Social Identity and Social Justice Orientation among Social Work Graduate Students: Examining the Role of Perceived Injustice and Self-Efficacy.

by

Cathryn Grace Fabian

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Lorraine M. Gutiérrez, Co-Chair
Professor Michael Spencer, Co-Chair
Professor Edward C. Chang
Associate Professor Robert M. Ortega

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather, Lazaro Fabian, who has been my inspiration and strength throughout this journey. *Lolo*, none of this would have been possible without you.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine predictors of social justice orientation among social work students by employing a psychological framework to explore trajectories through which social identity shapes an individual's worldviews and engagement with social justice. It was hypothesized that perceived injustice and self-efficacy would simultaneously mediate the relationship between critical awareness of one's social identity and their interest in social justice activities, their commitment to future engagement in social justice efforts, and their belief in the social change mission in social work. Participants completed measures of racial and gender identity (Gurin & Markus, 1988), belief in a just world (Lipkus, 1991), social justice self-efficacy, social justice interest, and social justice commitment (M. J. Miller et al., 2009) and belief in the mission of social work (Santangelo, 1993). One hundred and thirty one (131) Masters of Social Work students completed online surveys in March and April of 2012. Results indicated that belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy both mediated the relationships between racial identity and social justice interest. However, only social justice self-efficacy mediated the relationships between and between racial identity and social justice commitment and between racial identity and belief in the mission of social work. Results also indicated that only social justice self-efficacy mediated the relationships between gender identity and social justice interest and between gender identity and social justice commitment, while only belief in a just world mediated the relationship between gender identity and belief in the mission of social work. Findings

call attention to the importance of professional socialization of students toward social work's professional values in social work education, as well as to the importance of empowering students to become agents of social change regardless of their practice orientations. Implications for social work education and career counseling are discussed.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The term “social justice” is heralded as one of the core professional values of social work. Indeed, according to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers:

> Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers’ social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people (NASW, 2008).

However, within the field, some scholars have questioned social work’s true commitment to social justice when speaking of larger trends within the profession – namely, the shift toward psychotherapy as the dominant form of social work practice, and the movement toward more individualistic approaches, as opposed to ecological or person-in-environment paradigms (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992). Specht and Courtney (1994) criticized this movement as an abandonment of social work’s traditional mission to simultaneously serve disadvantaged populations through individual-level intervention and work to address social inequality through social action and reform, and they called for social workers to become more involved in community-focused practice. However, it is difficult for students in social work programs to obtain this type of

specialized training. A 1996 report by the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) found that only 15 out of 101 MSW programs in the United States offered a concentration in community practice or social administration (Pine & Mizrahi, 1996).

This disparity in specialized training opportunities is due in part to both the perceived demands of the labor market and the expressed career interests of social work students, the majority of who intend to pursue a career as clinical social workers in private practice (Abell & McDonnell, 1990; Butler, 1990; Perry, 2009; Rubin & Johnson, 1994). These tensions between the micro and macro domains of social work practice are the product of the larger historical debate in social work that has been framed more broadly as a divide between clinical and community-focused social work (Austin, Coombs, & Barr, 2005). Thus, in to order to ensure that social work remains committed to its historical mission of addressing inequality through structural change, this study seeks to understand the individual-level factors which lead students to pursue clinical practice over other forms of social work.

In light of the social work profession's impending workforce shortage (Whitaker, Weismiller & Clark, 2006), a more complex understanding of career influences and the individual-level motivational and social cognitive trajectories which lead individuals to enter social work careers would have the potential to inform recruitment efforts by schools of social work. These kinds of recruitment efforts also need to reflect differential processes through which diverse groups come to select social work as a career (Whitaker, 2008). Like many of the helping professions, social work is significantly less diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, and gender than the general U.S. population. A study drawn

from NASW membership suggests that Caucasians comprise about 86% of the social work workforce, compared to 68% of the U.S. population, and that women comprise about 81% of social workers compared to 51% of the population (Whitaker, Weismiller, & Clark, 2006). In order to more effectively service a client population that is becoming increasingly diverse, schools of social work must strive to recruit a student body that is more reflective of society a whole. Recent data from the Council on Social Work Education, the accrediting body for baccalaureate and masters level social work programs, found that in 2010, White non-Hispanic students comprised 58% of full-time MSW students in the United States, and 55% of part-time MSW students (CSWE, 2011).

While these demographics of current social work student cohorts are encouraging for the future composition of the social work profession, it is still imperative to understand why students of diverse backgrounds are drawn to social work. Previous research has examined the influence of race and ethnicity on social work practice preferences and commitment to social work's traditional mission. Jayaratne and colleagues (1992) found that social workers of color indicated a desire to help clients of similar background and cultures. In general, students of color are more likely than Caucasian students to desire to work with poor, disadvantaged, and stigmatized populations (Abell & McDonnell, 1990; Butler, 1990; Limb & Organista, 2003; Rubin & Johnson, 1984). Furthermore, students of color are also more likely than Caucasian students to endorse the traditional mission of social work, and less likely to plan to pursue careers in private practice (Abell & McDonnell, 1990; Limb & Organista, 2003).

One way to frame our understanding of this phenomenon is to examine how minority identity is related more broadly to social work values and practice preferences.

In support of this, Pierce, Singleton and Hudson (2011), using a sample of African-descended MSW students, found that ethnic identity was related to greater interest in and commitment to serving one's ethnic group. If the pursuit of a social work career can be construed to be a form of social action, since most students indicate that they are motivated out a of desire to help others and benefit society, then it may be useful to use social psychological theories of social action based upon social identity to better understand why attitudes about social justice vary greatly within a profession with a stated commitment to social justice in its code of ethics.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to build upon existing theories of social justice action by extending its application to the social work profession. In particular, the incorporation of a social-cognitive model of social justice advocacy would further explicate the relationships between salience of social identity to interest in engaging in social justice work, future commitment to social justice advocacy, belief in the traditional mission of social work, and intended practice preferences. While much of the extant literature focuses on race and ethnicity and their relationship to social work practice preferences, it may also be the case that students who identify with other marginalized social groups may also use the same social cognitive processes to inform their decision to pursue social work.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

1) How does significance of social identity relate to interest and commitment to social justice, and to opinions about the mission of social work?

Hypothesis 1a. Students with higher levels of politicized social identity will express higher interest in social justice activities.

Hypothesis 1b. with higher levels of politicized social identity with a marginalized social group will express greater commitment to social justice.

Hypothesis 1c. Students with higher levels of politicized social identity will be more likely to endorse the societal/institutional change mission of social work.

2) How does the perception of injustice, operationalized as the belief in a just world, help explain the relationship between social identity and social justice interest, commitment to social justice, and opinions about the mission of social work?

   Hypothesis 2a. Students with higher levels of politicized social identity will report lower endorsement in belief in a just world.

   Hypothesis 2b. Lower levels of belief in a just world will be related to greater interest in social justice activities.

   Hypothesis 2c. Lower levels belief in a just world will be related to greater commitment to social justice.

   Hypothesis 2d. Lower levels of belief in a just world will be related to greater endorsement of the societal/institutional change mission of social work.

   Hypothesis 2e. Belief in a just world will mediate the relationship between social identity and social justice interest, commitment to social justice, to opinions about the mission of social work.

3) How does self-efficacy help explain the relationship between social identity to interest and commitment to social justice, and to opinions about the mission of social work?

   Hypothesis 3a. Students with higher levels of politicized social identity will express higher levels of social justice self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 3b. Higher levels of social justice self-efficacy will be related to greater interest in social justice activities.

Hypothesis 3c. Higher levels of social justice self-efficacy will be related to greater commitment to social justice.

Hypothesis 3d. Higher levels of social justice self-efficacy will be related to greater endorsement of the societal/institutional change mission of social work.

Hypothesis 3e. Higher levels of social justice self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between social identity and social justice interest, commitment to social justice, to opinions about the mission of social work.

Structure of Chapters

Chapter One provides significance of the problem at hand, and introduces the research questions and hypotheses of the overall study. This chapter also presents the design of the proposed study.

Chapter Two reviews the extant literature pertaining to the theoretical framework of the study, specifically the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA). In addition, this chapter reviews the extant literature on career motivations among social work students. The aim of this literature review is to identify knowledge gaps in the existing body of research, to provide rationale for the selection of variables for the present study, and to propose relationships between the study variables.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology. This chapter provides an overview of the research design of the study, including a detailed description of sampling, measurement, and data collection processes. Research questions and

hypotheses will be discussed in greater detail. The data analysis plan is also proposed in this chapter.

Chapter Four presents results of the data analysis. It provides a demographic description of the sample, the results of analyses conducted, and an overview of quantitative findings. The results of analyses testing for relationships among variables as predicted in the study hypotheses are presented.

Chapter Five discusses significant findings from the present study, including implications for social work education and social work practice. More broadly, this chapter also argues for the significance of this study In terms of implications for the administration and implementation of social justice education in training programs for helping professions. This chapter argues for the significance of the contribution of this study to the existing body of knowledge in this area, and concludes by acknowledging limitations and providing directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

There is little consensus among intellectuals about how social justice should be defined in a socially unjust society (Reisch, 2002). Indeed, the primary referents for the various definitions of social justice vary across academic disciplines, and moreover, are strongly influenced by political orientations (Pardeck, 2005). For example, from a public policy standpoint, social justice may be embodied by the rectification of power imbalances between communities and government, while from a public health perspective, social justice may be embodied by the elimination of systemic health disparities between different groups in society. Each of these definitions describe social justice as a value or belief which espouses equitable access to resources, redistribution of power, and the protection of human rights (Vera & Speight, 2003; Torres-Harding, Siers, & Olson, 2011). Social justice as it is viewed in social work is largely drawn from Rawls' (1971; 2001) theory of justice (Banerjee, 2005; Finn & Jacobson, 2008). Rawls argued that the redistribution of social and economic resources to ensure that the least advantaged maintain a minimum standard of living. His theory is based on two fundamental principles: (1) an equal right by every individual to personal liberty within a larger system of total liberty for all; and (2) social and economic inequality are to be distributed so they both offer the greatest benefit to the least advantaged in society.

As one of the core values in their Code of Ethics, the National Association of Social Workers, social justice calls for a professional obligation to be an agent of social change, and to work with, and on behalf of those who affected by social injustice. In addition, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) stipulates in their 2008 Educational Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) that social work educational programs must provide explicit content in order for their students to develop competencies to "understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination; advocate for human rights and social and economic justice; and engage in practices that advance social and economic justice" (CSWE, 2008, p. 5). This commitment to social justice principles, however abstract, provides an ideological base for social workers to ground their social justice advocacy toward a variety of issues. However, as noted by Reisch (2002) and Pardeck (2005), neither social work practitioners nor educators have developed a clear framework for exactly how to achieve a socially just society. Social work literature often equates the goals of social justice with the goals of social diversity or multiculturalism, and challenges to oppressive normative power systems (Hyde, 1998). However, some scholars also consider social justice to be interchangeable with empowerment, which itself is also operationalized in various ways within social work (Cox, 2001).

The discourse around social justice in social work is especially pertinent due to a larger scholarly critique that social work is betraying its commitment to social change (Chu, Tsui, & Yan, 2009; Funge, 2011; Karger & Hernadez, 2004; Reisch, 2002; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Historically, there are two main ideologies that have guide social work's professional mission: (1) *individual adaptation,* which in which marginalized

groups are served through interventions which address social conditions at the individual level, and (2) *social or institutional change,* in which social conditions are improved through systemic social action and reform. Each of these ideological perspectives of the mission have social work can trace their roots back to early developments in the social work profession. The individual adaptation perspective began with the social casework practice model of the Charity Organization Societies, which emphasized individual change as a means to address social problems. The social change perspective grew from the community organizing model of the Settlement House Movement, which focused on liking individual problems to oppression and working with communities to develop their own social change agenda (DuBois & Miley, 2005). These two orientations toward the mission of social work are not mutually exclusive, and it is possible for an individual to endorse both the individual and the social change perspectives simultaneously in their professional practice (Han & Chow, 2010; Zastrow, 2007).

However, this ideological divergence has resulted today into two distinct modalities of social work practice: one focused on micro-level intervention targeted toward individuals, families and groups, and one focused on macro-level intervention targeting communities, organizations, and social systems. Social work scholars generally agree that the most effective way to achieve social justice is through an integration of these two modes of practice (Abramovitz, 1993, 1998; Weiss, 2006), and thus training programs in social work should ideally prepare students to combine both interpersonal practice and social change. However, the growth of interest in clinical social work practice has resulted in a concern among scholars that individual adaptation is becoming increasingly emphasized in training programs as the preferred means of addressing social

problems at the expense of social and institutional change (Ehrenreich, 1985; Specht, 1991; Specht & Courtney, 1994). While social workers do value both aspects of social work's mission, the social change function less emphasized their actual day-to-day practice (Weiss-Gal, 2008). A majority of NASW members (56.8%) reported working in some form of private practice (NASW, 2006). A number of studies have established that social work students demonstrate a clear preference for the direct practice activities of social work than for its more macro-focused activities, and view social work as a means to become a therapist in private practice (Bogo et al., 1993; Butler, 1990; Rubin, Johnson, & De Weaver, 1986, Weiss, 2006).

