CLAS newsletter announcement. Both messages were answered—one by phone and email and the other by email only.

The research recruitment call was also shared on Facebook and Twitter, which are well-known social media platforms. Facebook messages were shared on a personal social media page and in private social media groups. During recruitment, a tweet was shared multiple times that tagged each state's Department of Education.

To expand my reach, I utilized snowball recruitment by contacting friends with school leadership positions. I shared the IRB-approved information sheet, the research recruitment flyer, an informed consent document, and an abbreviated elevator speech for the study. The request was for each person to pass the details to two other school administrators who might be eligible to join. After two months of emailing and sharing social media ads, I also connected with school leaders at educational conferences. The recruitment efforts led to the return of 107 surveys. A total of 105 surveys were completed, and two surveys contained blank or missing data in all but one field. The incomplete surveys were removed from the dataset. Additionally, one respondent

was from Texas. The Texas response was also deleted, as the participant did not meet the criteria.

A Qualtrics questionnaire asked participants about self-care practices, leadership self-efficacy, and perceived racism. The questions are a collection of three valid instruments. Those instruments are 1) Cook-Cottone and Guyker's (2017) Mindful Self-Care Scale; 2) Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale; 3) Carter et al.'s (2018) Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale. There was a total of 99 questions. Thirty-three questions were related to self-care practices, 29 were related to self-reported leadership self-efficacy, 30 were related to the perception of racialized stress, and 13 were demographic.

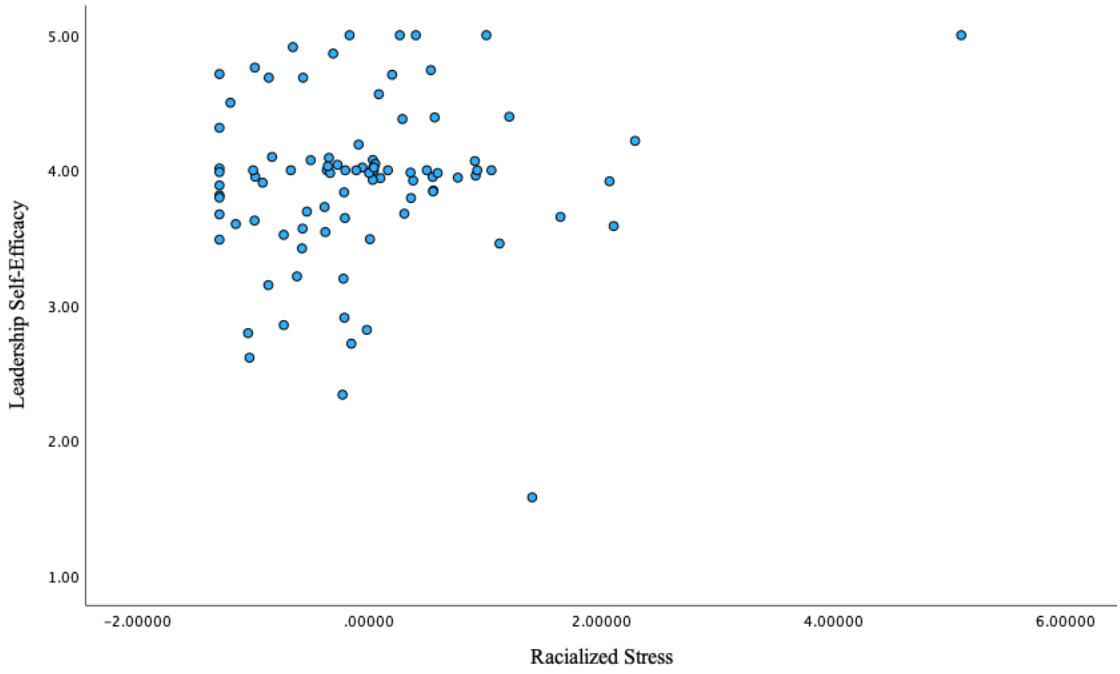
Assumptions

Assumption 1. Linearity. The relationship between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy is linear.

Linearity refers to the relationship between two or more variables that change at the same rate. In cases of linearity, a scatterplot would show data falling along a straight line in either a positive or negative direction (Huck, 2012). A graph was created in SPSS to test for linearity between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy. The results do not fit the terms of this assumption, and there appears to be no linearity between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy.

Figure 4

The Assumption of Linearity

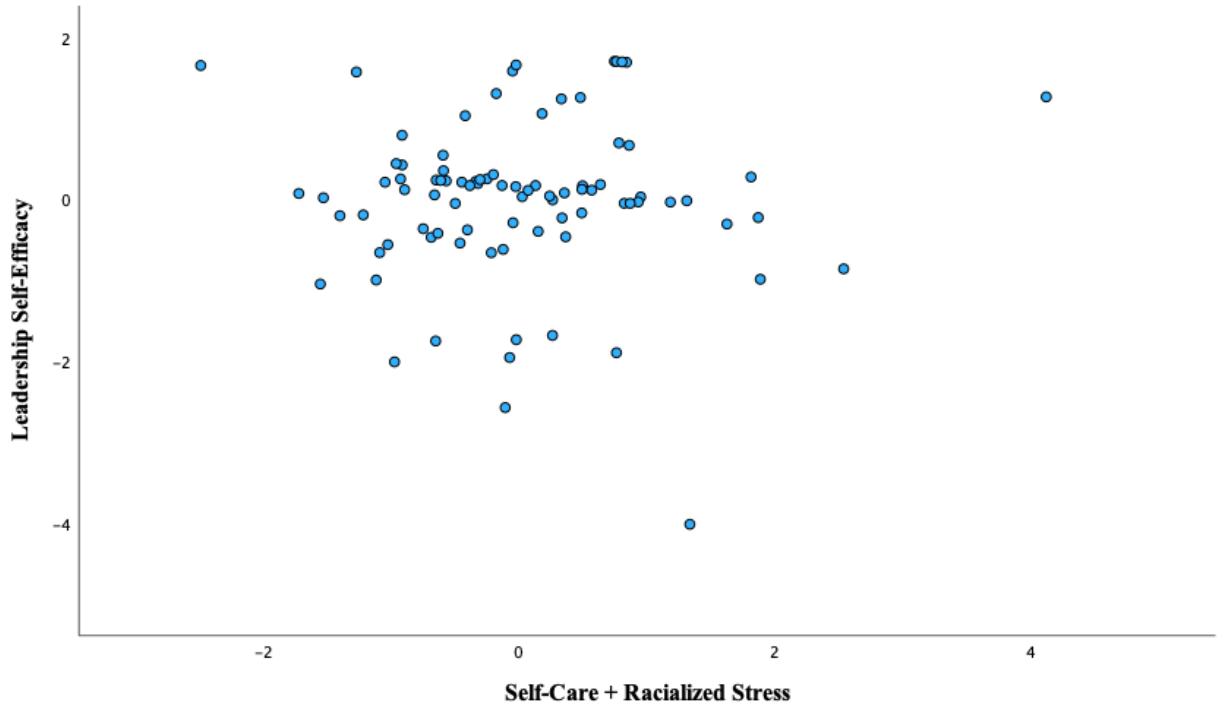


Assumption 2. Homoscedasticity. There is a normal distribution of leadership self-efficacy among Black school leaders with a constant variance between self-care and racialized stress.

Homoscedasticity is an assumption about the residuals of data in a multiple regression (Huck, 2012). The expectation is to see data dispersed around a best-fit line. The opposite of homoscedasticity is heteroscedasticity, which is a violation of the linear regression model. Heteroscedasticity has data dispersed unevenly and does not follow a best-fit line (Salkind, 2017). It is not surprising that the data from this study violates homoscedasticity, based on the initial assumption of linearity. There is no normal distribution of leadership self-efficacy, self-care, and racialized stress among the Black school leaders who participated in this study. With the data being heteroscedastic, the OLS regression would be inaccurate.

Figure 5

The Assumption of Homoscedasticity



Assumption 3. Independence. Black school leaders can remember and accurately provide their perceptions of stress during encounters of individual and collective racism.

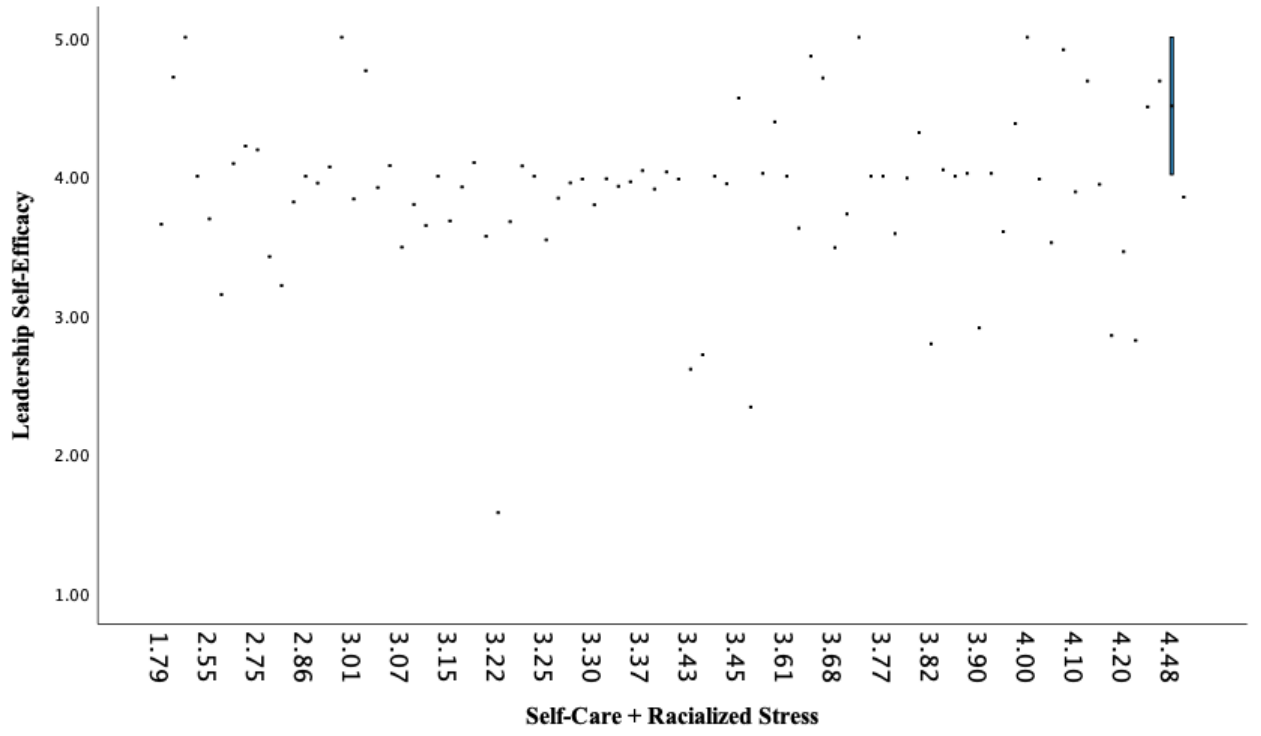
An independent sample t-test compares the scores of different groups of individuals who have completed the same survey (Ross & Shannon, 2011). The assumption is invalid for this study, as the sample is from the same Black school leaders. These leaders did share their perceptions of racialized stress in terms of feelings immediately after the incident occurred, as well as those feelings that are most recent.

