

**THE ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ENDORSEMENT  
WITH RACE-RELATED EXPERIENCES, RACIAL ATTITUDES, AND  
PSYCHOLOGICAL OUTCOMES AMONG BLACK COLLEGE STUDENTS**

**by**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines social responsibility to the African American community among African American college students. Particular attention is devoted to examining attitudes towards social responsibility and involvement in socially responsible behaviors. This study argues that while social responsibility endorsement is influenced by background and contextual factors, race-related variables are particularly influential among African American college students. Individual's experiences with race, the meaning and significance they attribute to their racial status, and their attitudes towards the racial group likely influence the extent to which individuals endorse social responsibility. As such, this work examines the relationship between social responsibility attitudes and behaviors with perceptions of societal racism, experiences with racial discrimination, and racial identity. The current study also explores the link between social responsibility endorsement and psychological outcomes.

African American college students from Historically Black and Predominantly White universities were surveyed about their attitudes towards social responsibility and their engagement in socially responsible behaviors. Differences in social responsibility endorsement emerged for religious service attendance, employment status, and university racial composition. Results also indicate that social responsibility attitudes were related to perceptions of societal oppression, Public Regard, and Nationalist Ideology. Involvement in social responsibility behaviors was related to experiences with racial discrimination and Racial Centrality. Racial identity attitudes and experiences with racial discrimination

did not moderate the relationship between social responsibility endorsement and perceptions of societal oppression. Results also suggest aspects of social responsibility endorsement are positively related to self-esteem, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction. Overall, these findings suggest endorsement of social responsibility attitudes is fairly common among African American college students, but that actual engagement in behaviors consistent with social responsibility is less frequent. This calls attention to the need to study both social responsibility attitudes and social responsibility behaviors, as levels of endorsement and the predictors of each dimension of social responsibility vary. Furthermore, this work provides more evidence to suggest that individual's race-related experiences and attitudes are critical to their social responsibility endorsement. Additional findings and implications of the work are discussed in greater depth.