Thus, the movement toward micro practice as being the dominant paradigm of social work is viewed as the strongest evidence that social justice is losing its significance as a guiding principle of social work. In order to better understand this phenomenon, researchers have sought to discern whether social work students' values toward social justice are in fact, concordant with those embraced by social work. Despite the complexity of variation in influences and motivations to pursue a social work career (Biggerstaff, 1996), previous research has established that, as a whole, students who enter social work programs tend to possess a value orientation consistent with the prosocial objectives of social work. For example, Albek (1987) found that the motivation to benefit society to be significantly higher among social work students than students of psychology, education, and chemistry. In a similar vein, Enoch (1988) found that Israeli social work students, compared to those who majored in social sciences, placed more importance on helping people, improving the situation of their country, and doing work that had social importance in their occupational pursuits. Compared to business students,

social work students are more motivated by a desire to gain professional knowledge or expertise, and less motivated by opportunities for career advancement and self-sufficiency (Basham & Buchanan, 2009). Hanson and McCullaugh (1995) found that service to others was a more commonly reported motivation for choosing a social work undergraduate major than personal prestige or earning ability. Moreover, the ability to contribute to society was given as the predominant reason to enter the social work profession. In support of this finding, Csikai and Rozensky (1997) found high levels of idealism among social work students, and found that altruistic reasons were more predictive of career choice than professional reasons.

While these studies have established that social work students' values are still congruent with the professional values espoused by the profession, research examining the endorsement of social work's traditional mission among social work students has not reached a similar unequivocal consensus. For example, in a study of 257 first year students in eight American MSW programs, Rubin and Johnson (1984) found that 86% of students wanted to enter private practice after graduation. They also found that students saw the most appeal in working with clients with mild or nonchronic emotional problems, and the lowest appeal in working with the poor, the aged, and the physically, mentally, and developmentally disabled. Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that most MSW students have little to no commitment to social work's traditional mission. However, Butler (1990) concluded that the number of students who wished to become private practitioners and who had little commitment to the traditional mission of social work was relatively small. While most MSW students expected to go on to do psychotherapy in private practice, they also expressed interest in traditional social work

activities and client groups. Others researchers have also come to similar conclusions that the majority of social work students are only partially supportive of social work's traditional mission in that they share its commitment to working with disadvantaged groups, but still overwhelmingly prefer direct service (Abell & McDonnell, 1990; Bogo, Raphael, & Roberts, 1993). In contrast, Limb and Organista (2003) found that incoming MSW students were attracted to both clinical practice and to other traditional non-clinical forms of social work practice, and compared to other domains of social work, were least attracted to psychotherapy and private practice. Working with the economically disadvantaged had high appeal to these students, and a slight majority (54.8%) favored societal and institutional change over individual adaptation as the primary goal of social work. On an even more encouraging note, some studies of MSW students at the completion of their programs indicate greater support of social work's traditional mission at graduation, speaking to the significance of social work education in developing students' professional identities (Bogo, Michalski, Raphael, and Roberts, 1995; Han & Chow, 2010; Limb & Organista, 2006; Rubin, Johnson, & DeWeaver, 1986).

If the pursuit of a social work career can be construed to be a form of social action, since most students indicate that they are motivated out a of desire to help others and benefit society, then it may be useful to use social psychological theories of social action to better understand why attitudes about social justice vary greatly within a profession with a stated commitment to social justice in its code of ethics. Scholars across multiple disciplines have engaged with the key question of why individuals engage in social protest activities that challenge some societal injustice and call for reforms to address the concerns of marginalized groups. In particular, an examination of subjective

psychological predictors of engagement in collective action may help to explain this variation in individual attitudes toward social justice, and to their belief about the priorities of the mission of social work among social workers.

Social Movement Theories

In social work, collective action is generally thought of from a sociological lens—that is, in how groups can mobilize to create social change, and of how social structures either foster or inhibit these mobilization efforts. As an extension of social movement theory, resource mobilization provides us with further understanding of how collective behaviors ultimately lead into larger social change efforts. Resource mobilization theorists place emphasis on the significance of structural factors such as the availability of resources, and of power dynamics within a social network, and view participation in a social movement as a rational decision on the part of the individual in which perceived benefits of participation outweigh its potential costs. McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996) identified three factors that influence the emergence and development of social movements. These are: (1) political opportunities and restraints; (2) mobilizing structures for individuals to engage in collective action; and (3) framing processes, or the collective social psychological processes which mediate between opportunity and action. While these factors help to explain macro-level factors that form structural causes of social action, they do not explain the micro-level forces that motivate individuals to participate in social movements. Resource mobilization theory attempts to explain social movements in terms of organizations and political structures, rather than through individual behavior. Collective action is thus viewed not as an impassioned response to social injustice, but as a political process in which a group works on behalf of their own interests and goals by

persuading those in power to submit to the demands of those without power. According to McCarthy and Zald (1977), the resource mobilization approach is highly depended upon theories of political sociology and economics than upon social psychology's theories of collective behavior. While social movement theory is useful in informing our overall understanding of social movements, it does not address the role of the individual as an active agent of change.

More recently, there has been an emerging trend in thinking of collective action in terms of individual behaviors, rather than large-scale social movements. Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam (1990) defined collective action as whenever a group member acts as a representative of the group and the action is directed at improving the condition of the entire group. This definition implies that individuals can act on behalf of their group, but only vaguely refers to a wide spectrum of behaviors that can be considered "collective action." The use of the term collective action is preferable as it serves as a larger umbrella for the various terms and conceptualizations that previous researchers have used to study essentially the same phenomenon. In the social science literature, collective action in its various forms has been conceptualized as civic engagement, community participation, community involvement, volunteerism, activism, social movement participation, community organizing, political participation, and as voting behavior. For the purposes of this paper, collective action is broadly operationalized as being analogous with activities consistent with the social change mission of social work.

However, these terms used to refer to social action are not always mutually interchangeable, and it is necessary to distinguish those forms involving relatively little personal commitment (e.g., signing a petition) from those requiring more substantial time

and effort (e.g., organizing a protest rally). Although it is possible that those who engage in low-investment forms of collective action may be more likely to engage in more overt politicized forms of collective action, this is not always the case. An individual who joins an organization does not necessarily become politically engaged, but many people who engage in more activist forms of collective action start at these lower levels of personal investment. Using a nationally representative sample, Walker (2008) identified a mediational model that specified an indirect trajectory of what he referred to as "unintentional activism," or the path from activity in a voluntary association to political participation. Individuals may join such organizations without any motivation to be more politically involved, but such organizations can be effective vehicles for mobilizing its members. According to Walker, direct requests to engage in a political activity targeted at individual members who exhibit high levels of civic abilities, interest in political issues, and a history of consistent participation were an important component of this indirect path between membership and activism. In addition, an organization must provide opportunities for political discussions and engage its members cognitively by providing information about the political system, fostering political efficacy, and increasing an individual interest in public affairs. Taken altogether, these contextual factors helps to explain why even within a single organization, some individuals engage in collective action at a relatively superficial level compared to others, and how simply joining an organization (a form of low investment collective action) may ultimately lead to even more activist behaviors in the future.

These collective action behaviors can range in the degree of time and effort required of an individual but all share a similar element of an expression of protest

against some form of collective disadvantage (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). However, measuring collective action has posed a challenge for researchers, and various methods have been used to study it as a variable of interest, including field studies, laboratory experiments, surveys, and scenario studies. Although some studies have examined actual behaviors or self-reports of past behavior, collective action is a difficult concept to operationalize, in part due to respondent biases. To address this difficulty, quantitative studies of collective action often use proxy measures such as attitudes in support of engaging in action, or of intention or tendency to engage in action. While general attitudes toward collective action can be idealistic, intentions toward collective action can take account of more practical concerns. Such studies with assess attitudes or intentions toward collective action tend to have larger effect sizes than studies that utilize behavioral measures, as behavior is generally more subject to individual or contextual confounding factors. Another issue with several studies that claim to study collective action is that actual action is conflated with assertions of group identity, or with cultural adjustment between one's group and outside groups. For example, studies of "ethnic community involvement" may assess behaviors that can be construed as being beneficial to the community, such as supporting ethnic-owned businesses, with behaviors that are more consistent with general acculturation, such as speaking a language other than English (e.g, Mezies, Filion, Bernner, & Elgie, 2007; Yip & Cross, 2004). Despite these methodological issues with the study of collective action, such research sheds light into what type of person is most likely to become involved in working toward social change in their community.

Psychological Antecedents of Collective Action

The aforementioned approaches to studying collective action assume that action is taken as a response to some kind of objective disadvantage –that is, some kind of tangible disparity between a coexisting dominant group and a subordinate group. However, historical analyses have demonstrated that objective disadvantage does not necessarily lead to collective action (Green, Glaser, & Rich, 1998). In the past few decades, the literature on collective action has become more concerned with the social and psychological factors that lead individuals to engage in action, rather than with the social conditions that facilitate the development of social action (Klandermans, 1997). These approaches assume that collective action originates in the individual perception of disadvantage, which may or may not be related to actual personal experiences of material disadvantage. Although an individual may feel that he or she is not directly affected by structural inequalities, he or she may still be motivated to act on behalf of their group, which they do believe is somehow disadvantaged (Postmes, Branscombe, Spears, & Young, 1999; Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, & Lalonde, 1990).

Although collective action is thought of in terms of behaviors intended to benefit one's group, the desire for self-esteem and self-enhancement can be just as strong of a motivation to become involved. In an attempt to organize the various reasons why someone may choose to engage in behaviors which benefit their communities, Batson (1994) described four motives for community involvement: (1) *Egoism,* motivation with the goal to benefit oneself; (2) *Altruism,* motivation intended to improve the welfare of one or more other individuals; (3) *Collectivism*, motivation with the goal of increasing the welfare of a group; and (4) *Principlism,* motivation intended to uphold some moral

principle, such as social justice. More than one of these motives may be present in any individual in any given situation. These motives may have an additive benefit with one another, or may conflict or undermine each other. Indeed, Tropp and Brown (2004) found that motivation for individual enhancement predicted interest and involvement in collective action beyond that which could be predicted by group enhancement motives alone. While the degree of influence of a particular motive varies according to the individual and the situation, it is possible for collective action that to be both prosocially and politically motivated.

Klandermans (1984) further elaborates upon motivations to participate in collective action by including a an individual's perception of the expected social and material benefits of participation. While all members of a community may have the potential to benefit from a social movement, the anticipated outcome of the movement may not be enough motivation for some individuals to become involved. People may not feel compelled to work toward improving the collective good, because they can still expect benefit indirectly from the work of individuals who do participate (Simon et al., 1998). Thus, Klandermans (1984, 1997) identified three motives of social movement participation that originate from different types of cost-benefit calculations on the part of the individual. The *collective* motive is a function of the subjective value of the goals of the movement and the subjective expectation that such goals are achievable. *Social* motives are concerned with the reactions of others (e.g, one's friends and family) to participation in a social movement. Finally, *reward* motives result from incentives that are related to non-social costs and benefits of participation such as loss of time or money, or risking one's health. Each of these motives are comprised of an expectation, and the

value one places on this outcome expectation. Taken together, the three motives should make additive contributions to willingness to participate in a social movement. Likelihood of participation should increase with the expected value of the outcome of the social movement (collective motive), with the favorable reactions of significant others (social motive), and with the expected value of the personal benefits of participation (reward motive). In short, Klanderman's (1984, 1997) model of social movement participation states that willingness to engage in collective action is due to the interaction of attitudes toward participation, and with the subjective social norm toward participation in collective action.

However, this cost-benefit perspective of participation in social action has been criticized for being overly individualistic, and neglecting the larger social and historical context, including that of intergroup conflict and perceived disadvantage between groups (Abrams & de Moura, 2002). As opposed to examining merely individual-level motives, social psychologists have underscored the importance of the social and group context by largely focusing on *social identity, perceived injustice,* and *perceived efficacy* as key predictors of collective action. These three variables all pertain to how an individual perceives oneself as part of a larger social environment, but have largely been studied as independent, rather than as interrelated constructs. While each perspective offers different explanations for collective action, taken together they provide more complex insight into collective action as a psychological phenomenon on the individual level.