Assumption 4. Normality. Leadership self-efficacy and self-care are evenly distributed among Black school leaders who experience racialized stress.

The assumption of normality means that the collected data follows a normal distribution (Kim & Park, 2019). Normality is usually done for parametric tests. An even distribution of leadership self-efficacy and self-care is observed in the dataset. Normality is confirmed.

Figure 6

Assumption of Normality



Assumption 5. No Multicollinearity. The independent variables of self-care practices and racialized stress are not highly correlated with one another.

Multicollinearity occurs when independent variables are highly correlated. Multicollinearity creates problems in determining which variable contributes to the dependent variable (Laerdu Statistics, 2023). In running the test for multicollinearity, the variance inflation factors (VIF) are all below 10 (Ross & Shannon, 2011). The dataset meets the assumption of no multicollinearity.

Table 5

Assumption of No Multicollinearity

Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
						Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.68	.41		8.85	<.001		
Leadership Self-Efficacy	.08	.07	.13	1.18	.24	.93	1.07
Self-Care	.07	.12	.06	.56	.58	.93	1.07

Self-Care

Cook-Cottone and Guyker (2017) developed the Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS), a practical self-assessment tool that guides participants to evaluate and improve their self-care. The scale assesses practices supporting positive self-care across six factors: physical care, supportive relationships, mindful awareness, self-compassion and purpose, mindful relaxation, and supportive structure. The MSCS gathers information by asking 33 questions that are rated on a Likert scale. Each question begins with "*how many times*" or "*how often*," and the scale ranges from never (0 days), rarely (1 day), sometimes (2-3 days), often (4-5 days), to regularly (6-7 days). To clarify, one question from the physical self-care subsection is "*how many times did you drink 6 to 8 oz of water this week*?"

A reliability test on the MSCS subscale items shows a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.917, which is an indication of high reliability. Before conducting the test, subscale items were

computed into a single variable using the mean of the total items in the respective subscale. For instance, there are eight questions in the Physical Care subscale. The average score of the eight questions was calculated and referred to as Mean_Physical Care. Reliability was also tested for these newly computed variables, and Cronbach's alpha was 0.789. The MSCS is reliable.

In a preliminary review of MSCS data, the standard deviations show that participants' Likert scale responses were slightly less than 1 point different from the mean. These standard deviations suggest that the data are close to the mean for each subscale. The skewness of the data suggests that the physical self-care, self-compassion and purpose, and supportive structures of self-care are skewed to the right. Whereas supportive relationships, mindful awareness, and mindful relaxation are skewed left. Results from the frequency statistics can be reviewed in Table 6.

Table 6

Statistics for the Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS)

		Physical Self-Care	Supportive Relationships Self-Care	Mindful Awareness Self-Care	Self-Compassion and Purpose	Mindful Relaxation	Supportive Structures
N	Valid	104	104	103	103	103	103
	Missing	0	0	1	1	1	1
Mean		2.77	4.18	3.78	3.35	3.10	3.40
Std. Deviation		.84	.74	.84	.85	.75	.75
Variance		.71	.54	.70	.73	.57	.56
Skewness		.02	-.77	-.52	.04	-.32	.64

Std. Error of Skewness	.24	.24	.24	.24	2.38	.238
Kurtosis	-.54	.04	.52	-.52	-.38	-.47
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47
Minimum	1.25	2.00	1.25	1.33	1.33	1.75
Maximum	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.67	5.00

Leadership Self-Efficacy

Finding that previous self-efficacy scales were limited to principals, Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES) is used to measure the self-reported data from a variety of school leaders—to include principals, headmasters, and other school administrators. The instrument asks school leaders to rate their confidence in seven leadership areas. Those leadership areas are creating an appropriate structure, leading and managing the learning organization, school self-evaluation for school improvement, developing a positive climate that manages conflicts, evaluating classroom practices, adhering to community and policy demands, and monitoring learning (Petridou et al., 2013). Responses are provided on a five-point Likert scale. Confidence is reported as 1= not at all confident, 2= not confident, 3= somewhat confident, 4= confident, and 5 = very confident.

The test for reliability on the SLSES returns a Cronbach's alpha of 0.959. Just as with the MSCS instrument, the SLSES subscale items were also computed into new variables using the subscale means. The Cronbach's alpha for the newly computed variables was 0.921. SLSES is reliable.

If charts are used to present the SLSES data, readers will see a bell curve with data points scattered around the means of each of the seven categories (Standard Deviations of 0.68, 0.72,

0.61, 0.58, 0.60, 0.90, 0.91). The data points for each of the seven categories are negatively skewed and scattered around the mean, resulting in a left-skewed curve. Almost all the data would peak above normal, as indicated by the kurtosis statistics. The only variable that would peak normally is the one for self-efficacy related to climate management leadership.

Table 7

Statistics for the School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES)

		Leading Others	Monitoring Learning	Leading and Managing	Climate Management	Creating Appropriate Structures	School Evaluation	Classroom Practices
N	Valid	104	103	104	104	103	102	104
	Missing	0	1	0	0	1	2	0
Mean		4.00	3.88	3.93	3.93	3.92	3.77	3.94
Std. Deviation		.68	.72	.62	.58	.60	.90	.91
Variance		.47	.52	.38	.34	.36	.82	.82
Skewness		-.94	-.98	-.89	-.07	-.38	-1.17	-1.67
Std. Error of Skewness		.24	.24	.24	.24	.24	.24	.24
Kurtosis		3.13	2.50	2.70	2.70	1.59	1.90	3.50
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.43	1.43	1.57	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Racialized Stress

The Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale (RBTSSS) is an instrument designed to assess the emotional and psychological stress reactions to experiences of racism and racial discrimination (Carter et al., 2018). The instrument was developed for the prevalence and severity of psychological and emotional stress reactions to memorable events (Carter et al., 2018). The RBTSSS allows participants to select a specific experience involving racism and share the recollection of reactions immediately after the event and those reactions that are most recent. The intent is for one month to separate the categorizations of *immediately after* and *most recently* on the survey. RBTSSS measures seven factors, including depression, intrusion, anger, hypervigilance, physical health, self-esteem, and avoidance.

Cronbach's alpha for the RBTSSS instrument indicates reliability across the seven factors (RBTSSS subscales AFTER, $\alpha = 0.819$; RBTSSS subscales RECENT, $\alpha = 0.830$). It is important to note that all scores were standardized into z scores to assist with the interpretation of data. The decision to standardize scores came from Carter and Sant-Barket's (2015) article, "*How to use the race-based traumatic stress syndrome scale in practice*." The article explains that converting summed scores to z scores and then to t scores is necessary. In following this advice, the formula 50 + 10 * (each respective subscale) yielded the t score. Subsequently, every participant now has a newly computed t score that indicates whether the participant's score was around the mean ($\mu = 50$) and a standard deviation of 10. For example, a t score of 41.72 is below the mean by 8.28; whereas a t score of 70.67 is above the mean by 20.67. The newly computed t-scores help to better understand each participant's scores in relation to self-reported racialized stress. This study utilizes the "recent" variables found in the RBTSSS dataset. The variable capturing

participants' most recent reactions and feelings related to racialized stress is used due to its likely prevalence in day-to-day interactions.

A bell curve of the RBTSSS would show that data are spread far from the means of the subscales and that all data are skewed to the right. Kurtosis indicates that the bell curve would have a flat tail.

Table 8

Statistics for the Race-Based Traumatic Stress Syndrome Scale (RBTSSS)

		Depression	Intrusion	Anger	Hypervigilance	Physical	Low Self Esteem	Avoidance
N	Valid	99	98	98	97	97	99	99
	Missing	5	6	6	7	7	5	5
Mean		49.78	49.81	49.82	49.68	49.99	49.92	49.83
Std. Deviation		7.86	7.33	7.81	7.33	7.48	7.67	6.46
Variance		61.71	53.71	61.06	53.74	56.00	58.80	41.69
Skewness		3.08	.13	.31	1.96	1.07	3.10	2.34
Std. Error of Skewness		.24	.24	.24	.25	.25	.24	.24
Kurtosis		12.63	.15	-.29	3.93	.34	11.00	6.35
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.48	.48	.48	.49	.49	.48	.48
Minimum		45.93	37.72	38.62	44.90	43.48	46.14	46.13
Maximum		96.02	74.15	73.13	78.01	72.50	88.81	78.27

Data Analysis and Research Questions

Data were analyzed using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. The OLS model minimizes the sum of squared errors between predicted and actual values. The analysis concentrates on potential correlations with leadership self-efficacy being the dependent variable (Ross & Shannon, 2011). The first regression explored leadership self-efficacy and the possible correlation between the control variables of age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The representation for this model is "Leadership Self-Efficacy ~ Control Variables" (age, experience, degree, position, geographic location).

The *p*-values indicate no significance between leadership self-efficacy and the control variables (age, experience, degree, position, and geographic location) for participants of this study. The *p*-values are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Correlations between Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Leadership Self-Efficacy	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	-	.64	.33	.49	.55
	N	100	100	100	100	99
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.047	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.64	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	104	104	104	103

Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.09	.85**	1.000	.44**	.39**
	Sig	.33	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.07	.43**	.43**	.03	.03
	Sig.	.49	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	104	104	103	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	.06	.38**	.39**	.030	1.00
	Sig.	.55	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	103	103	103	103
	Sig.	.98	.17	.36	.76	.53
	N	100	104	104	104	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 1. To what extent does racialized stress predict leader self-efficacy?