Social identity. Social identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) has emerged as one of the dominant theories of intergroup relations; it proposes that individuals use social categories to group individuals, some of which they will belong to. Group

membership consequently is a source for identification of the self. Gurin and Townsend (1986) conceptualized social identity as a multidimensional construct comprised of *perceived similarity* in personal characteristics to other group members, an *awareness of common fate* with other group members, and the *centrality* of group membership itself to one's self-concept. As individuals come to identify more strongly with their ingroup, they begin to use social comparisons to discern the status of their ingroup relative to outgroups that lead to positive, neutral, or negative self-evaluations (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). If they perceive their group to be higher in status than other groups, they will try to maintain or extend their position within the intergroup context. If they perceive their group as being lower in status than other groups, they will attempt to change the situation by trying to find ways to alleviate these perceived discrepancies (Festinger, 1957; Kawakami and Dion, 1995). SIT proposes that three contextual concerns attenuate behavior in response to these perceived status differences: the permeability of group boundaries, the legitimacy of intergroup relations, and the stability of status (Ellemers, Wilkie, & van Knippenberg, 1993). When members of a low status group perceive their status to be unjust and amenable to improvement, their identification with the group is strengthened, and they are more likely to engage in actions to address intergroup status differentials. Thus, according to SIT, identification with a disadvantaged group would be a direct predictor of engagement in collective action.

Researchers have further elaborated upon this argument by proposing that politicized group identity, as opposed to non-politicized identity is more predictive of collective action (Simon et al., 1998; Van Zomeren, Spears, and Postmes, 2009). Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980) described the process through which group identity becomes

politicized as *stratum consciousness*. Stratum consciousness consists of four elements: (1) identification with a group; (2) power discontent, or the belief that one's group is deprived of power in relation to the dominant group; (3) rejection of legitimacy, or the belief that inequalities between groups are legitimate; and (4) collectivist orientation, or the belief that collective action which changes the status quo is more desirable over acting solely in one's self-interest. The latter three elements embody a political ideology around group membership which recognizes power imbalances, rejects rationalizations which justify subjugating some groups and privileging others, and embraces collective action as a way of addressing social issues. Using this framework of identity, Duncan and Stewart (2007) found using a sample of midlife and activist women that politicized gender identity was positively associated with both women's rights activism and civil rights activism.

Perceived injustice. According to relative deprivation theory (RDT; Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star, and Williams, 1949), collective action is predicated upon the subjective experience of disadvantage, rather than merely outright objective. In other words, members of oppressed groups do not always seek to address stereotypes, discrimination, and disparities by working towards redress or social change. Rather, collective action only occurs as a result of social comparisons with specific others. Thus, these feelings of deprivation are not absolute, but are contingent upon the individual or group that is being used as a comparison point. Furthermore, RDT proposes that there are dimensional components that determine the type of deprivation (Dion, 1993). The first dimension concerns the focus of comparison, and distinguishes between a person feeling individually deprived relative to others in their ingroup, as opposed to a group

perceiving themselves to be collectively disadvantaged compared to other groups. The second dimension concerns the distinction between the cognitive aspect of perceived inequality and the affective aspect of feeling resentment over these inequalities (Dion, 1993). Generally, affective, collectivistic deprivation (resentment over poorer treatment of one's group), has been found to be most predictive of desires and attempts toward social change (Dion, 1986).

This perspective offered by relative deprivation theory also suggests that assessments of personal status (as opposed to group status) should be unrelated to taking collective action. Perceived personal deprivation is thus irrelevant to collective action, as an individual is unlikely to work to enhance their group's status simply because of an individual instance of deprivation. Rather, the experience of personal discrimination is more likely to predict action that enhance one's one individual status, than to participation in collective efforts to improve overall group status. However, when perceptions of personal deprivation are defined in relation to the outgroup, the experience of personal deprivation becomes integral to understanding collective action. In other words, the recognition of personal deprivation in relation to the more privileged outgroup plays an important role in consciousness raising and motivation for collective action. Research has established that perceiving both personal and group-based discrimination was more predictive of engagement in collective action than the perception of personal discrimination alone (Foster & Matheson, 1995). This is congruent with group consciousness theories that suggest that recognizing one's personal experience with discrimination as a critical condition for collective action to occur. Discrimination against other members of one's group is understood to affect oneself; by internalizing perceived

injustice against one's group as being personally relevant, collective action then becomes a more likely response to injustice.

The perception of injustice, and beliefs about justice more generally, are also related to participation in social action. The "just world" phenomenon refers to the tendency to believe that the world is inherently just, and that people get what they deserve (Lerner, 1980). Because of this, people who highly endorse the belief in a just world are more likely to rationalize injustice as the deserved outcome of a personal shortcoming, or through some fault of the affected individual. In contrast, people who have low to average endorsement of the belief in a just world belief that the world is unfair or prejudiced. In this way, the legitimization of inequality through belief in a just world is negatively with social action. Two studies of social work students found that those who believed in a just world were less likely to engage in social justice advocacy for women, people of color, and LGBT people (Van Soest, 1996; Van Voorhis & Hostetter, 2006). Furthermore, Weiss (2003) found that students who were more likely to attribute poverty to structural causes were also more likely to endorse political activist behaviors.

Perceived effectiveness. Among those more strongly self-identified with low-status groups, having a more sophisticated understanding of the implications class- and race-based stratification has been found to be predictive of intent to engage in activities which serve the political interests of one's group (A. H. Miller, Gurin, Gurin, & Malanchuk, 1981; Sanchez, 2006; Stokes, 2003). Of interest to both scholars and practitioners is the question of why simply raising consciousness, (e.g., educating people about why they will be personally affected by the issue), does not always motivate people

to become involved in an issue. Despite awareness about social inequalities and issues of injustice, individuals tend to only take action if they believe such actions will be successful in achieving the desired outcome (M. J. Miller et al., 2009; Pecukonis & Wenocur, 1994).

Earlier resource mobilization theorists contend that specific social and material resources must be identified and utilized in order for a collective of individuals to move towards some type of social action. Thus, it is also implicitly assumed that individual participation in collective action is the result of a rational decision-making process in which perceived personal benefits outweigh perceived personal costs. Klandermans (1984) sought to integrate these sociological and social psychological perspectives by suggesting that the subjective expectation of whether collective action would be effective in achieving its desired goals bridges these macro and micro level perspectives. Efficacy has since become one of the key explanatory antecedents of collective action; individuals are more likely to engage in action if they believe that their participation will make it more likely that the desired outcome will be achieved. Similar to SIT and RDT, conceptualizations of efficacy are based in the perception of one's group. The belief that issues can be addressed more effectively through a unified effort by one's group gives individuals a sense of collective power or strength by increasing their perceived capabilities of bringing about social change. In other words, the stronger an individual's perception of group efficacy, the more likely they are to engage in collective action (Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999).

M. J. Miller and colleagues (2009) further elucidated the relationship between self-efficacy and social action by proposing a conceptual model based on Lent, Brown,

and Hackett's (1994; 2002) social cognitive career theory (SCCT), which emphasizes an individual's agency in directing their vocational choices while also acknowledging personal and environmental variables that may strengthen, weaken, or override agency in career development. M. J. Miller et al. (2009, 2011) used SCCT to inform the development of a domain-specific model for social justice advocacy in which social justice self-efficacy and personal interest in social justice activities directly predicted commitment to social justice advocacy. Furthermore, they also found that social support for engaging in social justice, social barriers to engaging in social justice work, and outcome expectations indirectly predicted social justice commitment by influencing the relationship between self-efficacy and interest. Thus, M. J. Miller et al.'s model builds upon the extant knowledge between self-efficacy and collective action by seeking to identify social cognitive processes that specifically pertained to engagement in social justice advocacy.

Within social work, empowerment has been a key concept in delineating the transformative process through which individuals from marginalized groups come to work toward advancing the social and political position of their communities. There has been much variability in the definition and conceptualization of empowerment theory, but all of these perspectives share a common pragmatic purpose of redistributing power to those who may believe that may be efficacious in acquiring such power on their own.

Gutierrez (1990) defined empowerment as referring to "increasing individual, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals, families, and communities can take action to improve their life situations" (p.149). As both a process and a theory, empowerment links individual well-being with a larger socio-political context

(Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment is viewed as a means to address the problems of disenfranchised populations and to mediate the role of powerlessness. As a psychological variable, empowerment is not merely an intrapersonal construct. Rather, it includes the individual's perceptions of his or her environment and cognitive variables such as self-efficacy and locus of control, and places them in ecological and cultural contexts (Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment theory in the social sciences has existed for many years. However, its operational and conceptual definitions are not as well standardized. Empowerment as a construct has been conceptualized at multiple levels of analysis. Gutierrez (1990) described three different meanings of empowerment. It can be on the macro level, as the process of increasing collective political power; on the micro level, as the development of an increased sense of perceived individual control; or as the effect of the latter upon the former. Thus, empowerment theory focuses on how beliefs about the self can predict individual, community, and social change.

Zimmerman (1995) also noted that empowerment can occur at individual, organizational, and community levels. Furthermore, Zimmerman posited that empowerment has three dimensions: a) an interpersonal component, where an individual feels that he/she has some sense of control over his/her environment and a certain degree of competence; b) an interactional component, where one has a critical awareness about the issues effecting his/her community and knowledge of resources and methods to produce social change; and c) a behavioral component, which refers to the action taken by an individual to effectuate change. Empowerment is linked to increased perceptions of competence and control, critical awareness of one's sociopolitical environment, and to

community involvement and organizational participation (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).

Theories of empowerment focus on how beliefs about the self can contribute to individual, community, and social change. For individuals to engage in social action, they must first develop a sense of critical consciousness, in which the disenfranchised gain power by recognizing themselves as being oppressed and taking subsequent action. Based upon Freire's (1970) writings about *concientizacao,* Gutierrez (1990) described the development of critical consciousness as involving three psychological processes: a) the development of group identification and the internalization of group membership as a central aspect of one's identity, b) an understanding of the differential status and power of social groups in society, and c) a sense of self and collective efficacy in perceiving oneself as a an active agent capable of effecting social change. In applying this theory to ethnic minority groups, the development of group identification would be expressed as the formation of an ethnic identity. This in turn, would increase one's sense of perceived control over their socio-political context, which would then predict the likelihood to engage in behaviors to change the social order.

As an expansion and synthesis of existing definitions, Catteneo and Chapman (2010) defined empowerment as:

> an iterative process in which a person who lacks power sets a personally meaningful goal oriented toward increasing power, takes action toward that goal, and observes and reflects on the impact of this action, drawing on his or her evolving self-efficacy, knowledge, and competence related to the goal. Social context influences all six process components and the links among them (p. 647).

In this conceptualization of empowerment, the empowerment process is concentrated on a set of specific goals that are personally meaningful and involve gaining

power and increased social influence, rather than just intrapsychic change. As a person gains a greater sense of their capabilities, becomes more aware of unequal power dynamics in their immediate social context and potential courses of action that can be used to address such imbalances, and develops concrete skills to achieve their goals, they must then take some kind of action to achieve those goals. However, Cattaneo and Chapman (2010) differ from other empowerment theorists by defining action more broadly than participation; in this line of thought, a person may be empowered to decrease their participation with a group, or to have more influence within an interpersonal relationship. Finally, there is a reflexive component of the empowerment process, in which the individual evaluates the outcomes of his or her actions, including their beliefs about their own efficacy and social contextual factors that contributed to either the action's success or failure. This reflection of the impact of one's actions then leads to a reiteration of personally meaningful goals, and the empowerment process may begin again based on knowledge and skills gained from addressing the previously set goals. Thus, empowerment is a process used toward achieving a goal, as well as a goal in and of itself. Furthermore, the ability to acquire power within one's sphere of social influence is the product of both beliefs about the self and of constraints within the existing social context.

Based on empowerment theory, individuals who are more aware of their social context and who have a heightened sense of self would be more likely to take action to directly influence outcomes (Gutierrez, 1990; Zimmerman, 1995). This notion assumes that a common group identity would lead to collective action, which is necessary to effectuate social change. Psychological empowerment is consequently the result of a

critical consciousness of the implications of one's identity, and is subsequently related to community participation. Thus, organizing and collective action on behalf of one's group can be viewed as a social change movement rooted in issues of identity and marginalization with mainstream society.

To better understand how empowerment theory helps engagement in social action, it may be more useful to place this theory within the context of sociopolitical development. Watts, Williams, and Jagers (2003) described sociopolitical development as an extension of empowerment theory as it relates to activism and social change movements. Sociopolitical development emphasizes a critical understanding of macro-level forces such as culture and politics to inform individuals about their social status, as well as acquisition of skills and capabilities needed to resist oppression and promote a just society.