The first research question explores the correlation between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy. The variable used to quantify racialized stress is based on each participant's "*most recent*" reaction or feelings toward a memorable, racially charged event.

If the *p*-value is less than 0.005, it would indicate statistical significance. The *p*-value indicates no significance between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy among participants in this study. The *p*-value is 0.162.

Table 10

Correlation between Racialized Stress and Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		LSES	Racialized Stress	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.16	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	-	.13	.64	.33	.49	.55
	N	100	91	100	100	100	99
Racialized Stress	Correlation Coefficient	.162	1.00	.01	-.07	.00	-.15
	Sig.	.13	-	.92	.50	.99	.14
	N	91	95	95	95	95	94
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.05	.01	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.64	.92	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.09	-.07	.85**	1.00	.43**	.39**
	Sig	.33	.50	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.07	.00	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.49	.99	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103

Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.06	-.15	.38**	.39**	.03	1.00
	Sig.	.55	.14	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	94	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 2. To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care?

The second research question pertains to the correlation between racialized stress and the practice of self-care. The variable used to quantify racialized stress is based on each participant's "*most recent*" reaction or feelings toward a memorable, racially charged event. The SPSS representation is racialized stress ~ self-care.

The *p*-value indicates that there is no significant correlation between racialized stress and the practice of self-care. The *p*-value is 0.335. See Table 11 for a full review of the statistics.

Table 11

Correlation between Self-Care and Racialized Stress and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Self-Care	Racialized Stress	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Self-Care	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	-.10	.01	-.04	.13	.04
	Sig.	-	.34	.91	.67	.19	.73
	N	100	91	100	100	100	99
Racialized Stress	Correlation Coefficient	-.10	1.00	.01	-.07	.00	-.15
	Sig.	.34	-	.92	.50	.99	.14
	N	91	95	95	95	95	94

Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.01	.01	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.91	.92	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	-.04	-.07	.85**	1.00	.43**	.39**
	Sig	.67	.50	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.13	.00	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.19	.99	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.04	-.15	.38**	.39**	.03	1.000
	Sig.	.73	.14	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	94	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 3. In what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy?

The third research question examines the correlation between leadership self-efficacy and the practice of self-care, controlling for age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The SPSS representation for this model is leadership self-efficacy ~ self-care.

The *p*-value indicates no significant correlation between leadership self-efficacy and self-care. The correlation between leadership self-efficacy and self-care has a p-value of 0.406. See Table 12 for a full review of the statistics.

Table 12

Correlation between Self-Care and Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Self-Care	Leadership Self-Efficacy	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Self-Care	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	0.09	.01	-.04	.13	.04
	Sig.		-	.41	.91	.19	.73
	N		100	96	100	100	99
Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	0.87	1.00	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	.41	-	.64	.31	.49	.55
	N	96	100	100	100	100	99
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.01	.047	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.91	.64	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	-.04	.09	.85**	1.00	.43**	.04
	Sig	.67	.33	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103

Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.13	.069	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.19	.49	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.04	.06	.38**	.39**	.03	1.000
	Sig.	.73	.55	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	99	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 4. When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leader self-efficacy?

The previous tests did not find any correlations between any of the variables. It is unnecessary to test the complete model. I accept the null hypothesis; the quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

Chapter 5
Discussion

A critical analysis of literature related to racialized stress, self-care, and leadership self-efficacy suggests that Black school leaders may benefit from the intentional practice of self-care. The topic of race, and subsequently racism, have been subjects of debate. One truth is that race has no meaning outside of the structures that society has assigned. Being born with brown skin, white skin, or any variation in between is biological (Williams, 2012). Race becomes real when considering how this social construct highlights differences and often defines opportunities, especially for Black and Brown people in America. This study focuses on the realities of race, real or perceived, and the unique stress that it can create for Black school leaders who must navigate this social construct in both their personal and professional lives. The purpose of this current study is to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders. The research questions are 1) to what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy; 2) to what extent does racialized stress predict self-care; 3) in what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy; 4) when testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy?

Problem Statement

Positions in school leadership are highly stressful (Ray et al. 2020). Consider the dynamics of many public schools. Some receive unequal state and federal funding, have high poverty rates, and struggle with teacher shortages (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic adds another layer to an already challenging role. School closures, remote learning, social distancing, and mandatory quarantines for symptomatic individuals all contribute to widening academic, opportunity, and learning loss gaps (Wilson & Sanders, 2023) that exist in these schools. Despite these obstacles, school leaders are responsible for exercising effective

leadership for continuous school improvement. Leaders need to have a strong sense of self-efficacy, which enables the confidence necessary to handle the challenges of the position.

Now, consider the social construction of race and what it means for Black school leaders. Race is an example of one of the most complex social constructs in America (Bonilla-Silva, 2022). Biologically, race has no meaning. Yet, these meanings are assigned socially, are internalized through the establishment of policy (Kendi, 2019), and are mass communicated through social normalization (DiAngelo, 2018). The Black community bares the weight of a history of enslavement and still falls victim to the unrelenting perils of race and racism (Dyson, 2017; Feagin, 2006). Whether the peril is macroaggressive, such as witnessing the recording of violence against unarmed Black people, or microaggressive, such as being dismissed or humiliated, it can elicit a stress response—known in this study as racialized stress. Racialized stress has the potential to make it difficult for Black school leaders to remain efficacious. Focusing on self-care may be a beneficial coping mechanism for Black school leaders.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this current study is to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leader self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

Research Questions

1) To what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy?

2) To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care?

3) In what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy?

4) When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy?

Hypothesis and Null Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis: The quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

Hypothesis: The quality and frequency of self-care practices improve leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders and serve as an effective coping mechanism for the conceptualization of racialized stress.

H1: An inverse relationship exists between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

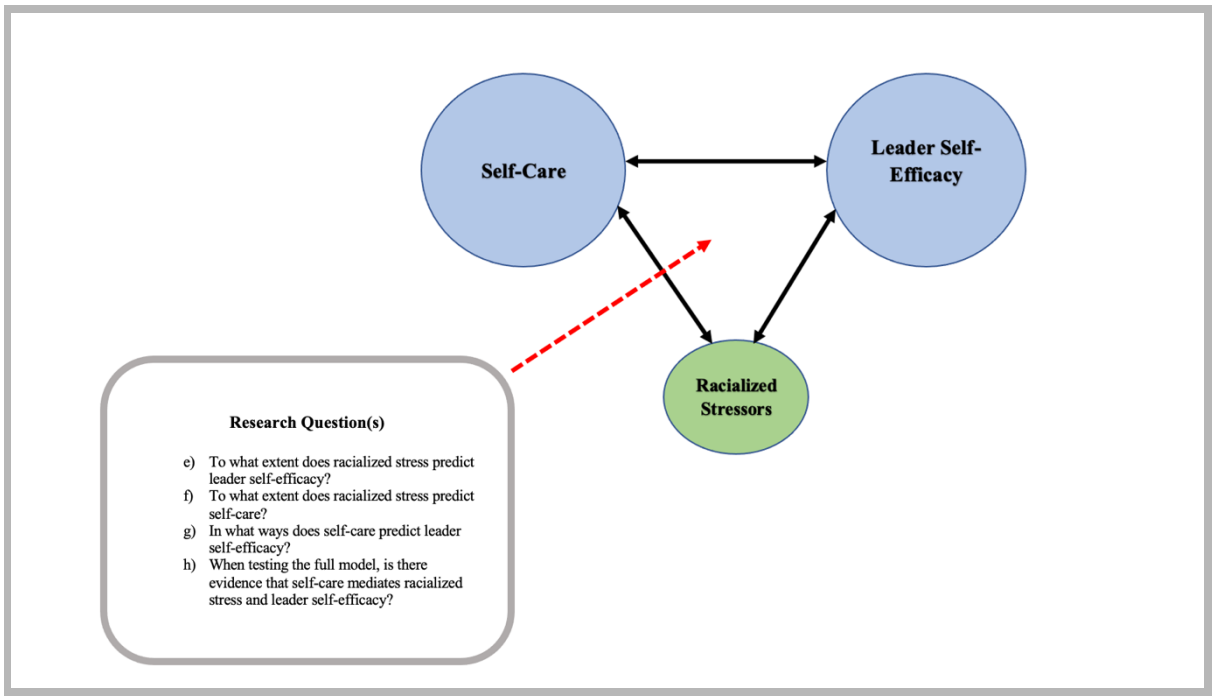
H2: A linear relationship exists between racialized stress and self-care for Black school leaders.

H3: A linear relationship exists between self-care and leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

H4: When testing the full model, self-care will partially mediate the effects of racialized stress on leadership self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

Review of Methodology

Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework for this study draws from the research of Jones' (1997) multidimensional model of racism and Harrell's (2000) conceptualization of racialized stress. Jones' (1997) multidimensional model of racism suggests that minority ethnic groups encounter racism on three levels—individual, institutional, and cultural. Individual racism is a standalone experience where racism affects a single individual or group. Institutional racism, also referred to as systemic racism, perpetuates racism through oppressive policies. Cultural racism is racial socialization and the ways in which dominant beliefs and values are taught and reinforced in society.

Harrell (2000) expanded Jones' conceptualization by identifying six categories of racialized stress. The six categories for racialized stressors are racism-related life events,

vicarious racism experiences, daily racism microaggressions, chronic contextual stress, collective experiences of racism, and transgenerational transmission of group trauma.

Stress, while real in its perception, is conceptual. Strategies can be implemented to reduce its effects on an individual's mental and physical health. It is here that Harrell's (2000) conceptualization and the current study meet to address Black school leaders. Racialized stress has the potential to make it difficult for Black school leaders to remain efficacious. The intentional focus on self-care will not eliminate racialized stress, but self-care may mediate its impact. The purpose of this current study is to deepen the understanding of self-care and its correlation to leader self-efficacy for Black school leaders.

Research Design

A cross-sectional explanatory research design provides the structure for observing and explaining variables in this study. The design allows data collection from multiple participants to gain insight and possibly explain shared experiences with racialized stress, self-care, and self-reported leadership self-efficacy. Participants are Black school leaders from Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina public schools. These leaders are currently employed in a school leadership position ranging from assistant principal to assistant superintendent in a PK-12 public school system. Each participant completed a Qualtrics survey to share current self-care practices, self-reported leadership self-efficacy, and personal perceptions of racialized stress.

The Qualtrics survey consists of three existing instruments. The instruments are Cook-Cottone and Guyker's (2017) Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS), Petridou et al.'s (2013) School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES), and Carter et al.'s (20183) Race-Based Traumatic Stress Symptom Scale (RBTSSS).

Cooke-Cottone & Guyker's (2017) MSCS quantifies self-care according to six factors: physical care, supportive relationships, mindful awareness, self-compassion and purpose, mindful relaxation, and supportive structure. Questions guide participants through a review of the last seven days and gather information about water intake, proper nutrition, and social and emotional networking, among other practices. The MSCS captures this information with 33 Likert scale items.

Petridou et al.'s (2013) SLSES asks school leaders to rate their leadership self-efficacy, or confidence, in six leadership areas. Those leadership areas are creating an appropriate structure, leading and managing the learning organization, school self-evaluation for school improvement, developing a positive climate that manages conflicts, evaluating classroom practices, and monitoring learning.

Carter et al.'s (20183) RBTSSS allows participants to select a specific experience with racism and share the recollection of reactions immediately after the event and the most recent reactions. This study recognizes the most recent reactions as the variable for racialized stress.

The research recruitment call was shared by email and social media. A total of 3,504 invitations were sent to school leaders by email. Facebook messages were shared on a personal social media page and in private social media groups. During recruitment, a tweet was shared multiple times that tagged each state's Department of Education. The slow return of surveys led to snowball recruitment within my professional network. Recruitment efforts led to the return of 107 surveys. Three surveys were removed because of incompletion or failure to meet the requirements for participation. Data for the remaining 104 participants were analyzed using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. Chapter 4 provides a detailed review of the results and an acceptance of the null hypothesis. The quality and frequency of self-care practices do not

mediate racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy. The content that follows in this chapter explores the findings and generates discussion around the results.

Results

Research Question 1. To what extent does racialized stress predict leadership self-efficacy?

The first research question explores the correlation between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy. The variable used to quantify racialized stress is based on each participant's "*most recent*" reaction or feelings toward a memorable, racially charged event. There is no significance between racialized stress and leadership self-efficacy among participants in this study. The *p*-value is 0.162.

Research Question 2. To what extent does racialized stress predict self-care?

The second research question pertains to the correlation between racialized stress and the practice of self-care. Again, the variable used to quantify racialized stress is based on each participant's "*most recent*" reaction or feelings toward a memorable, racially charged event. The *p*-value indicates that there is no significant correlation between racialized stress and the practice of self-care. The *p*-value is 0.335.

Research Question 3. In what ways does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy?

The third research question examines the correlation between leadership self-efficacy and the practice of self-care, controlling for age, experience, degree type, position, and geographic location. The *p*-value indicates no significant correlation between leadership self-efficacy and self-care. The correlation between leadership self-efficacy and self-care has a p-value of 0.406.

Research Question 4. When testing the full model, is there evidence that self-care mediates racialized stress and leader self-efficacy?

The previous tests did not find any correlations between the variables. It is unnecessary to test the complete model. I accept the null hypothesis; the quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

Discussion and Findings

Discussion and Findings for Self-Care

Self-care involves intentional practices to increase self-awareness for the purpose of promoting good physical and mental health. Self-care practices are unique to each individual, but there is consensus among the literature that the most effective self-care practices include a mindfulness approach to ensure adequate sleep, physical fitness, exercise, proper hydration (Ray et al., 2020), social support, and spirituality (Krull & Robicheau, 2020).

The Rationale for the Black School Leaders' Incorporation of Self-care

School leadership is a demanding profession that frequently requires the ability to balance multiple tasks and make informed decisions. Ray et al. (2020) conducted a study to learn more about school principals' well-being and self-care practices. The self-care practices highlighted in the survey were sleep, nutrition, hydration, and exercise. A sample of 473 practicing Arkansan administrators, mostly White (n=431), found that many members of the principal workforce overwork to the point of exhaustion. "*School administrators [as compared to the general population] are working longer hours, sleeping less, rarely exercising, sacrificing time with loved ones, and missing out on engaging in activities outside of their job that bring them meaning and joy"* (Ray et al., 2020, p. 442).

By focusing on the job's daily demands, school leaders overlook the deeper problem of attending to their own mental and physical health. In open-ended responses from the same study (Ray et al., 2020), participants wrote about the obligatory requirements of leadership that took

time away from family and friends. Many respondents also mentioned irregular sleep and infrequent meal patterns, as "*skipping lunch*" was a common reply. According to Ray et al. (2020), school leaders who prioritize self-care are more capable of effectively performing in their leadership role. These results suggest that there might be a connection between self-care and self-efficacy.

The current study uses Cook-Cottone and Guyker's (2017) MSCS as the instrument for self-care. This instrument is designed to be practical, assisting participants in evaluating and improving their self-care practices. It measures self-care based on six factors: physical care, supportive relationships, mindful awareness, self-compassion and purpose, mindful relaxation, and supportive structure (Cook-Cottone & Guyker, 2017). There are 33 Likert scale items. Each question starts with the prompt, "*how many times or how often…*," and the scale is written as never = 0 days, rarely = 1 day, sometimes = 2 to 3 days, often = 4 to 5 days, and regularly = 6 to 7 days.

Subscale: Physical Care

The physical care portion of the MSCS asks participants to share information related to water intake, nutrition, physical activity, and meal planning. Black school leaders in the current study have a mean of 2.7572 in this area, which implies these leaders are "sometimes" attentive to their physical self-care. Black school leader participants are spending between 2 to 3 days per week on their physical self-care.

Subscale: Supportive Relationships

A review of literature suggests that prioritizing self-care can have a significant positive impact on overall quality of life and personal and professional success (Cook-Cottone & Guyke, 2017; Kaluza et al., 2020; Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Self-care is a process that requires self-

awareness and an adaptation of needs, experiences, and values (Dorociak et al., 2017). While this can involve taking proactive steps to ensure physical, mental, and emotional well-being, it is also necessary to seek out appropriate support systems. Black school leaders, in this study, have a mean score of 4.1788, suggesting that these leaders "often" receive support from those closest to them.

Subscale: Mindful Awareness

Mindful awareness is the ability to calm internal thoughts and engage in positive self-talk. These skills make it easier to manage complex tasks with resilience (Fancera, 2016). Black school leaders in this current study have a mean score of 3.7840. These leaders are practicing mindful awareness "often" throughout the course of the week.

Subscale: Self-Compassion and Purpose

Self-compassion allows school leaders to acknowledge difficulties and failure without internalizing negativity (Petridou et al., 2018). A driving force behind the work of some school leaders is purpose, which fuels their passion. It requires the ability to allow feelings and emotions to arise without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Black school leader participants in the current study report an average of 3.3544, which means that these leaders "sometimes" practice self-compassion.

Subscale: Mindful Relaxation

Taking time to relax can be beneficial in reducing tension, alleviating stress, and promoting mental well-being (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). There are various types of relaxation, which are categorized by Cook-Cottone and Guyker (2017) as intellectual relaxation, relaxation that stimulates the five senses, and creative relaxation through art and drawing. Black school leader

participants in the current study have an average of 3.0987—indicating that these school leaders practice mindful relaxation "sometimes" throughout the week.

Subscale: Supportive Structure

Being organized, maintaining cleanliness, effectively managing a schedule, and balancing the needs of others with personal needs are all important supportive structures. Collectively, Black school leaders in this study have an average of 3.4029. The average indicates that these leaders are able to structure their activities and schedules at least 2 to 3 times per week.

Final Thoughts on Self-Care

The findings in this current study reveal that the 104 Black school leader participants prioritize self-care at least 2-3 times a week. The most practiced form of self-care involves seeking and maintaining supportive relationships. The results align to Krull and Robicheau's (2020) study of Black school leaders, who reported the supportive relationships they develop through spirituality and religious practices as an effective coping mechanism for stress. There are gaps in the literature that suggest that self-care is still a developing research area. Future research presents a valuable opportunity for advancing knowledge and promoting self-care among minority leaders.

Discussion and Findings for Leadership Self-Efficacy

Effective leadership is crucial for continuous improvement in public schools, particularly those struggling with low performance and high poverty rates. We know that the zoning of public schools can influence the demographics of the learning community—leading to schools with high poverty, as indicated by low socioeconomic status (SEF, 2022). We also know that public schools face the challenges of unequal state and federal funding and often struggle with teacher shortages (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Yet, we know of schools that are thriving despite

these obstacles. We know of schools that consistently show academic growth and appear to achieve all of their shared goals. Knowing these realities makes it easier to draw questions about effective school leaders' actions to achieve progress within the learning community. What qualities are necessary for a school leader to be effective? How are effective school leaders increasing academic growth within their learning communities?

When discussing students' academic growth, it is commonly accepted that teachers have the most significant and most direct influence. Teachers facilitate learning by connecting course content, providing feedback, fostering discussion, and building relationships to support academic growth (Fancera & Bliss, 2011). According to Fancera (2016), school leaders have little impact in these areas. Instead, the school leader's role is to promote collective efficacy, which is essential for these improvements.

The school leader guides and empowers educators to work towards shared goals. Prior research points to efficacy as a foundational element for high-achieving schools (Bandura, 2000; Hannah et al., 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Efficacy pertains to the level of confidence that an individual or a group possesses in their capability to carry out challenging tasks successfully. Efficacy requires belief, dedication, calculated risks, and an unwavering resolve to follow through. People who believe they have the necessary abilities to face challenges are more likely to successfully meet their goals (Bandura, 2000).

Research around leadership self-efficacy looks at the leader-follower dynamics (Hannah et al., 2008), suggesting that school leaders must have confidence and agency and create the same levels of traits in those they are leading (Bandura, 2000). An efficacious school leader will be able to generate solutions, engage in complex decision-making, develop a vision, set attainable goals, and monitor progress (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004).

The current study employs Petridou et al.'s (2013) SLSES instrument to capture leadership self-efficacy for participants. The instrument uses a Likert scale where 1= Not at All Confident, 2= Not Confident, 3= Somewhat Confident, 4= Confident, and 5= Very Confident. The SLSES instrument asks school leaders to rate their leadership self-efficacy, or confidence, in seven leadership areas. Those areas are 1) creating appropriate structures, 2) leading and managing the learning environment, 3) school evaluation, 4) climate management, 5) classroom practices, 6) monitoring learning, and 7) leading others.