In order to provide a theoretical framework for the psychological origins of collective action among oppressed groups, Watts and Abdul-Adil (1998) proposed a five stage model which emphasizes critical consciousness of race as a necessary component of sociopolitical development. The first stage is an acritical stage, which is marked by a lack of awareness of social injustice or a belief that inequality is a reflection of the capabilities of group members. Next, during the adaptive phase, social inequality is acknowledged, but collective action is not viewed as a viable solution. As a result, adaptation to the current social paradigm is used to maintain a positive sense of self and to obtain social and material goals. The next phase is the precritical stage, where an awareness of inequality begins to emerge, and the value of adapting to an unequal society is questioned. The fourth stage, the critical stage, marks the incorporation of critical

consciousness, with a desire to learn more about oppression and injustice. Through this process, it is concluded that systemic social change is needed to address inequity in society. Finally, the liberation stage is marked by a cognizance of the implications of oppression and a strong desire to improve social conditions. If conditions are conducive for doing so, the individual would then become an active agent of social change in his or her environment. As sociopolitical development proceeds, critical consciousness and analysis of political conditions is enhanced, individual capacities are built upon, and propensity to engage in collective action movements is increased. Within the context of race, this model of sociopolitical development specifies how a marginalized social identity can ultimately lead to civic engagement. By increasing awareness about the implications of race on their personal lives, a person of a minority background would then feel a greater sense of social responsibility for changing the social and economic conditions which allow discrimination against their group to persist.

Social Action and Social Identity

These three variables of social identity, perceived inequality, and perceived effectiveness come from distinct theoretical traditions, and because of this, full integration between these perspectives has been limited, and studies that have included all three as predictors of collective action are relatively few in number. However, attempts to integrate these three variables into one theoretical model have begun to outline a causal sequence wherein identity has direct and indirect effects on collective action (Kawakami & Dion, 1995; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995; Mummendey et al., 1999; Simon et al., 1998; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Empirical studies have established that incorporation of a collective group identification of one's self-concept is a strong

predictor of participation in social action movements that directly benefit the group itself. Simon and colleagues (1998) were able to demonstrate that group identification was strongly correlated with willingness to participate in collective action. Furthermore, this study also found that the perception of discrimination as a member of a marginalized group predicted a stronger sense of identification with the collective action movement itself. This, in turn, was also related to willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of their group.

While collective identity can be related empirically to participation in collective action, the exact psychological processes through which social identity leads to participatory behaviors are not as well identified. From a meta-analysis of 182 studies of collective action, van Zomeren and colleagues (2008) developed an integrative social identity model of collective action (SIMCA) where identity, perceived injustice, and efficacy all separately had modest unique main effects on collective action. Feelings of injustice more strongly predicted collective action than perceptions of injustice, and identity predicted collective action against both structural disadvantage, or disadvantage based on group membership, and incidental disadvantage, or disadvantage based on particular a particular issue or situation. Injustice and efficacy were related more strongly to collective action that addressed incidental disadvantage than to structural disadvantage. Finally, both perceived injustice and efficacy partially mediated the relationship between identity and collective action. This model provides a useful framework to guide an analyses plan, but not a descriptive way of how these are associated.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to build upon the social identity model of collective action by extending its application to the social work profession. In to order ensure that social work remains committed to its historical dual mission of addressing inequality through both individual and structural change, this study seeks to understand the individual-level factors which lead students to express interest in social justice activities and future lifelong commitment to social justice, and predict students' endorsement of either objective of social work's dual mission. While much of the extant literature focuses on race and ethnicity and their relationship to social work practice preferences, it may also be the more general case that students who have a more complex understanding of their social identities also use the same social cognitive processes to inform their decision to pursue social work as a career, and social justice advocacy more broadly. Thus, I intend to also explore how these relationships vary across both racial and gender identities. A conceptual model of the study is presented in Figure 1.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Study Design

This study utilized methods for internet-based survey research as described by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009). The Qualtrics survey platform used in this study allowed for anonymous data collection and automatic data entry using a secure independent website. The survey instrument itself was designed based on Dillman et al.'s survey format parameters, and was pre-tested by four individuals who were identified as members of the larger target population. Dillman's process for recruitment for participation in internet-based surveys was then followed to provide potential participants with information about the survey and to periodically remind them to respond.

This study was reviewed by the Health and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board of the University of Michigan and received an exemption from ongoing review on the basis that it is "research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation" (personal communication, November 16, 2011).

Sample Selection

All Masters of Social Work students enrolled in the Winter 2012 term at the University of Michigan School of Social work were eligible to participate. Potential participants were contacted using an official administrative group email (ssw.msw@umich.edu) used to contact students en masse. All of the 479 students received an e-mail invitation to participate with a link to the Qualtrics website hosting the survey. The text of the initial recruitment email is provided in Appendix A. Over a period of three weeks, each person was sent the recruitment notice, two reminder e-mails, and finally, a third reminder announcing the conclusion of the survey. Participants were required to check a box indicating that they gave consent before being administered the survey. The text of the informed consent form can be found in Appendix B. Upon completion of the internet survey, individuals were automatically directed to another website where they could leave their information in order to receive a $10 Visa gift card in exchange for their participation.

Of the 479 students who were sent the survey link, 153 responded and completed at least part of the survey, for a response rate of 31.94%. Of those surveys that were received, 131 provided enough demographic and variable information for their data to be included in the data analysis, for a usable response rate of 27.35%.

Participants

A summary of demographic information of the study sample is presented in Table 1. Of the 131 individuals with usable data, eight (6.1%) identified as male, 122 (93.1%) identified as female, and one (0.8%) participant did not respond. The mean age of

participants was 26.14 (SD = 6.22), and participants ranged from 22 to 59 years of age. With respect to racial identification, participants were able to choose multiple categories as applicable, with 117 (89.3%) identifying as monoracial, and 14 (3.8%) as multiracial. Seventeen (13.8%) identified as African American, Afro-Caribbean, or black, nine (6.8%) identified as Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander, 10 (7.6%) as Latino or Hispanic, five (3.8%) as Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, two (1.5%) as Arab or Arab American, and 106 (79.9%) identified as White or European American.

For religious affiliation, 30 (22.9%) described themselves as "spiritual, but not religious," 26 (19.8%) as atheist or agnostic, 35 (26.7%) as Protestant, 19 (14.5%) as Roman Catholic, 10 (7.6%) as Jewish, and 10 (7.6%) as members of other faiths, including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Universal Unitarianism, and one (0.8%) participant did not respond. One hundred and seven (81.7%) participants identified themselves as heterosexual, and 24 (18.3%) identified as non-heterosexual (e.g., gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer, and pansexual). Participants described the socioeconomic class of their family of origin as follows: 10 (7.6%) as lower class, 19 (14.5%) as lower-middle class, 61 (46.6%) as middle class, 40 (30.5%) as middle class, 40 (30.5%) as upper-middle class, and one (0.8%) as upper class.

The majority of participants were in the first year of their MSW program (N = 94; 71.8%); 17 (13%) were second-year students, 17 (13%) were on another degree plan (e.g., enrolled part-time or in multiple degree programs), and three (2.3%) did not respond. Twenty-four (18.3%) of participants were in the 12-month Advanced Standing curriculum track (meaning that they entered the program with an undergraduate degree in

social work and were eligible to earn the MSW in one calendar year), 51 (38.9%) were enrolled in the 16-month curriculum track (enrolled in four consecutive terms, including spring/summer term), 45 (34.3%) were enrolled in the 20-month track (enrolled in a conventional two-year program), eight (6.1%) were not enrolled in any of the School's established curriculum tracks, and three (2.3%) did not respond.

Students enrolled in University of Michigan's Masters of Social Work program are required to declare dual concentrations in both a practice area and a practice method, which determine each student's advanced coursework requirements and practicum placements. The practice method concentration focuses on "theories and interventions related to practice with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and/or society," while the practice area concentration focuses on "selected contexts and domains of practice, with particular attention given to specific policies, procedures, and practices" (http://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/curriculum/dual-advanced.html). With respect to practice method concentrations within the MSW program, 76 (58.0%) were focusing on Interpersonal Practice, 24 (18.3%) on Community Organization, 16 (12.2%) on Management of Human Services, and 13 (9.9%) in Social Policy and Evaluation, and two (1.5%) did not respond. Of the 26 (19.8%) students who also noted an additional practice method minor, nine were in Interpersonal Practice, five on Community Organization, four on Management of Human Services, and eight on Social Policy and Evaluation. Regarding their practice area concentration, 43 (32.8%) indicated a concentration in Children and Youth, 10 (7.6%) in Aging, 29 (22.1%) in Mental Health, six in Health (4.6%), 41 (31.2%) in Community and Social Systems, and two (1.5%) did not respond. Thirteen (9.9%) respondents were also concurrently enrolled in another degree program

at University of Michigan; of these, five were also enrolled in the Ph.D. program in Social Work and Social Science, five were pursuing a Masters of Public Health, two were pursuing a Masters of Public Policy, and one was pursuing a Masters of Urban Planning.

Measures

The complete survey instrument can be found in Appendix C.

Independent variables.

Social identity. Two items measuring different dimensions of politicized collective identity were given to participants (Gurin & Markus, 1988). These dimensions represented two of the three dimensions identified by Gurin and Townsend (1986) as properties of gender identity that were predictive of discontent with the status quo, a rejection of the legitimacy of gender disparities, and greater support for change-oriented collective action. *Cognitive centrality,* or the degree to which one's subjective group membership is central to how one thinks about the self, was assessed using an item that asked "How often do you think about yourself as a member of each of the following groups?" Participants gave responses on a scale ranging from 1= "Never" to 7 ="Frequently" as they pertained to their race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, ability/disability status, religion/spirituality, age, and national origin. *Common fate*, or the degree to which one perceives commonalities in the ways that group members are treated in society, was assessed using an item that asked "For each of you social identity groups, how much does the way people in the group are treated in the United States affect what happens in your life?" Similar to the previous item, participants gave responses on a scale ranging from 1= "Not at all" to 7 = "Very much" as they pertained to their race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation,

ability/disability status, religion/spirituality, age, and national origin. For the purposes of the present study, only racial identity and gender identity were examined, and separate analyses were conducted for each type of identity as the independent variable. Consistent with similar previous research (e.g., Duncan and Stewart, 2007), scores for each of the items were converted to *z*-scores, and them summed to provide an overall score for social identity. For racial/ethnic identity, scores ranged from -4.69 to 3.60 with a mean of 0.00 (*SD* = 1.64), and reliability (Crohnbach's α) was .74. For gender identity, scores ranged from -4.94 to 2.20 with a mean of 0.00 (*SD* = 1.74), and reliability was .72.

Mediating variables.

Relative deprivation. In order to examine the perception of injustice across members of both privileged and marginalized groups, it is necessary to use a measure assessing abstract individual opinions about inequality and justice in the present study. The *Global Belief in a Just World Scale* (GBJW) examines the extent to which individuals view the world as a just place. Lipkus (1991) created the survey to measure the belief that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. The GBJWS is comprised of 7 items on a six point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree" to 6 = "strongly agree." Sample items include "I feel that people get what they are entitled to have" and "I feel people who meet with misfortune have brought it upon themselves." Higher scores reflect greater agreement with the belief that the world is inherently a just place and people get what they deserve, while lower scores reflect strong disagreement that the world is a just place and that individuals are do not always get what they deserve (Lipkus, 1991). For the current study, the mean GNJW was 2.45 (*SD* = .88) and reliability (Crohnbach'sα) was .85.

Social justice self-efficacy. Social justice self-efficacy will be assessed using a 20-item subscale from the *Social Issues Questionnaire* (SIQ). The SIQ (M. J. Miller et al., 2009) measures level of interest in and commitment to engaging in social justice. The SIQ contains 53 10-point items, with scales measuring social justice self-efficacy, social justice outcome expectations, social justice interest, social justice commitment, and supports and barriers to social justice engagement. The social justice self-efficacy scale assesses an individual's perceptions of their abilities to work toward social justice across four domains: intrapersonal (e.g., examine your own worldview, biases, and prejudicial attitudes after witnessing or hearing about social injustice), interpersonal (e.g., discuss issues related to racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism with your friends," community (e.g., develop and implement a solution to a community social issue such as unemployment, homelessness, or racial tension), and institutional/political (e.g., challenge or address institutional policies that are overtly or covertly discriminatory). Participants are asked to respond by rating their perceived ability to accomplish each task on a 10-point scale ranging from 0 = "no confidence at all" to 9 = "complete confidence). Individual items were summed and then averaged, with higher scores reflecting increased confidence in performing social justice advocacy behaviors. For the current study, the mean social justice self-efficacy score was 7.53 (*SD* = 1.11) and reliability (Crohnbach'sα) was .92, and internal consistency estimates for the social justice self-efficacy subscales ranged from .71 to .91.

Dependent variables.