Subscale: Creating Appropriate Structures

Creating appropriate structures involves professional, ethical, and legal principles. In this part of the survey, school leaders assess their skills in managing the school environment and fostering a culture that establishes strong partnerships with parents and external organizations to enhance learning.

Previous research indicates that creating appropriate structures is critical for leadership self-efficacy, as poor performance in this area can have a negative impact on all other factors (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Petridou et al., 2013). The mean score among participants in this study was 3.9223, indicating that 103 of the Black school leaders feel "confident" in their abilities to establish and maintain the appropriate structures for continuous improvements in their schools. One participant has missing data and is not represented in this count.

Subscale: Leading and Managing in the Learning Organization

Leading and managing the learning environment highlights the ability to foster collective efficacy among teachers. In this part of the survey, school leaders must consider how they promote the active participation of staff in decision-making. Other questions inquire about adaptable leadership styles, task delegation, and prioritizing learning in strategic planning.

According to Petridou et al.'s (2013) SLSES, the strongest correlation is found between creating a suitable structure and leading and managing the learning organization. While this correlation is not the strongest for the current study, there is a low positive correlation (0.480) between creating appropriate structures and leading and managing the learning organization when controlling for socioeconomic status and being a rural school in the Deep South. Black school leaders in this study have a mean score of 3.9286, indicating that they are “confident” in the ability to lead and manage the organization.

Subscale: School Self-Evaluation for School Improvement

Self-evaluation in schools is essential for making continuous improvement plans and communicating a shared vision. Many school leaders are required to draft plans to address continuous improvement in academic growth, proficiency, and other areas that impact success. In this survey, participants are asked to rate their confidence in developing, implementing, and using continuous improvement plans from their school leadership positions. The mean score among the Black school leaders participating in this study was 3.7712, indicating that these leaders are “confident” in their abilities to develop, implement, and use continuous improvement plans.

Subscale: Developing a Positive Climate and Managing Conflicts

School leaders are responsible for establishing a supportive environment that promotes and welcomes achievement while effectively handling disagreements. Petridou et al.’s (2013) SLSES instrument has these traits listed with developing a positive climate. In this current study, Black school leaders have an average score of 3.9327, indicating that they are "confident" in their ability to foster a positive culture.

Developing a positive climate is not easy. School leaders must see change and improvement as possibilities, then must believe in the structures, personnel, beliefs, values, and culture of the learning community (Hesbol, 2019). Finally, school leaders must view themselves as capable of facilitating the changes and motivating the team to stay the course (Fancera, 2016). Participants in this study have reported a high level of leadership self-efficacy in this area. It could mean that all of the participants are highly efficacious and are serving as school leaders in the most effective schools. It could also mean that Black school leaders, who completed this survey, inflated the scores—either consciously or subconsciously.

Subscale: Evaluating Classroom Practices

High-quality classrooms have practices in place that allow for progress monitoring, feedback, and instructional adjustments. School leaders must be able to monitor teacher performance and offer constructive feedback for improvement (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004). In the current study, Black school leaders have an average of 3.9423, indicating that they are confident in their ability to assess classroom practices.

Subscale: Monitoring Learning

The data show the strongest correlation (0.784) occurs between evaluating classroom practices and monitoring learning for participants in the current study. Monitoring learning involves keeping track of student performance, evaluating the effectiveness of classroom practices, and utilizing the existing school infrastructure to improve learning for both students and staff. Black school leaders participating in this study have a mean score of 3.8786, indicating that these leaders are “confident” in monitoring learning.

Final Thoughts on Leadership Self-Efficacy

Based on responses from 104 Black school leaders who completed the leadership self-efficacy portion of the Qualtrics survey, it was found that these leaders have a high level of confidence in their leadership abilities. It is common for researchers to request that surveys assessing leadership self-efficacy incorporate responses from both teachers and school leaders (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Petridou et al., 2013) instead of self-reporting. Those surveys allow teachers to offer their evaluation of the school's overall climate and the effectiveness of the school's leadership. The school leader would do the same. In the present study, an instrument for self-reporting was incorporated to foster self-awareness among participants. The thought was that increased self-awareness may facilitate potential links with Black school leaders' self-care. A consideration for future research is to conduct leadership self-efficacy studies for an explicit understanding of Black school leaders' abilities to build confidence and agency. What are the areas that Black school leaders tend to excel in, and what areas are these leaders lacking? How does mentorship impact confidence levels?

Discussions and Findings for Racialized Stress

Conversations about the current research study started in 2020 during a time when the Black community may have experienced heightened levels of collective stress due to various events. These events include, but are not limited to, the COVID-19 pandemic coupled with the murder of George Floyd. Floyd's murder sparked a renewed sense of addressing racial inequities in the United States. Slogans like, "It takes all of us" began to emerge to support addressing the underpinning issues related to race and racism in our country. To capture emotions effectively, I deliberately sought out an instrument that would enable participants to share the feelings endured immediately after a traumatic event, as well as their most recent feelings. Carter et al.'s (2018)

Race-Based Traumatic Stress Syndrome Scale (RBTSSS) is an instrument created to evaluate the emotional and psychological responses to instances of racism and racial discrimination. The instrument is intentional in capturing data among seven factors, including depression, intrusion, anger, hypervigilance, physical health, self-esteem, and avoidance.

Participants are asked to choose a primary category for the incident before starting the RBTSSS, which will act as the basis for the following answers. For example, participants are asked to select from one of three events: Event 1) a vicarious racism experience, such as the murder of George Floyd; Event 2) a personal racism experience that occurred at work; and Event 3) a personal racism experience that occurred in the participants' personal lives. The findings show that 36 participants (34.6%) centered their responses on Event 1, while 41 participants (39.4%) focused on Event 2, and 26 participants (25.0%) centered their answers around Event 3.

When using the RBTSSS to measure racialized stress, it is important to consider certain limitations such as the time lapse, the severity of symptoms, and the audience. Timing is a factor that may have impacted the results of the current study. As time passes, it is not uncommon to find that individuals remember events differently (Carter et al., 2018), but the experience of racism is not often forgotten entirely (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996). The conversations that began in 2020 were not measured through this study until 2023. The 3-year time lapse provides an opportunity to compartmentalize the feelings that may have surrounded incidents related to the experience with collective racism. It may be difficult for participants to pinpoint exactly how they may have felt 3 years ago, especially if these are high-functioning leaders in society.

The RBTSSS *After* scores reflect the participants' immediate feelings towards stressors after the event. Conversely, the RBTSSS *Recent* scores represent the participants' feelings regarding stressors within the last month. Findings indicate a moderate positive correlation

between the RBTSSS *After* and RBTSSS *Recent* scores. The Pearson correlation is 0.781, and the p-value is <0.001. The RBTSSS *Recent* scores serve as the variable for racialized stress in this current study. The scores were standardized into z scores and then transformed into t scores to make it easier to interpret the data. The RBTSSS Likert scale now has the following comparison: 0 = Does not describe my reaction (t score = 0), 1 = Had this reaction infrequently (t score = 25), 2 = Had this reaction sometimes (t score = 50), 3 = Had this reaction frequently (t score = 75), and 4 = The reaction would not go away (t score = 100).

Subscale: Depression

The questions in the depression subscale of RBTSS address issues such as low energy levels, lack of motivation, feelings of hopelessness, and difficulty managing emotions. Results from the current study show that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.7810, suggesting that these leaders "sometimes" experience depression from racialized stress.

Subscale: Intrusion

Intrusion refers to the experience of mental images or emotions that make it challenging to revisit anything that triggers memories of the event that caused racialized stress. The findings of the current study indicate that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.8125, which implies that they "sometimes" encounter intrusion caused by racialized stress.

Subscale: Anger

In the RBTSSS, anger refers to a tendency to become easily agitated or upset and experience difficulty in relaxing. In the findings of the study, Black school leaders have an average score of 49.8198, which indicates that they "sometimes" experience anger due to racialized stress.

Subscale: Hypervigilance

In RBTSSS, hypervigilance refers to being overly attentive and easily intimidated. It can cause feelings of nervousness, distress, and frustration about things that were once not bothersome. Results from the current study show that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.6817, suggesting that these leaders "sometimes" experience hypervigilance from racialized stress.

Subscale: Physical Health

Experiencing physical responses to racialized stress can manifest as a racing heartbeat, difficulty breathing, sweating, loss of appetite, or nervousness. Results from the current study show that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.9966, suggesting that these leaders "sometimes" experience physical health maladies from racialized stress.

Subscale: Self-esteem

The RBTSSS asks about emotions related to failure, whether the person feels responsible for the situation, and if they experience excessive worry about certain scenarios. They excessively worry about similar situations. Self-esteem is closely linked to confidence. Results from the current study show that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.9158, suggesting that these leaders "sometimes" experience low self-esteem from racialized stress.

Subscale: Avoidance

In RBTSSS, avoidance can take the form of denying the occurrence of an event, experiencing emotional numbness, or resorting to alcohol or drugs as a means of coping with racialized stress and promoting sleep. Results from the current study show that Black school leaders have an average score of 49.8257, suggesting that these leaders "sometimes" experience avoidance from racialized stress.

Final Thoughts on Racialized Stress

The t-scores on the RBTSSS exhibited a high level of consistency among all participating Black school leaders in the study. It is difficult to determine the impact of racialized stress on Black school leaders due to the lack of variation. All of the averages indicate that Black people are "sometimes" affected by racialized stress. Perhaps the RBTSSS was not the instrument to use for measuring racialized stress in such highly efficacious school leaders. In hindsight, school leaders who struggle with severe depression, debilitating anger, hypervigilance, or extremely low self-esteem may be too traumatized to perform their duties.

Discussion of Unexpected Results

The results of the linear regressions showed no statistically significant correlation between racialized stress, leadership self-efficacy, and self-care practices among the study participants. These results were unexpected, as a literature review suggests that nearly all minorities experience a unique racial stress (Harrell, 2000; Jones, 1997) that can impact the self-confidence of Black school leaders (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Krull and Robicheau (2020) discovered that Black school leaders experience profound self-doubt when held to different standards than their White colleagues. Self-doubt can impact the foundational aspects of the confidence necessary to lead schools, so it is surprising to find that racialized stress does not correlate with leadership self-efficacy. It is also surprising to find that self-care does not explain itself as a mediator for racialized stress. The discussion centers around potential reasons for these unexpected findings, such as response bias, social pressure, survey length, and the research approach.

Response Bias

Black school leaders in the study shared information about self-care practices, leadership self-efficacy, and racialized stress using Likert scale questionnaires. Prior to the study, I neglected to review response style literature for minorities. Response style is the tendency to respond systematically to questionnaire items on some basis other than what the items were designed to measure (Bachman & O'Malley,1984; Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001). A recent review of response style literature suggests that Black and Hispanic respondents tend to provide extreme responses more frequently than other racial groups. Extreme responses can create a bias toward exaggerated or understated answers, leading to inflated scores and negatively skewed measures (Weech-Maldonado et al., 2008). The effect is particularly strong when respondents are asked to respond to agree/disagree questions (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001) like those in the current study.

An extreme response bias may be an explanation for the leadership self-efficacy data collected through this study. Black school leader participants indicated high levels of confidence in their leadership abilities by selecting Likert scale choices 4 (confident) and 5 (very confident). The self-reported data was trusted blindly without measures to verify the accuracy or the actual schools' effectiveness.

Response bias may also be evident in the racialized stress data, where respondents indicated that they *sometimes* experience racialized stress. A significant number of responses fall in the middle range, which can be considered another form of an extreme response style (Weech-Maldonado et al., 2008). In this study, these middle-line answers provide little variation and make it difficult to provide an explanation for racialized stress among Black school leaders in the Deep South.

Social Pressure

Individuals held in high esteem, like those in leadership positions, can often report feeling a certain level of social pressure. The pressure can lead to imposter syndrome, which is a psychological condition where a person doubts their abilities, talents, or accomplishments (Brown, 2010), and presents what they see as a fraudulent version of themselves to the world. Notable figures like Brene′ Brown and Michelle Obama have discussed imposter syndrome. Here, the discussion turns to exploring social pressures and how the desire to maintain the fraudulent act may have affected Black school leaders in this study.

An epithet in the Black community relates to working "*twice as hard to receive half as much*." Members of the Black community often feel social pressure regarding their job duties and responsibilities, as illustrated by such epithets (Dyson, 2017; Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Many Black leaders consider themselves overqualified (Krull & Robicheau, 2020) and without lack of knowledge or the adequate skill set. A review of the literature suggests Black leaders feel pressure to establish credibility (Brown, 2005), to be seen as non-threatening (DeGruy, 2005; Krull & Robicheau, 2020), and to feel more authentic (Baldwin, 1963). These social pressures often lead Black leaders to overperform (Harrell, 2000; Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Knowing these social pressures, it becomes clearer why Black school leaders would rate themselves highly when asked to self-report their confidence in their knowledge and skills related to leadership abilities.

Mental health is also stigmatized in the Black community (Hope et al., 2020). The stigma presents another social pressure for this study, as Black school leaders were asked to share their experiences of racialized stress by how those experiences impacted their mental health. Dyson (2017) shares that even though racialized stressors are felt by almost all members of the Black

community, there is a considerable amount of shame and humiliation in revealing those racism-related events to others. To cope with and manage racialized stressors, many Black individuals rely on spirituality and social groups for personal resilience (Frances-Winters, 2020; Krull & Robicheau, 2020). This study found that Black school leaders rated supportive relationships as the highest form of self-care on the MSCS, likely explained by the reliance on spirituality and social groups. However, the failure to share accurate feelings about racism may explain why racialized stress is underreported.

Survey Length

It took a minimum of 25 minutes to finish the survey, and Qualtrics gave it a score of *fair*. To improve the survey, Qualtrics suggested reducing the number of questions and improving the readability. While I do not believe that readability was an issue for the Black school leaders qualifying to serve as participants in this study, I do believe that carving out the time to complete the survey was a challenge. In looking at the response times, many participants responded after work hours or on the weekends. These after-hour responses negate the self-care boundaries that this study sought to explain.

Research Approach

A quantitative approach was selected for the current study; however, a qualitative approach may have been more suitable. The results show that although Black school leaders who participated are highly efficacious, it is difficult to determine the contributing factors. Talking with these leaders would have provided space for an opportunity to learn more about the lived experiences of racialized stress in the workplace and the self-care practices that are used to mediate the effects. A qualitative approach would have also presented an opportunity to learn about the development of leadership self-efficacy. Were these leaders always confident in their

abilities to lead? Or, were supportive relationships responsible for nurturing these Black leaders to become the best versions of themselves? It would be beneficial to hear these answers and to construct a clear picture of the essential elements necessary for highly efficacious school leadership from the recurring themes that arise.

Additional Findings

The additional findings of the present study have considerable potential. Although not statistically significant, weak negative correlations between self-care and racialized stress exist. For instance, an increase in mindful self-care may result in a minor decrease in the perception of racialized stress ($r = -0.26$). These, along with other additional findings, suggest that improving self-compassion, creating a sense of purpose, building supportive relationships and structures, and practicing mindfulness can help mitigate the adverse effects of racialized stress on mental and physical health.

There are also weak but positive correlations between self-care and leadership self-efficacy. It implies that an increase in one variable leads to a minutely corresponding increase in the other. These findings also help to answer a portion of Research Question 3. The question reads, *in what ways,* does self-care predict leadership self-efficacy? While not statistically significant in the regression analysis, the study found that supportive structures ($r = 0.35$) and physical self-care ($r = 0.25$) can predict certain aspects of leadership self-efficacy. Supportive structures pertain to maintaining a manageable schedule and being organized both at work and at home. Physical self-care pertains to exercise, proper nutrition, hydration, and sleep.

Summary of Limitations

It is important to consider the limitations that potentially impact the findings of this study. These limitations include factors such as population size, sample size, recruitment

strategies, instrumentation, and methodology. While not explicitly stated, there exists an unconscious bias around the belief that almost every Black school leader experiences, copes with, and identifies sources of racialized stress. The intent, of this study, was to gain insight from efficacious Black school leaders who are skilled at practicing self-care, despite the challenges of managing racialized stress. These unconscious biases served as an obvious limitation in terms of the leaders who participated in the survey and those who did not. To participate in the survey, an individual must have had at least a slight interest in one of the three factors. The inability to adequately educate those who were not well-informed about the variables may have hindered potential participants from joining the study.

The sample size is another potential limitation of the results. A total of 104 individuals returned surveys from the states of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina. However, the available listservs and accountability data did not provide a comprehensive representation of the race and ethnicity of school leaders, beyond the position of principal. This lack of data made it challenging to establish a generalizable dataset. It is possible that a larger sample size, one that adequately represents the proportion of Black school leaders in the states, would have yielded a more substantial variance in the data. Increasing the sample size, and possibly the variance, may provide predictions between and among variables in this cross-sectional explanatory design.

The recruitment strategies utilized in this study were subject to certain limitations. Social media platforms, email, and snowball recruitment were the strategies. Notably, advertisements were placed on Facebook and Twitter, operating under the assumption that potential candidates who satisfied the study's criteria were active on these social media sites and monitored the pages of their state departments of education with some frequency. During one stage of the data

collection process, the recruitment call was added to personal social media pages, with the expectation that potential candidates had access to or were friends with individuals who had reshared the recruitment flyers.

Emails were also sent to school leaders using the states' listservs. Early in the sharing process, it became apparent that some districts block emails until those emails can be authenticated. Consequently, it is plausible that many potential candidates misconstrued the recruitment email as a phishing message. Snowball recruitment invited participants to disseminate the recruitment call to no fewer than two other school leaders who may be eligible. The majority of participants were from Alabama, and this could be attributable to these recruitment strategies.

Based on the inconclusive results of the current study, previous literature provides some recommendations for practice. One of the recommendations is the adaptation of higher education courses. The suggestion is based on the research conducted by Krull & Robiecheau, who examined sources of racialized stress for Black principals. These researchers recommend incorporating material on racial equity and race consciousness into administrative preparation programs, with special attention to the subtle microaggressions that can trigger stress responses (Krull & Robiecheau, 2020). The second recommendation is to provide culturally responsive training for learning communities.

Schools and districts can ensure that everyone in the learning community receives training on cultural responsiveness, race, and equity (DiAngelo, 2018; Frances-Winters, 2020; Krull & Robiecheau, 2020). In the same manner, schools and districts can consider mentorship programs and peer support groups that allow minority school leaders to support one another. It is important to note that this recommendation is not limited to minority school leaders only and

can be expanded to encompass a larger community. There are certain areas where peer-to-peer support is necessary, and it can be especially helpful in situations of microaggressions where having someone who understands means that this is no need to re-explain the situation. Removing the need to re-explain or educate others can offer better opportunities to alleviate stress and receive support.

Mentorship offers more than just relief from racialized stress. It presents a platform for individuals to share their knowledge and skills. Through these interactions, self-care strategies can be elevated, and leadership abilities can be honed. Leadership self-efficacy, which is rooted in confidence, can be boosted through mentorship programs and targeted professional development. Specific areas of professional development may include work-life balance, time management, stress management, organization, and workload management.

One final recommendation for practice is the implementation of Wellness Initiatives. Schools and districts should prioritize offering programs aimed at improving the physical, mental, and social well-being of all employees. Black school leaders, in particular, would benefit from initiatives focused on physical health, while programs designed to promote mental health awareness and stress reduction may benefit all employees.

It is recommended for future research to consider a mixed methods study, comparative studies, and demographic inclusivity. It is believed that a mixed methods approach would be beneficial as it could help to combine the lived experiences of participants with the survey data. Additionally, conducting a comparative study would provide insights into how culture and region shape the experiences of Black school leaders. The current study was conducted in the Deep South, which is known for its history of racism, but racism and racialized stress happen

throughout the country, and therefore, including participants from other regions could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Another recommendation for future research is to expand the study to include participants from all demographic backgrounds. This would involve including individuals from various racial and ethnic backgrounds to ensure that the study is inclusive and representative of the wider population. It could provide insights into the experiences of Black school leaders compared to those of leaders from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, which could help to identify and address any disparities that exist.

Conclusion

Understanding the experiences of Black school leaders is an important aspect in the phenomena of racialized stress and its potential connection to leadership self-efficacy. While self-care is only a coping mechanism, there may be benefits that lend to professional longevity and a greater sense of mental and physical health. The study proposed a cross-sectional explanatory design to explain correlations between self-care, racialized stress, and leadership self-efficacy using a quantitative approach. No statistically significant correlations were found among the variables. The null hypothesis has been accepted for this study. The quality and frequency of self-care practices have no effect on the leadership self-efficacy of Black school leaders.