Interest in social justice activities. Social justice interest refers to individual's patterns of likes, dislikes, and indifferences toward social justice advocacy activities, and

will be measured using another subscale of M.J. Miller et al.'s (2009) Social Issues Questionnaire. Participants were asked to rate their level of interest on a 10-point scale in nine different social justice activities, such as "volunteering your time at a community agency," "watching television programs that cover social issues," and "supporting a political candidate on the basis of his or her stance on social issues." Higher scores indicate higher interest in engaging in social justice activities. For the current study, the mean social justice interest score was 7.85 (*SD* = 1.36) and reliability (Crohnbach'sα) was .85.

Commitment to social justice. Social justice commitment, as defined as an individual's intentions to engage in social justice advocacy work in the future, will be assessed using another subscale of M. J. Miller et al.'s (2007) Social Issues Questionnaire. Participants will be asked to rate their level of agreement with four statements, such as "In the future, I intend to engage in social justice activities" and "I have a plan of action for ways I will remain or become involved in social justice activities over the next year." Individual items were summed and then averaged, with higher scores indicate stronger commitment to future social justice engagement. For the current study, the mean social justice self-efficacy score was 7.71 (*SD* = 1.95) and reliability (Crohnbach's α) was .92.

Belief in the mission of social work. To assess participants' views on the mission of social work, a single-item measure used in the California Social Work Education Center's (CalSWEC) 10-year study assessing changes during the course of MSW students' graduate education (Santangelo, 1993). Participants will be asked to respond to the following item:

> Some social workers feel that social work should help the individual find a mode of adaptation to the world around him/her, and others feel that emphasis should be placed on societal/institutional change. While both approaches are valuable and not necessarily in conflict with each other, which would **you** favor if you had to make a choice?

Participants will be given the option of either "individual adaptation" or "societal/institutional change." In the current study, 38 (29%) of participants responded "individual adaptation" and 93 (71%) responded "societal/institutional change."

Demographic variables. In addition to the aforementioned variables, participants were also asked to provide information about their age, gender, race, socioeconomic status of their family of origin, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, correlations, and tests of mediation were utilized in the data analysis for this study. The analyses conducted are as follows:

Descriptive Analyses. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the continuous study variables (age, racial identity, gender identity, belief in a just world, social justice self-efficacy, social justice interest, and social justice commitment). In order to address missing data, scale means were calculated for each case that responded to at least 80% of the items on each scale. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for the one categorical study variable, belief in the mission of social work, and for all of the categorical demographic variables (gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status of family of origin, year in program, curriculum plan, and practice concentrations). Data were examined for distribution and variability, to ensure accuracy and to inform further data analyses.

Preliminary Analyses. A correlation matrix was constructed to explore relationships between and among the study variables and the primary demographic variables of interest (age, gender, racial identity, gender identity, belief in a just world, social justice self-efficacy, social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work).

Tests of Mediation. To test for mediation, two analytic procedures were employed. First, simple mediation was tested for each combination of independent (racial identity or gender identity), mediator (belief in a just world or social justice self-efficacy), and dependent (belief in the mission of social work, social justice interest, social justice commitment) variables, for a total of 12 sets of analyses. Ordinary least squares regression was used unless belief in the mission of social work, a dichotomous variable, was the dependent variable, in which case logistic regression was used. The first method employed was a four-step procedure described by Baron and Kenny (1986). For each step, a condition must be fulfilled in order to establish mediation. Step 1 should determine a significant main effect between the independent variable on the dependent variable. Step 2 should determine a significant relationship between the independent variable and the mediating variable. Step 3 tests for a significant effect of the mediator on the dependent variable. Finally, Step 4 should establish that the relationship between the independent and dependent variable is substantially decreased when the mediator variable is also included as a predictor in the model, and that the mediator significantly accounts for the variability in the dependent variable in the presence of the independent variable.

To simultaneously test both belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy as mediators, a bootstrapping technique developed by Preacher and Hayes (2008) was

then used to examine a multiple mediation model. A multiple mediation model would provide an estimate of both the total indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable by way of the mediators, and of each specific indirect effect, or the individual mediating effect of each mediator. Compared to the aforementioned Baron and Kenny (1986) procedure, bootstrap analysis offers greater statistical power without assuming a normal sampling distribution. Furthermore, by testing multiple mediators simultaneously, bootstrapping reduces the number of inferential tests, providing a more parsimonious analysis and reducing the possibility of Type I error (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). An SPSS macro designed for testing multiple mediation models available for download on http://www.quantpsy.org was used to test the study hypotheses (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Bootstrap analyses use random sampling with replacement from the original study sample to repeatedly compute estimates of the statistic of interest (Mallinckrodt, Abraham, Wei, & Russell, 2006). In the present study, the original sample of 131 was used to generate a bootstrap sample of 131 with replacement. Using this sample, the total indirect effect was calculated as the sum of (a) the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through belief in a just world, and (b) the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable through social justice self-efficacy. Following the advice of Preacher and Hayes (2008), this calculation was repeated 5000 times to yield parameter estimates for the total and specific indirect effects. If a zero was not included in the 95% bias-corrected interval of the estimate, the indirect effect was statistically significant and mediation demonstrated. Separate multiple mediations models were tested for each possible combination of independent (racial

identity and gender identity) and dependent (belief in the mission of social work, social justice interest, and social justice commitment) variables, for a total of six multiple mediation models.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Preliminary Analyses

A correlation matrix of the primary study variables is presented in Table 1. Non-parametric correlations for the dichotomous variable of belief in the mission of social work are reported where appropriate. Racial identity and gender identity were significantly positively correlated. As expected, racial identity and gender identity were also significantly positively correlated with social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work. Both racial identity and gender identity were negatively related to global belief in a just world and positively related to social justice self-efficacy. Belief in a just world and social justice self–efficacy were positively associated with social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work in the expected directions.

Age and socioeconomic status were not found to be correlated to any of the study variables. Furthermore, advanced standing students (who completed an undergraduate degree in social work before beginning graduate study) did not differ significantly from the rest of the sample on any of the study variables. With regards to gender, a t-test revealed that men and women significantly differed only in racial identity (t = 3.127, $p < .05$); however, due to the small number of men in the total sample (N = 8), gender was not controlled in any subsequent analyses.

Mediation Analyses

Racial identity. Simple tests of mediation were performed using the procedure by Baron and Kenny (1986) described in Chapter 3. Step 1 should determine if there is a significant effect of the predictor variable (racial identity) on the dependent variables (social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work). Results of mediation analyses testing belief in a just world are presented in Tables 3 through 5, and results of mediation analyses testing social justice self-efficacy are presented in Tables 6 through 8. In Step 1, racial identity was found to have a significant main effect on social justice interest ($B = .18$, $t = 2.49$, $p < .05$) and social justice commitment ($B = .42$, $t = 4.24$, $p < .001$), and a marginally significant effect on belief in the mission of social work ($B = .24$, $\chi^2 = 3.80$, $p = .05$). Thus, participants whose racial identities were more salient were more interested in social justice activities, expressed greater future commitment to social justice, and were more likely to endorse the social/institutional change mission of social work, and the first step needed to establish mediation was satisfied for social justice interest and social justice commitment. Because the marginally significant effect of racial identity on belief in the mission of social work may have the result of limited power due to sample size, and because since it is possible to have a significant indirect effect even in the presence of a non-significant total indirect effect (MacKinnon, Krull, & Lockwood, 2000; Shrout & Bolger, 2002), the decision was made to proceed with the test of mediation for that dependent variable as well. Step 2 should determine whether the predictor variable (racial identity) significantly affects the mediating variables (belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy). As expected, participants with higher levels of racial identity were also less likely to have higher levels of endorsement of the belief that the world was inherently just ($B = -.116$, $t = -2.52$, $p <$

.05) and to express greater confidence in the abilities to engage in social justice activities (B = .25, t = 4.47, p < .001). Thus, the second step for establishing mediation was satisfied for both belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. Step 3 should determine whether the partial effects of the mediators on the dependent variables were statistically significant. When controlling for racial identity in Step 3, belief in a just world was found to be a significant predictor of social justice interest (B = -.41, t = -3.12, p < .001), social justice commitment (B = -.40, t = -2.14, p < .05), and belief in the mission of social work (B = -.91, χ^2 = 11.55, p < .001). In a similar fashion, when racial identity and social justice self-efficacy were simultaneously entered into the regression model, social justice self-efficacy was a significant predictor of social justice interest (B = .65, t = 6.68, p < .001), social justice commitment (B = -.84, t = 6.07, p < .001), and belief in the mission of social work (B = .49, χ^2 = 5.94, p < .05). Thus, the third step for establishing mediation was satisfied for both potential mediators on each of the dependent variables. In Step 4, which establishes that the mediators explain the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables, the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variables should no longer be significant when the mediator is included in the model. When racial identity and belief in a just world were simultaneously entered as predictor variables, the partial effect of racial identity was not significant at the .05 level for both social justice interest (B = .13, t = 1.84, p = .07), and belief in the mission of social work (B = .16, χ^2 = 1.53, p = .22), suggesting significant mediation by belief in a just world. However, the relationship between racial identity and social justice commitment was still significant when belief in a just world was included as a predictor (B = .37, t = 3.73, p < .001), indicating that it was not a significant

mediator. When racial identity and social justice self-efficacy were simultaneously entered as predictor variables, the partial effect of racial identity was not significant at the .05 level for both social justice interest (B = .65, t = 6.68, p < .001), and belief in the mission of social work (B = .12, χ^2 = .88, p = .35). However, the partial effect of racial identity on social justice commitment was still significant (B = .21, t = 2.25, p < .05), indicating that social justice self-efficacy did not mediate this relationship (Table 7). Thus, belief in a just world was a significant mediator for racial identity and social justice interest and belief in the mission of social work. In other words, participants who were more strongly identified with their race were less likely to endorse that the world was inherently just, and more likely to feel confident in their abilities to work for social justice, and thus both more likely to express interest in social justice activities and were more likely to endorse the social change mission of social work.

To formally test multiple mediation models, Preacher and Hayes' (2008) bootstrapping technique was used to test multiple mediators simultaneously and assess their relative impact. Figure 2 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of racial identity on social justice interest was significant (B = .18, p < .05). However, the direct effect of racial identity on social justice interest after controlling for the two mediators was non-significant (B = -.01, p = .88). Table 9 presents the parameter estimates for the total and specific indirect effects on the relationship between racial identity and social justice interest. The bootstrap results indicate that the total effect of racial identity on social justice interest though belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy was statistically significant, as the confidence intervals do not contain zero. In addition, the specific indirect effects of belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy were each

both statistically significant. Thus, belief in a just world was a significant mediator such that salience of racial identity was negatively related to belief in a just world (B = -.12), which in turn was positively related to social justice interest (B = -.30). Social justice self-efficacy was also a significant mediator such that racial identity was positively related to social justice self-efficacy (B = .25), which in turn was positively related to social justice interest (B = .61). An examination of the pairwise contrast of indirect effects (belief in a just world vs. social justice self-efficacy) revealed that the specific indirect effect of social justice self-efficacy was larger than that of belief in a just world, as the confidence interval for the parameter estimate did not include zero. The overall model presented in Figure 2 accounted for 33.11% of the variance (R^2) in social justice interest.

Similarly, results from the bootstrap analysis testing a multiple mediation model for social justice commitment determined a significant total effect of racial identity on social justice commitment. Figure 3 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of racial identity on social justice interest was significant (B = .41, $p < .001$). However, the direct effect of racial identity on social justice interest after controlling for the two mediators was still significant (B = .19, $p < .05$). Furthermore, the specific indirect effect of racial identity on social justice commitment through belief in a just world was not statistically significant, in that its confidence interval contained zero (see Table 10). However, the specific indirect effect of racial identity on social justice commitment through social justice self-efficacy was statistically significant. Thus, social justice self-efficacy, but not belief in a just world, was found to mediate the relationship between racial identity and social justice commitment. Racial identity positively predicted social justice self-efficacy

(*B* = .25), which in turn predicted social justice commitment (*B* = .81). The pairwise contrast of indirect effects revealed that the specific indirect effect of social justice self-efficacy was larger than that of belief in a just world, as the confidence interval for the parameter estimate did not contain zero. The overall model represented in Figure 3 accounted for 33.32% of the variance (R^2) in social justice commitment.