The review of the literature suggests that racialized stress, whether real or perceived, does impact Black school leaders (Krull & Robicheau, 2020). Perhaps the quantitative approach did not provide the space necessary for leaders to share the lived experiences of navigating racialized stress in the workplace. A qualitative approach would allow Black school leaders to share their experiences in either focus groups or through a phenomenological study. Potential interview

questions could include 1) when was the first time you knew or realized that you were Black, and what did it feel like; 2) describe being a Black school leader in a Southern American public school; 3) what stressors do you encounter in the workplace, and do you see these stressors as similar to or different from your White colleagues; 4) what self-care practices have you adopted; 5) how does racialized stress impact your job performance?

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Appendix 1

Tables

Table 1

Frequencies of Demographics for Socioeconomic Status, Community, and Location

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
SES		104	-	1	3	1.07	.32	.10
	Low SES	99	95.2%	-	-	-	-	-
	High SES	3	2.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	Unsure	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
Community		104	-	1	3	2.66	.69	.48
	Suburban	13	12.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	Urban	9	8.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Rural	82	78.8%	-	-	-	-	-
Deep South		104	-	1	3	1.04	.28	.08
	Yes	102	98.1%	-	-	-	-	-
	Maybe	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2

Frequencies of Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Race		104	-	3	3	3.00	.00	.00
	Black	104	100.0%					
Ethnicity		104	-	1	2	1.99	.09	.01
	Hispanic	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	
	Not Hispanic	103	99.0%	-	-	-	-	
Gender		104	-	1	2	1.38	.49	.24
	Man	39	37.5%	-	-	-	-	
	Woman	65	62.5%	-	-	-	-	

Table 3

Frequencies of Age Ranges for Black School Leaders

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Age Range		104	-	1	8	3.79	1.377	1.897
	25-29 yrs	4	3.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	30-35 yrs	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	36-40 yrs	39	37.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	41-45 yrs	26	25.0%	-	-	-	-	-
	46-50 yrs	14	13.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	51-55 yrs	9	8.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	56-60 yrs	3	2.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	61-65 yrs	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4

Frequencies of Demographics for School Leadership Positions and Years of Experience

Variable		N	%	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Var.
Position		104	-	1	9	3.41	2.13	4.52
	Assistant Principal	19	18.3%	-	-	-	-	-
	Principal	32	30.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	Specialist	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Supervisor	8	7.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	Director	14	13.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	Coordinator	15	14.4%	-	-	-	-	-
	Assistant Superintendent	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	Other	4	3.8%	-	-	-	-	-
Professional Experience		104	-	1	8	3.88	1.24	1.55
	0-5	2	1.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	6-10	10	9.6%	-	-	-	-	-
	11-15	29	27.9%	-	-	-	-	-
	16-20	34	32.7%	-	-	-	-	-
	26-30	10	9.6%	-	-	-	-	-
	36-40	1	1.0%					
School Leader		104	-	1	6	1.97	.91	.82

Experience								
	0-5	32	30.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	6-10	52	50.0%	-	-	-	-	-
	11-15	13	12.5%	-	-	-	-	-
	16-20	6	5.8%	-	-	-	-	-
	26-30	1	1.0%	-	-	-	-	-

Table 5

Assumption of No Multicollinearity

Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
						Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.68	.41		8.85	<.001		
Leadership Self-Efficacy	.08	.07	.13	1.18	.24	.93	1.07
Self-Care	.07	.12	.06	.56	.58	.93	1.07

Table 6

Statistics for the Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS)

		Physical Self-Care	Supportive Relationships Self-Care	Mindful Awareness Self-Care	Self-Compassion and Purpose	Mindful Relaxation	Supportive Structures
N	Valid	104	104	103	103	103	103
	Missing	0	0	1	1	1	1
Mean		2.77	4.18	3.78	3.35	3.10	3.40

Std. Deviation	.84	.74	.84	.85	.75	.75
Variance	.71	.54	.70	.73	.57	.56
Skewness	.02	-.77	-.52	.04	-.32	.64
Std. Error of Skewness	.24	.24	.24	.24	2.38	.238
Kurtosis	-.54	.04	.52	-.52	-.38	-.47
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47
Minimum	1.25	2.00	1.25	1.33	1.33	1.75
Maximum	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.67	5.00

Table 7

Statistics for the School Leaders' Self-Efficacy Scale (SLSES)

		Leading Others	Monitoring Learning	Leading and Managing	Climate Management	Creating Appropriate Structures	School Evaluation	Classroom Practices
N	Valid	104	103	104	104	103	102	104
	Missing	0	1	0	0	1	2	0
Mean		4.00	3.88	3.93	3.93	3.92	3.77	3.94
Std. Deviation		.68	.72	.62	.58	.60	.90	.91
Variance		.47	.52	.38	.34	.36	.82	.82
Skewness		-.94	-.98	-.89	-.07	-.38	-1.17	-1.67
Std. Error of Skewness		.24	.24	.24	.24	.24	.24	.24

Kurtosis	3.13	2.50	2.70	2.70	1.59	1.90	3.50
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47	.47
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.43	1.43	1.57	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

Table 8

Statistics for the Race-Based Traumatic Stress Syndrome Scale (RBTSSS)

		Depression	Intrusion	Anger	Hypervigilance	Physical	Low Self Esteem	Avoidance
N	Valid	99	98	98	97	97	99	99
	Missing	5	6	6	7	7	5	5
Mean		49.78	49.81	49.82	49.68	49.99	49.92	49.83
Std. Deviation		7.86	7.33	7.81	7.33	7.48	7.67	6.46
Variance		61.71	53.71	61.06	53.74	56.00	58.80	41.69
Skewness		3.08	.13	.31	1.96	1.07	3.10	2.34
Std. Error of Skewness		.24	.24	.24	.25	.25	.24	.24
Kurtosis		12.63	.15	-.29	3.93	.34	11.00	6.35
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.48	.48	.48	.49	.49	.48	.48
Minimum		45.93	37.72	38.62	44.90	43.48	46.14	46.13
Maximum		96.02	74.15	73.13	78.01	72.50	88.81	78.27

Table 9

Correlations between Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Leadership Self-Efficacy	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	-	.64	.33	.49	.55
	N	100	100	100	100	99
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.047	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.64	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.09	.85**	1.000	.44**	.39**
	Sig	.33	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.07	.43**	.43**	.03	.03
	Sig.	.49	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	104	104	103	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	.06	.38**	.39**	.030	1.00
	Sig.	.55	<.001	<0.001	.77	-

	N	99	103	103	103	103
	Sig.	.98	.17	.36	.76	.53
	N	100	104	104	104	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10

Correlation between Racialized Stress and Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		LSES	Racialized Stress	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.16	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	-	.13	.64	.33	.49	.55
	N	100	91	100	100	100	99
Racialized Stress	Correlation Coefficient	.162	1.00	.01	-.07	.00	-.15
	Sig.	.13	-	.92	.50	.99	.14
	N	91	95	95	95	95	94
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.05	.01	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.64	.92	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.09	-.07	.85**	1.00	.43**	.39**
	Sig	.33	.50	<.001	-	<.001	<.001

	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.07	.00	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.49	.99	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.06	-.15	.38**	.39**	.03	1.00
	Sig.	.55	.14	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	94	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11

Correlation between Self-Care and Racialized Stress and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Self-Care	Racialized Stress	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Self-Care	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	-.10	.01	-.04	.13	.04
	Sig.	-	.34	.91	.67	.19	.73
	N	100	91	100	100	100	99
Racialized Stress	Correlation Coefficient	-.10	1.00	.01	-.07	.00	-.15
	Sig.	.34	-	.92	.50	.99	.14
	N	91	95	95	95	95	94
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.01	.01	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.91	.92	-	<.001	<.001	<.001

	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	-.04	-.07	.85**	1.00	.43**	.39**
	Sig	.67	.50	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.13	.00	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.19	.99	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	95	104	104	104	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.04	-.15	.38**	.39**	.03	1.000
	Sig.	.73	.14	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	94	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12

Correlation between Self-Care and Leadership Self-Efficacy and Controls (Age, Experience, Degree, and Location)

		Self-Care	Leadership Self-Efficacy	Age Range	Years of Experience	Administrative Experience	Degree Type
Self-Care	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	0.09	.01	-.04	.13	.04
	Sig.		-	.41	.91	.19	.73
	N		100	96	100	100	99

Leadership Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	0.87	1.00	.05	.09	.07	.06
	Sig.	.41	-	.64	.31	.49	.55
	N	96	100	100	100	100	99
Age Range	Correlation Coefficient	.01	.047	1.00	.85**	.43**	.38**
	Sig.	.91	.64	-	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103
Years of Experience	Correlation Coefficient	-.04	.09	.85**	1.00	.43**	.04
	Sig	.67	.33	<.001	-	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103
Administrative Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.13	.069	.43**	.43**	1.00	.030
	Sig.	.19	.49	<.001	<.001	-	.77
	N	100	100	104	104	104	103
Degree Type	Correlation Coefficient	0.04	.06	.38**	.39**	.03	1.000
	Sig.	.73	.55	<.001	<0.001	.77	-
	N	99	99	103	103	103	103