Finally, results from the bootstrap analysis testing a multiple mediation model for belief in the mission of social work revealed a significant total effect of racial identity on belief in the mission of social work. Figure 4 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of racial identity on social justice interest was marginally significant ($B = .24$, $p = .05$). The direct effect of racial identity on social justice interest after controlling for the two mediators was non-significant ($B = .06$, $p = .68$). Table 11 presents the parameter estimates for the total and specific indirect effects on the relationship between racial identity and social justice interest. The bootstrap results indicate that the total effect of racial identity on social justice interest though belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy was statistically significant, as the confidence intervals do not contain zero. The bootstrap results indicate that the specific indirect effect through belief in a just world was statistically significant, in that its confidence interval did not contain zero. Additionally, the specific indirect effect through social justice self-efficacy was also statistically significant. Thus, racial identity negatively predicted belief in a just world, which in turn was negatively associated with belief in the mission of social work. Racial identity was also simultaneously positively related to social justice self-efficacy, which in turn was positively related to social justice commitment. An examination of pairwise contrasts of indirect effects revealed that the magnitude of the indirect effects of belief in

a just world and social justice self-efficacy did not differ significantly from each other. The overall model presented in Figure 4 accounted for 22.8% of the variance (Nagelkerke's R^2) in belief in the mission of social work.

Gender identity. The Baron and Kenny (1986) procedure to test for mediation was again used to gender identity as a predictor variable, social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work as the dependent variables, and belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy as mediator variables. Separate sets of analyses were conducted for each possible combination of mediating and dependent variables Results of mediation analyses testing belief in a just world are presented in Tables 12 through 14, and results of mediation analyses testing social justice self-efficacy are presented in Tables 15 through 17. In Step 1, in which the predictor variables are to be significantly associated with each dependent variable, gender identity was a significant predictor of social justice interest (*.28*, $t = 4.34$, $p < .001$), social justice commitment ($B = .46$, $t = 5.12$, $p < .001$), and belief in the mission of social work ($B = .35$, $\chi^2 = 8.66$, $p < .01$). In Step 2, in which the predictor variables are to be significant predictors of the dependent variables, gender identity was related to both belief in a just world ($B = -.20$, $t = .40$, $p < .001$) and to social justice self-efficacy ($B = .21$, $t = 4.00$, $p < .001$). More specifically, participants who were more strongly identified with their gender were less likely to endorse belief in a just world, and more likely to feel efficacious in their abilities to engage in social justice activities. In Step 3, in which the mediators are to significantly predict the dependent variable while controlling for the independent variable, the partial effect of belief in a just world was found to be a significant predictor of social justice interest ($B = -.29$, $t = -2.12$, $p < .05$), and belief in

the mission of social work (B = -.82, χ^2 = 8.72, p < .01) when both gender identity and belief in a just world were entered as predictor variables in the regression model. However, belief in a just world was found to not predict social justice commitment when it was entered simultaneously with gender identity as independent variables (B = -.22, t = -1.12, p = .27). Social justice self-efficacy was found to significantly predict social justice interest (B = .58, t = 6.17, p < .001), social justice commitment (B = .79, t = 5.99, p < .001), and belief in the mission of social work (B = .41, χ^2 = 4.36, p < .05) when controlling for the effect of gender identity. In Step 4, in which the predictor variable is to no longer predict the dependent variable in the presence of the mediator, gender identity was found to still have a significant effect on social justice interest (B = .23, t = 3.21, p < .01) and social justice commitment (B = .42, t = 4.27, p < .001) when belief in a just world was also entered as a predictor variable. However, when both gender identity and belief in a just world were entered as predictors as belief in the mission of social work, gender identity was no longer a significant predictor (B = .22, χ^2 = 2.79, p = .10), indicating that belief in a just world mediated this relationship. When gender identity and social justice self-efficacy were entered as predictor variables, gender identity remained a significant predictor of social justice interest (B = .16. t = 2.66, p < .01), social justice commitment (B = .30, t = 3.51, p < .001), and belief in the mission of social work (B = .27, χ^2 = 4.689, p < .05). Thus, according to the criteria established by Baron and Kenny (1986), belief in a just world mediated the only relationship between gender identity and belief in the mission of social work, and social justice self-efficacy did not mediate any of the relationships between gender identity and the dependent variables.

The Preacher and Hayes (2008) bootstrapping procedure for testing multiple mediators was again employed using gender identity as the independent variable and belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy as mediating variables for each of the three dependent variables. Figure 5 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of gender identity on social justice interest was significant (B = .28, p < .001). However, the direct effect of gender identity on social justice interest after controlling for the two mediators was non-significant (B = .12, p = .07). Table 18 presents the parameter estimates for the total and specific indirect effects on the relationship between gender identity and social justice interest. The bootstrap results indicate that the total effect of gender identity on social justice interest was statistically significant, as the confidence intervals do not contain zero. In addition, the specific indirect effect through belief in a just world was not statistically significant, but the indirect effect of social justice self-efficacy was statistically significant. Thus, social justice self-efficacy was also a significant mediator such that gender identity was positively related to social justice self-efficacy (B = .21, p < .001), which in turn was positively related to social justice interest (B = .57, p < .001). An examination of the pairwise contrast of indirect effects (belief in a just world vs. social justice self-efficacy) revealed that the magnitude of the specific indirect effects of belief in a just world and of social justice self-efficacy did not differ significantly from each other, even though the indirect effect of social justice interest differed significantly from zero and the indirect effect of belief in a just world did not. The overall model presented in Figure 5 accounted for 34.88% of the variance (R^2) in social justice interest.

Similarly, results from the bootstrap analysis testing a multiple mediation model for social justice commitment determined a significant total effect of gender identity on

social justice commitment. Figure 6 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of gender identity on social justice commitment was significant (B = .47 p < .001), while the direct effect of gender identity on social justice commitment after controlling for the two mediators was remained significant (B = .28, p < .001), its magnitude was nonetheless attenuated. Furthermore, the specific indirect effect of gender identity on social justice commitment through belief in a just world was not statistically significant, in that its confidence interval contained zero (see Table 19). However, the specific indirect effect of gender identity on social justice commitment through social justice self-efficacy was statistically significant. Thus, social justice self-efficacy, but not belief in a just world, was found to mediate the relationship between gender identity and social justice commitment. Gender identity positively predicted social justice self-efficacy (B = .21, p < .001), which in turn predicted social justice commitment (B = .78, p < .001). The pairwise contrast of indirect effects revealed that the specific indirect effect of social justice self-efficacy was larger than that of belief in a just world, as its confidence interval did not contain zero. The overall model presented in Figure 6 accounted for 35.74% of the variance ($R^{2)}$ in social justice commitment.

Finally, results from the bootstrap analysis testing a multiple mediation model for belief in the mission of social work revealed a significant total effect of gender identity on belief in the mission of social work. Figure 7 shows that the total (non-mediated) effect of gender identity on social justice commitment was significant (B = .35, p < .001). However, the direct effect of gender identity on social justice interest after controlling for the two mediators was non-significant (B = .14, p = .32). Table 20 presents the parameter estimates for the total and specific indirect effects on the relationship between gender

identity and belief in the mission of social work. The specific indirect effect through belief in a just world was statistically significant, in that its confidence interval did not contain zero. However, the specific indirect effect through social justice self-efficacy was not statistically significant, as the confidence interval for the parameter estimate included zero. Thus, racial identity negatively predicted belief in a just world (B = -.20, $p < .001$), which in turn was negatively associated with belief in the mission of social work (B = -.83, $p < .01$). Social justice self-efficacy did not mediate the relationship between gender identity and belief in the mission of social work. An examination of pairwise contrasts of indirect effects revealed that the magnitude of the indirect effects of belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy did not differ significantly from each other. The overall model presented in Figure 7 accounted for 23.37% of the variance (Nagelkerke's R^2) in belief in the mission of social work.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine predictors of social justice orientation among social work students. More specifically, it was hypothesized that awareness of social identity would be related to attitudes toward engagement in social justice, and that perceived injustice and self-efficacy would simultaneously mediate this effect in a manner consistent with the van Zomeren et al.'s (2008) Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA). Because the primary referent category of social identity can vary according to the individual, both racial and gender identity were separately tested for their unique effects on predicting social justice orientation. Findings indicate that these hypotheses were partially supported for both types of social identity, and point to a more complex understanding of how social work students' understanding of self is related to their attitudes toward social action, and to their own professional practice orientations. This study is significant the first study to date which has empirically tested SIMCA within a social work context. While the present investigation is highly exploratory in nature due to its novel use of a psychological model to examine the nature of an ideological schism within the social work profession, it nonetheless provides insight into how students might be differentially motivated to pursue a social work career, and into how training programs can socialize their students to become agents of social justice regardless of their desired practice modality.

As expected, the multiple mediation tests of indirect effects found that both belief in just world and social justice self-efficacy mediated the relationship between racial identity and social justice interest. However, only self-efficacy mediated the relationship between gender identity and social justice interest. In other words, the belief that the world is inherently just was only a predictor of social justice interest for those participants whose race was particularly salient, but not for those whose gender was salient. This discrepancy between racial and gender identity may pertain to how injustice is perceived by different marginalized groups in relation to the dominant group. Previous studies have established racial differences in the perception of just world, with African Americans generally expressing the lowest levels of support for belief in a just world (Calhoun & Cann, 1994; Hunt, 2000). However, systematic research examining the relationship between gender and belief in a just world has concluded that there is no significant difference in level of endorsement in just world (O'Conner, Morrison, McLeod, & Anderson, 1996). Thus, the degree to which perceived injustice explains the relationship between social identity and social justice interest may vary in accordance with the type of injustice that is perceived. In the present study, politicized social identity implicitly included some awareness of intergroup hierarchies. Race, and by extension, attitudes about one's racial membership, might be related to perceived legitimacy of social hierarchies, but gender and attitudes about one's gender membership are not as strongly associated with belief in a just world. This may indicate that individuals are more likely to express greater interest in social action that addresses issues of racism rather than sexism. Given that discourses around social justice in social work often conflate the goals of social justice with those of social diversity or multiculturalism

(Hyde, 1998), social work students themselves may construct their own personal schema of social justice as something that primarily addressing race-based inequalities, followed by other inequality toward other groups.

Findings from the multiple mediation tests also revealed that for both racial and gender identity, only social justice self-efficacy, but not belief in a just world, predicted social justice commitment. Being strongly identified with one's race or with one's gender was related to feeling more efficacious in one's ability to perform social justice activities, which in turn was related to greater commitment to engage in social justice activities in the future. This particular finding is consistent with the findings of M. J. Miller et al. (2011) who, using the same instrumentation as the present study, determined that that social justice self-efficacy had a significant direct effect on social justice commitment among counseling psychology graduate students. In contrast, a previous study also conducted by M. J. Miller and colleagues (2009) found no such relationship using a sample of undergraduate college students. Taken altogether, these studies suggest that the nature and the role of social justice self-efficacy in predicting social justice commitment is different for students enrolled in training programs in the helping professions than for students as a whole. For example, the concrete micro and macro practice skills that social work students learn both in the classroom and through their supervised practicum experiences, combined with explicit curriculum content on social justice issues would lead students to feel more confident in their abilities to work for social justice across multiple domains, which would then relate to their expressed future commitment to social justice causes. In addition, a heightened politicized awareness of one's identity, and the privileges and disadvantages inherent in different aspects of that identity, would also lead

students to be more critically vigilant toward issues of social justice, which may also contribute to their sense of self-efficacy.

Findings from the present study also revealed that both belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy mediated the relationships between racial identity and belief in the mission of social work, but that only belief in a just world mediated the relationship between gender identity and belief in the mission of social work. As hypothesized, both belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy simultaneously mediated the relationship between racial identity and belief in the mission of social work. This finding may help to explain why social work students of color express more interest in working directly with oppressed populations, and more likely to endorse the social change mission of social work (Abell & McDonell, 1990; Butler, 1990; Limb & Organista, 2003, 2005; Rubin & Johnson, 1984). Students who possess a more politicized racial identity (regardless of whether this is a privileged or oppressed racial group) would be more cognizant of intergroup power differentials and of structural and societal forces that perpetuate oppression against racial minorities. Because of this heightened sense of sociopolitical awareness, it possible that people who are more conscious of their race, and the implications of their racial group membership, would be more likely to view social work's primary mission being one of societal or institutional change as opposed to one of individual adaptation. The converse interpretation of this argument would also provide insight into the finding that only belief in a just world mediated the relationship between gender identity and belief in the mission of social work. Individuals who did not have as highly developed politicized gender consciousness were more likely to endorse belief in a just world, and thus were more likely to support individual adaptation as social work's

primary mission. Previous studies have established that strong support for the belief in a just world is related to acceptance of the status quo in social and political institutions, and to nonparticipation in social change activities (Rubin & Peplau, 1973, 1975). Furthermore, belief in a just world has also been related to negative attitudes toward underprivileged groups, and to the attribution of poverty to individual shortcomings, rather than structural causes (Harper & Manasse, 1992; Harper, Wagstaff, Newton, & Harrison, 1990). Thus, it is possible that social work students with lower levels of gender identity express greater belief that the world is a just place; consequently, this belief that individual merit and fate are closely linked would be related to greater support of addressing individual change as a means to achieve social justice.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The present study has a number of limitations that must be considered when interpreting results and before conceptualizing future research in this area. First, data were collected from Master's level students at one school of social work at a research-intensive university, and thus may have limited generalizability to undergraduate students, and to students enrolled in social work programs at different types of institutions (e.g., private or religiously-affiliated institutions, teaching-oriented universities, universities that attract a larger percentage of minority or nontraditional students). In addition, the study sample was actually slightly less diverse than overall survey population of potential participants, which in turn is less diverse than the overall nationwide population of social work students. The current study's sample was almost 80% Caucasian and 93% female, compared to University of Michigan School of Social Work total student population, which is 70% Caucasian and 88% female (T. Colenbeck,

personal communication, April 12, 2012). A nationwide survey of work programs determined that among MSW students, 57% were Caucasian and 85% were female (CSWE, 2011). Thus, this study sample is far from representative of the among social work students across the country and at different types of institutions. However, the current study could easily be replicated at other schools of social work, with both undergraduate and graduate students, and with a larger and more diverse sample.

Furthermore, the current study was limited to examining social identity only in terms of race or gender, and to analyzing these identities as orthogonal constructs. Other forms of social identity based on group membership, such as religious affiliation, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status, may also similarly lead to the development of a politicized critical consciousness, and thus inform an individual's perception of injustice and their orientations toward engagement in social justice. For example, a student who strongly identifies as Muslim may be especially sensitive to discrimination towards Muslims and other religious minorities, and consequently view social work as a means to serve their community while also addressing larger structural forces that contribute to religious discrimination. In addition, every individual possesses multiple social statuses based on their various social identities, and these categories of group membership simultaneously interact with and influence one another to shape individual worldviews and experiences, a concept referred to as *intersectionality* (Crenshaw, 1989/1993). For example, a black woman may experience discrimination by virtue of being black, by being a woman, or by being specifically a black woman. However, some members of disadvantaged groups might also experience privilege due to other aspects of their identity, such as gay men, or upper-SES Asian immigrants. Thus, future research should

consider not only multiple types of social identities and how they might pertain to social justice orientation, but also to how multiple social identities shape notions of injustice and individual self-efficacy. On a related note, future research in this area might also examine students' understanding of their own personal privilege due to their social identities, and how that might pertain to how they think about social justice issues.

Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the data precludes the current investigation from definitively establishing causal relationships between the study variables. Although there is a strong theoretical reason to believe that social identity should predict social justice orientation, it is plausible that involvement with social justice issues informs an individual's perceptions of injustice and increases their sense of self-efficacy, which can in turn reinforce their identity as a member of a particular social group. However, findings from longitudinal studies of MSW students that were conducted over the course of their graduate training do suggest that education may play a role in shaping students' values around social justice and belief in the mission of social work. In evaluating a curriculum on social oppression, Van Soest (1996) found that post-test scores on belief in a just world significantly increased among students who had completed the course, but decreased among students who were in a control group. Van Voorhis and Hostetter (2006) found that professional empowerment as social workers and commitment to client empowerment through social justice advocacy significantly increased from students' matriculation into the MSW program and their graduation from it two years later. Additionally, Han and Chow (2010) found that students who believed primarily in the individual adaptation mission of social work upon entering an MSW program were more like to endorse the social change mission by graduation if they had

completed a practicum focusing on macro practice. Thus, future research could examine not only longitudinal changes in social justice orientation, but also determine specific aspects of their program that are conducive to socializing students toward professional ideals of socially just practice.

The present study did not include other potentially important individual trait variables such as personality dispositions, altruistic motivations, or personal moral imperative. It is possible that certain personality are more drawn to social justice advocacy than others, and it is also possible that individuals choose to engage in social justice issues out of desire to simply help others in need or out of a specific personal framework of moral values. Future research may wish to examine these how these factors may also be differentially related to social identity and social justice orientation. Finally, the while the present study argues for a linear model of social justice advocacy, it did not test for potential associations between the two mediators (i.e., belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy), or between the three dependent variables (i.e., social justice interest, social justice commitment, and belief in the mission of social work). Previous studies of collective action or of social justice advocacy tendencies have found modest associations between perceived injustice and efficacy (e.g., Calal, Hewstone, Schwar, & Heath, 2011; D. A. Miller, Cronin, Garcia, & Branscombe, 2009, Van Voorhis & Hostetter, 2006), but there is no clear consensus as to whether these two concepts should be positively or negatively related. In addition, M. J. Miller and colleagues (2009, 2011) found that interest in social justice interest predicted greater commitment to social justice advocacy in the future. It is possible that social justice commitment may in itself predict both social work students' views on the mission of social work, and to their desired

professional practice activities. Thus, future research may wish to examine the extent to which social justice interest predicts commitment to engaging in social justice advocacy, and to beliefs about the mission of social work, and to actual advocacy behaviors within a professional context.

Implications

Overall, findings from this study call attention to the potential utility of a social-identity based model of social justice orientation, and offer some tentative implications for fostering social justice among students in social work and in other fields. The identification of a psychological trajectory toward social action would be useful to those involved in vocational counseling who might steer particular types of individuals toward social justice focused careers. In addition, this line of research provides insight about the value orientations of students that are drawn to pursue social work careers, and thus may help to inform recruitment and retention efforts by schools of social work that target diverse groups across multiple social identity dimensions. If social work as a profession strives to build a workforce that is representative of the diversity in the general population, then it would be imperative to understand how students make sense of their multiple identities, and how awareness of social identity is related to values congruent with those considered most desirable for prospective social work students. To this effect, findings from the current study may also potentially inform procedures in social work training programs to assess readiness to enter the profession; for example, students who may have not yet developed a critical awareness of their social identity may not possess the degree of cultural competence skills necessary for a particular practicum setting. In a more extreme example, a student who is resistant to analyzing structural causes of

oppression may be deemed unsuitable for the profession. Although the practice of gatekeeping in social work programs is controversial, it may be pertinent for schools of social work to pay closer attention to the values and motivations of applicants before they are admitted into professional training programs in order to ensure that the profession maintains its traditional commitment to social justice (Moore & Urwin, 1990; Younes, 1998).

To the extent that students' values, motivations, and social justice attitudes are malleable, findings from the current study also point to how social work education may contribute to the professional socialization of its students. Several potential approaches may potentially be employed in order to create a training environment that is conducive toward fostering social justice orientation among social work students. Given the importance of racial identity in predicting social justice engagement outcomes, a more thorough examination of issues of multiculturalism and diversity within the formal curriculum may lead to greater propensity toward social justice advocacy, consistent with previous research of undergraduate students which demonstrated a strong positive effect of diversity-related coursework on attitudes toward social justice engagement (Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004; Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004; Laird, Engberg, & Hurtado, 2005). Furthermore, as social justice self-efficacy was related to social justice outcomes in the present study, social work training programs could also employ more structured social justice learning experiences both in the classroom, at practicum sites, and in the community which facilitate the development of social justice advocacy skills and an appreciation for the integration of social work practice which integrates both micro and macro practice modalities.

Conclusions

Contrary to the contentions of some scholars, the current study finds that social justice is indeed still valued by students who will be joining the social work profession. Although most students possess values and worldviews that are consistent with those of social work's historical objectives of advocating for oppressed populations and promotion of social change, there still remains disagreement about which route to achieving social justice – either individual adaptation or social change –is the most desirable, or the most feasible course of action. Given these circumstances, social work education needs to better articulate to students how social justice can be enacted through both the facilitation of individual adaptation and the promotion of institutional and social reform. The training environment of social work education must consequently be able to foster students' ability to utilize a critical awareness of oneself and one's positionality in analyzing social issues and developing practice behaviors. Thus, the impending challenge for social work both as an academic discipline and as a profession is to do away with the artificial reification of the divide between social work's dual missions by socializing students to value both the micro and the macro dimensions of social work practice within a larger ideological framework that promotes social justice for all.

Table 1: *Study Sample Demographics (N=131)*

Category		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	8	6.1
	Female	122	93.1
Race	African American	17	13.8
	Asian American	9	6.8
	Latino	10	7.6
	Native American	5	3.8
	Arab American	2	1.5
	Caucasian	106	79.9
Religious	Atheist/Agnostic	26	19.8
	Protestant	35	26.7
	Roman Catholic	19	14.5
	Jewish	10	7.6
	Other	10	7.6
	Spiritual, not religious	30	22.9
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	107	81.7
	Non-Heterosexual	24	18.3
Socioeconomic	Lower	10	7.6
	Lower Middle	19	14.5
	Middle	61	46.6
	Upper Middle	40	30.5
	Upper	1	.8
Year in Program	1st	94	71.8
	2nd	17	13
	Other	17	13
Curriculum Track	12-Month	24	18.3
	16-Month	51	38.9
	20-Month	45	34.3
	Other	8	6.1
Practice Method	Interpersonal Practice	76	58.0
	Community Organizing	24	18.3
	Management	16	12.2
	Social Policy & Evaluation	13	9.9
Practice Area	Aging	10	7.6
	Children & Youth	43	32.8
	Comm. & Soc. Systems	41	31.2
	Health	6	4.6
	Mental Health	29	22.1

Table 2. *Intercorrelations and Descriptive Statistics for Primary Study Variables (N=131)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean(SD)	Range	α
1. Racial identity[a]	1.00							0.00(1.64)	-4.69 - 3.60	.74
2. Gender identity[a]	.54**	1.00						0.00(1.74)	-4.94 - 2.20	.72
3. Belief in a just world	-.22*	-.40**	1.00					2.45(.88)	1 - 6	.85
4. Social justice self-efficacy	.37**	.33**	-.21*	1.00				7.53(1.11)	0 - 9	.92
5. Social justice interest	.22*	.36**	-.30**	.54**	1.00			7.85(1.36)	0 - 9	.85
6. Social justice commitment	.35**	.41**	-.25**	.54**	.60**	1.00		7.71(1.95)	0 - 9	.92
7. Belief in the mission of social work[b]	.20*	.23**	-.34**	.26**	.22*	.21*	1.00	n/a	n/a	n/a

* p < .05; ** p < .01.

[a] Z-scored measures
[b] Non-parametric correlation; 0 = individual adaptation, 1 = societal/institutional change

Table 3. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Social Justice Interest*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	*β*	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.05	6.20
(Constant)	7.85	.12		67.28		
Racial Identity	.18	.07	.22	2.49*		
Step 2					.05	6.37
(Constant)	2.45	.08		32.45	.	
Racial Identity	-.12	.05	-.22	-2.52*		
Step 3					.11	8.18
(Constant)	8.85	.34		67.28		
Racial Identity	.13	.07	.16	1.84		
GBJW	-.41	.13	-.27	-3.12**		

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 4. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Social Justice Commitment*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.12	17.98
(Constant)	7.71	.16		47.91		
Racial Identity	.42	.10	.35	4.24***		
Step 2					.05	6.37
(Constant)	2.45	.08		32.45		
Racial Identity	-.12	.05	-.22	-2.52*		
Step 3					.15	11.53
(Constant)	7.71	.16		47.91		
Racial Identity	.37	.10	.31	3.74***		
GBJW	-.40	.18	-.18	-2.14*		

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 5. *Logistic Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	Wald	*df*	Exp(*B*)	R^2
Step 1						.04
(Constant)	.94	.20	21.89	1	2.53	
Racial Identity	.24***	.12	3.8	1	1.27	
Step 2						.05
(Constant)	2.45	.08			.	
Racial Identity	-.12*	.05				
Step 3						.18
(Constant)	3.24	.73	19.63	1	25.61	
Racial Identity	.16	.13	1.53	1	.41	
GBJW	-.91	.73	19.63	1	1.18	

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; Step 2 is a linear regression of racial identity on belief in a just world.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 6. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Social Justice Interest*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.05	6.20
(Constant)	7.85	.12		67.28		
Racial Identity	.18	.07	.22	2.49*		
Step 2					.13	19.95
(Constant)	7.53	.09		82.92	.	
Racial Identity	.25	.06	.37	4.47***		
Step 3					.29	26.49
(Constant)	2.94	.74		3.96		
Racial Identity	.01	.07	.02	.25		
SJSE	.65	.10	.54	6.68***		

Note. SJSE = Social justice self-efficacy.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 7. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Social Justice Commitment*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.12	17.98
(Constant)	7.71	.16		47.91		
Racial Identity	.42	.10	.35	4.24***		
Step 2					.13	19.95
(Constant)	7.53	.09		82.92	.	
Racial Identity	.25	.06	.37	4.47***		
Step 3					.32	29.95
(Constant)	1.41	1.05		47.91		
Racial Identity	.21	.09	.18	2.25*		
SJSE	.84	.14	.47	6.07***		