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 2

Figures

Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework*

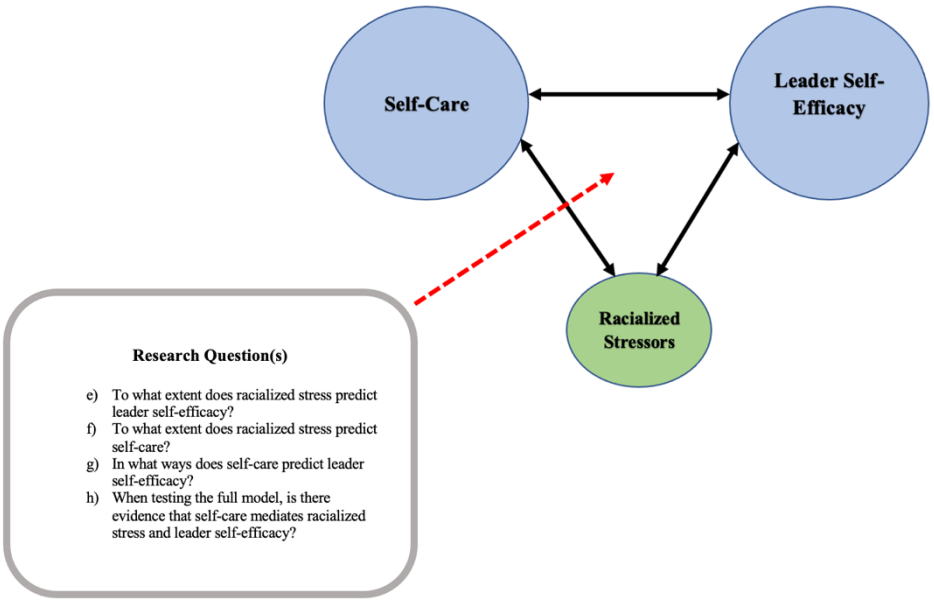

Figure 2 *Participants' Demographics by State*

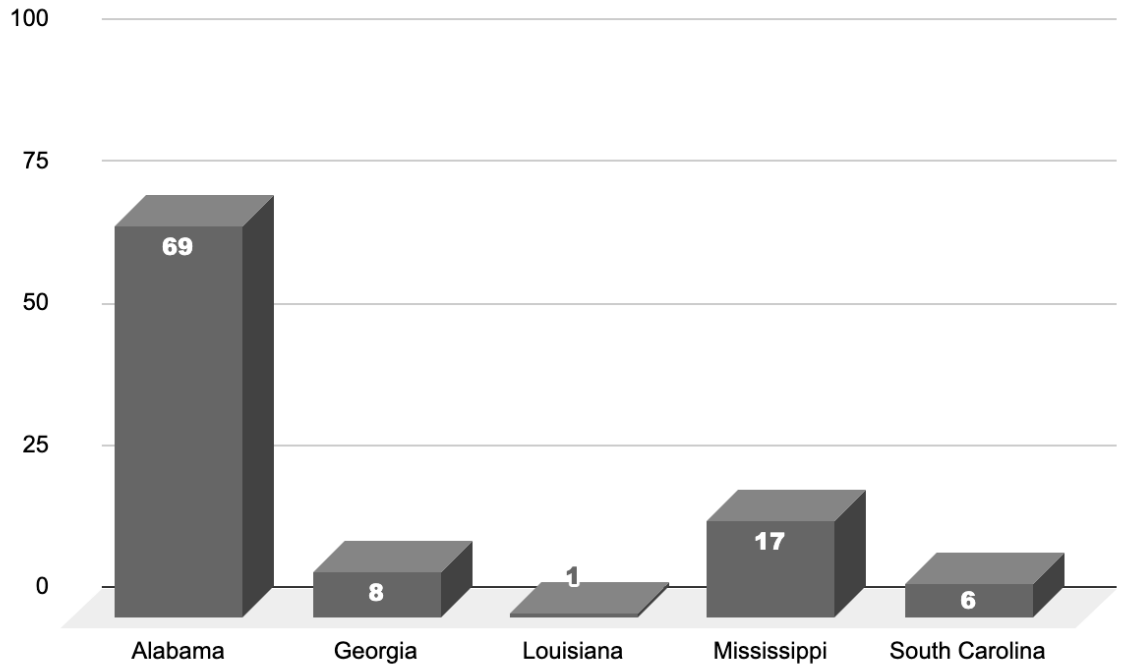

Figure 3 *Participants' Current Positions*

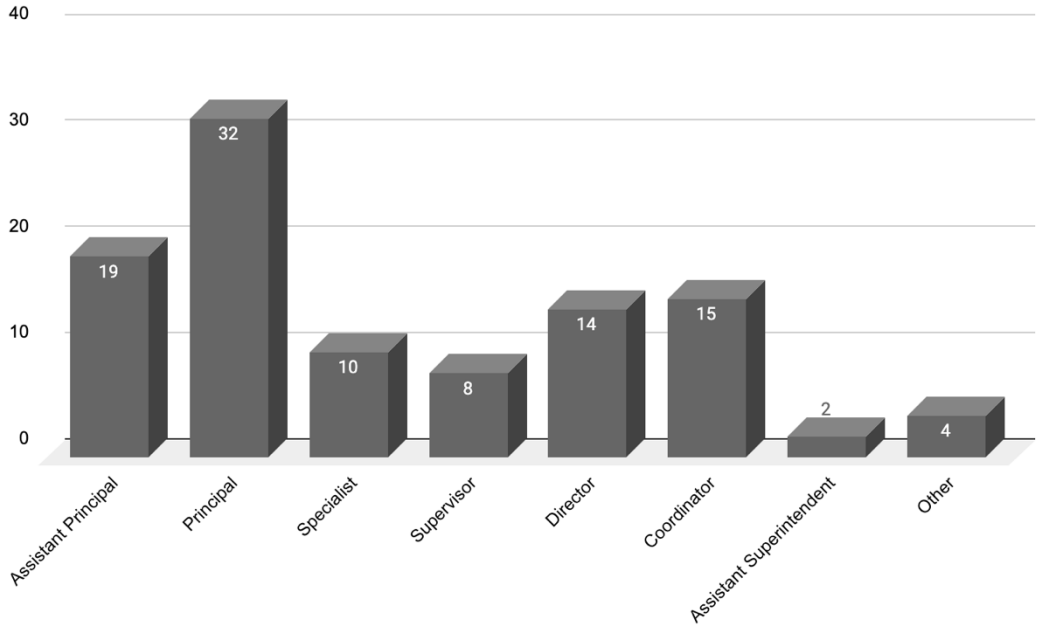

Figure 4 *The Assumption of Linearity*

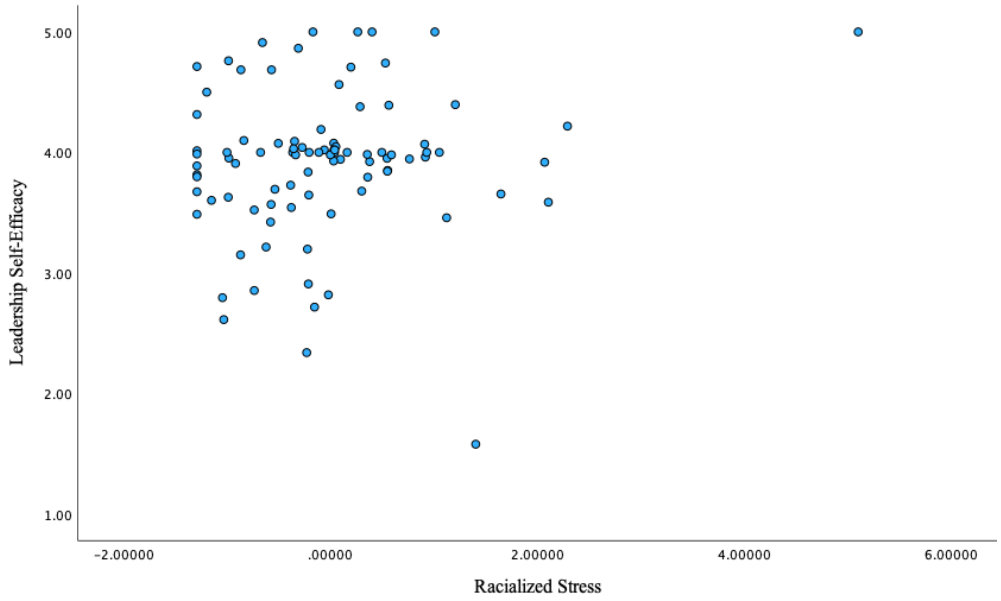

Figure 5 *The Assumption of Homoscedasticity*

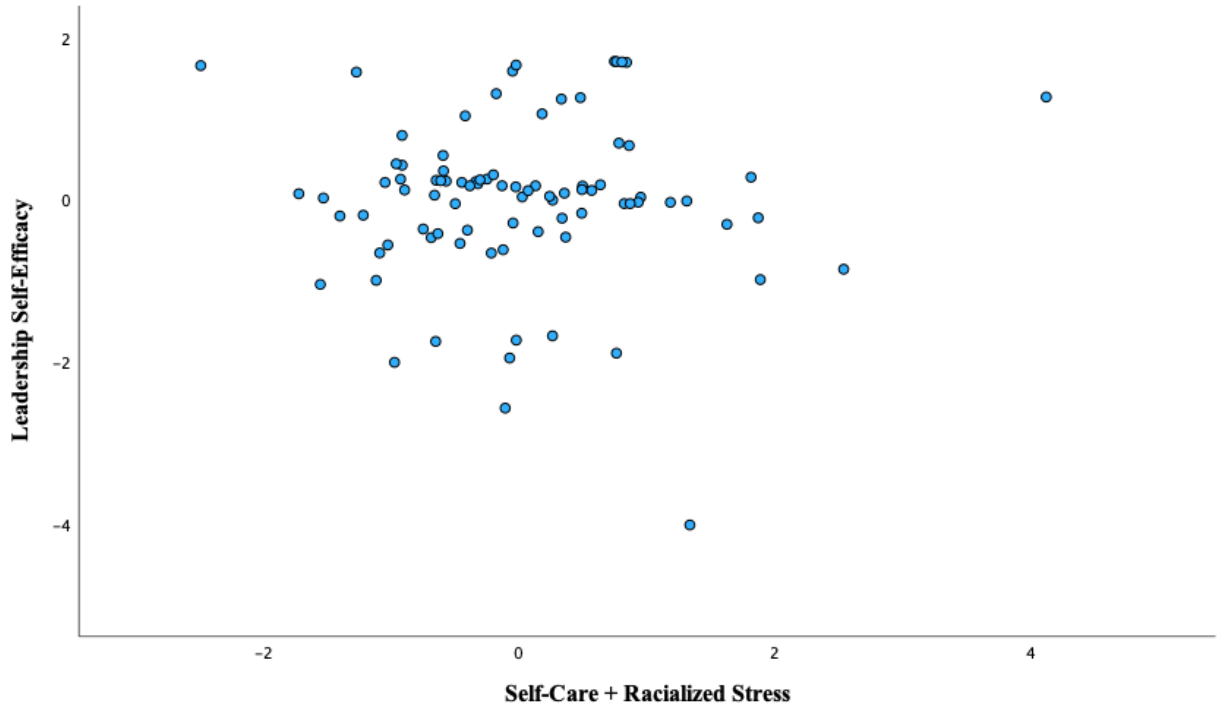

Figure 6 *Assumption of Normality*