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 8. *Logistic Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Racial Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	Wald	*df*	Exp(*B*)	R^2
Step 1						.04
(Constant)	.94	.20	21.89	1	2.53	
Racial Identity	.24***	.12	3.8	1	1.27	
Step 2						.05
(Constant)	7.53	.09			.	
Racial Identity	.25***	.06				
Step 3						.11
(Constant)	-2.68	1.47	3.30	1	.07	
Racial Identity	.12	.13	.88	1	.35	
SJSE	.49***	.20	5.94	1	1.62	

Note. SJSE = Social justice self-efficacy; Step 2 is a linear regression of racial identity on belief in a just world.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 9. *Indirect Effects of Racial Identity on Social Justice Interest through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.18	.05	.111	.230*
GBJW	.04	.02	.003	.095*
SJSE	.15	.04	.089	.246*
C1	-.17	-.04	-.215	-.038*

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

Table 10. *Indirect Effects of Racial Identity on Social Justice Commitment through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.22	.07	.094	.391*
GBJW	.03	.03	-.017	.099
SJSE	.20	.06	.093	.339*
C1	-.17	.06	-.297	-.058*

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

Table 11. *Indirect Effects of Racial Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.22	.09	.0786	.416*
GBJW	.10	.06	.02	.24*
SJSE	.11	.07	.009	.272*
C1	-.01	.09	-.194	-.158

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

Table 12. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Social Justice Interest*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.13	18.84
(Constant)	7.86	.12		67.28		
Gender Identity	.28	.07	.36	4.34***		
Step 2					.16	23.69
(Constant)	2.45	.07		34.22	.	
Gender Identity	-.20	.04	-.40	-4.87***		
Step 3					.16	11.92
(Constant)	8.56	.35		24.34		
Gender Identity	.23	.07	.29	3.21**		
GBJW	-.29	.14	-.19	-2.12*		

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 13. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Social Justice Commitment*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.17	26.18
(Constant)	7.73	.16		49.27		
Gender Identity	.49	.09	.41	5.12***		
Step 2					.16	23.69
(Constant)	2.45	.07		34.22	.	
Gender Identity	-.20	.04	-.40	-4.87***		
Step 3					.18	13.73
(Constant)	8.26	.50		16.60		
Gender Identity	.42	.10	.38	4.27***		
GBJW	-.21	.19	-.09	-1.12		

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 14. *Logistic Regression Analysis Testing Belief in a Just World as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	Wald	*df*	Exp(*B*)	R^2
Step 1						.10
(Constant)	.99	.21	22.98	1	1.41	
Gender Identity	.35**	.12	8.65	1	1.27	
Step 2						.16
(Constant)	2.45	.07			.	
Gender Identity	-.20***	.04				
Step 3						.20
(Constant)	3.05	.75	16.47	1	21.19	
Gender Identity	.22	13	2.79	1	1.24	
GBJW	-.82**	.28	8.71	1	.44	

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; Step 2 is a linear regression of gender identity on belief in a just world.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 15. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Social Justice Interest*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.13	18.84
(Constant)	7.86	.12		67.28		
Gender Identity	.28	.07	.36	4.34***		
Step 2					.11	16.00
(Constant)	7.53	.09		81.36	.	
Gender Identity	.22	.05	.33	4.00***		
Step 3					.33	31.20
(Constant)	3.43	.72		4.86		
Gender Identity	.16	.06	.21	2.66**		
SJSE	.58	.10	.48	6.17***		

Note. SJSE = Social justice self-efficacy.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 16. *Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Social Justice Commitment*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	β	*t*	R^2	*F*
Step 1					.17	26.18
(Constant)	7.73	.16		49.27		
Gender Identity	.47	.09	.41	5.12***		
Step 2					.11	16.00
(Constant)	7.53	.09		81.36	.	
Gender Identity	.22	.05	.33	4.00***		
Step 3					.36	34.64
(Constant)	1.76	1.01		1.75		
Gender Identity	.30	.09	.27	5.51***		
SJSE	.79	.13	.45	5.99***		

Note SJSE = Social justice self-efficacy
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 17. *Logistic Regression Analysis Testing Social Justice Self-Efficacy as a Mediator of Gender Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work*

Variable	*B*	SE *B*	Wald	*df*	Exp(*B*)	R^2
Step 1						.10
(Constant)	.99	.21	22.98	1	1.41	
Gender Identity	.35**	.12	8.65	1	1.27	
Step 2						.11
(Constant)	7.53	.09			.	
Gender Identity	.22***	.05				
Step 3						.11
(Constant)	-2.07	1.46	2.01	1	.13	
Gender Identity	.27*	.20	4.69	1	1.21	
SJSE	.41	.20	4.37	1	1.51	

Note. SJSE = Social justice self-efficacy; Step 2 is a linear regression of gender identity on belief in a just world.
*p < .05. **p < .01. *** p < .001.

Table 18. *Indirect Effects of Gender Identity on Social Justice Interest through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.16	.05	.072	.296*
GBJW	.04	.04	-.006	.143
SJSE	.12	.04	.060	.202*
C1	-.07	.04	-.164	.013

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

Table 19. *Indirect Effects of Gender Identity on Social Justice Commitment through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.19	.09	.034	.370*
GBJW	.03	.05	-.065	.128
SJSE	.17	.06	.067	.291*
C1	-.14	.06	-.275	-.033*

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

Table 20. *Indirect Effects of Gender Identity on Belief in the Mission of Social Work through Belief in a Just World and Social Justice Self-Efficacy*

Mediator	Parameter Estimate	SE	BC 95% CI Lower	BC 95% CI Upper
Total	.26	.11	.092	.516*
GBJW	.17	.08	.05	.368
SJSE	.09	.06	-.003	.237
C1	-.08	.09	-.082	.287

Note. GBJW = Global Belief in a Just World; SJSE = Social Justice Self-Efficacy; C1 = Pairwise contrast for GBJW and SJSE; BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval.
* $p < .05$ (significant indirect effect)

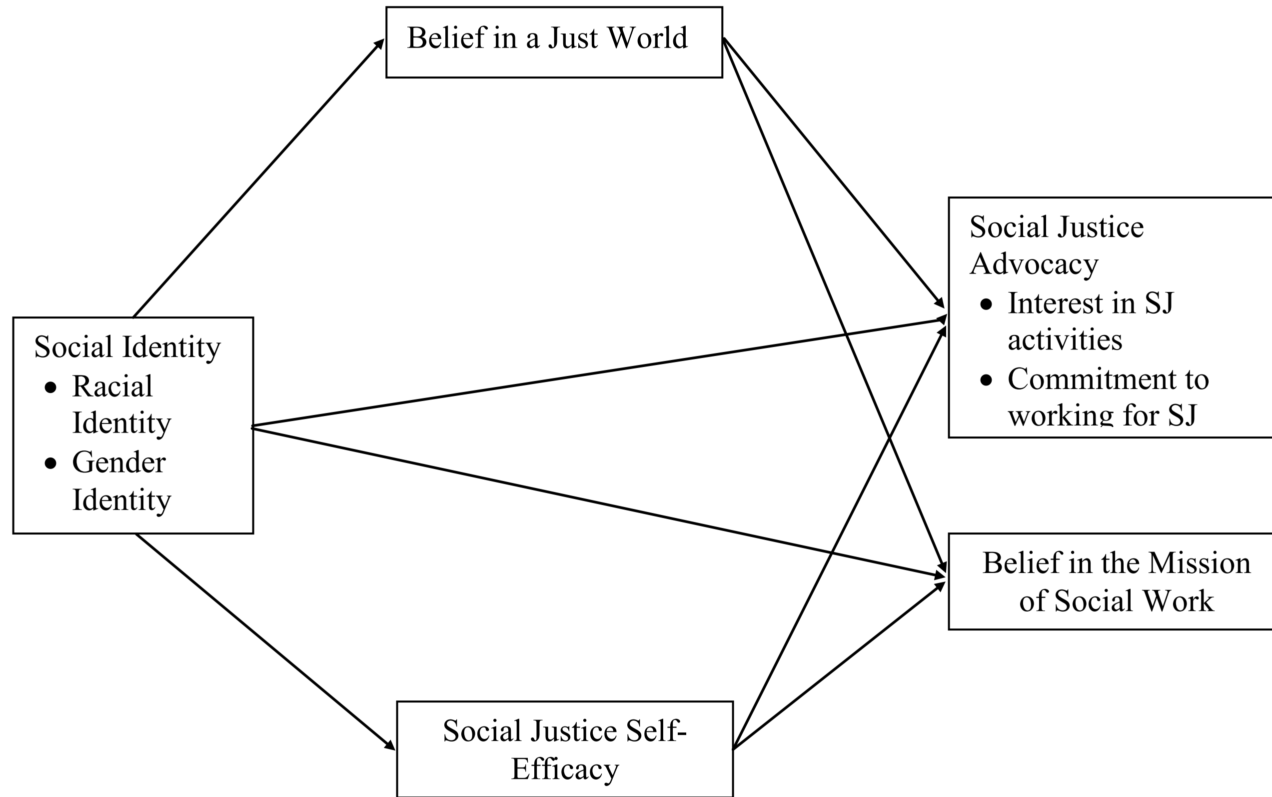

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

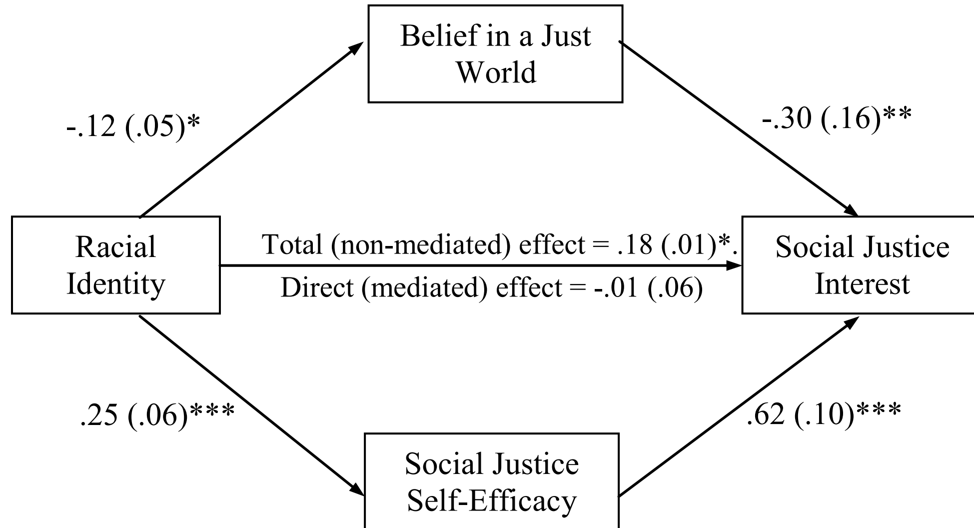

Figure 2: Estimated multiple mediation model of racial identity and social justice interest through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

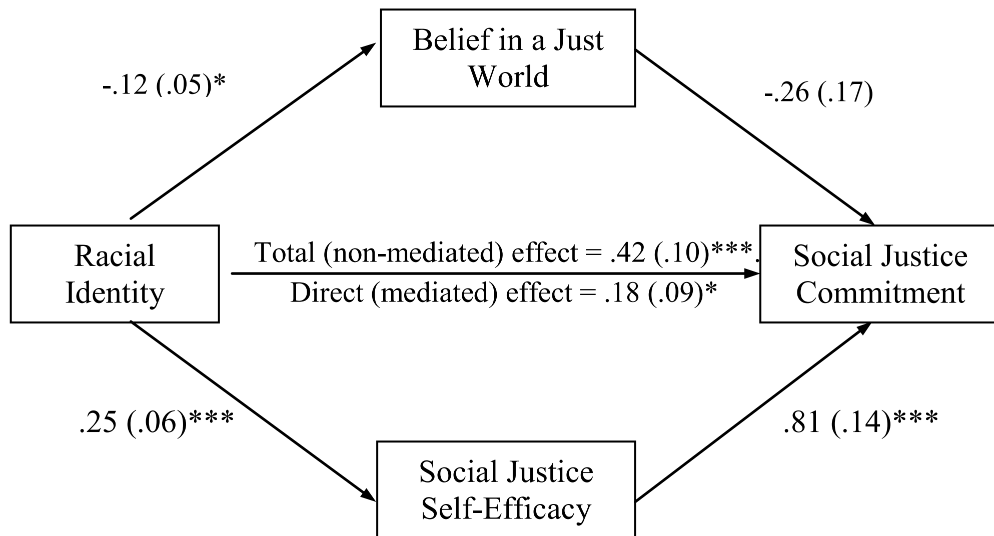

Figure 3. Estimated multiple mediation model of racial identity and social justice commitment through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

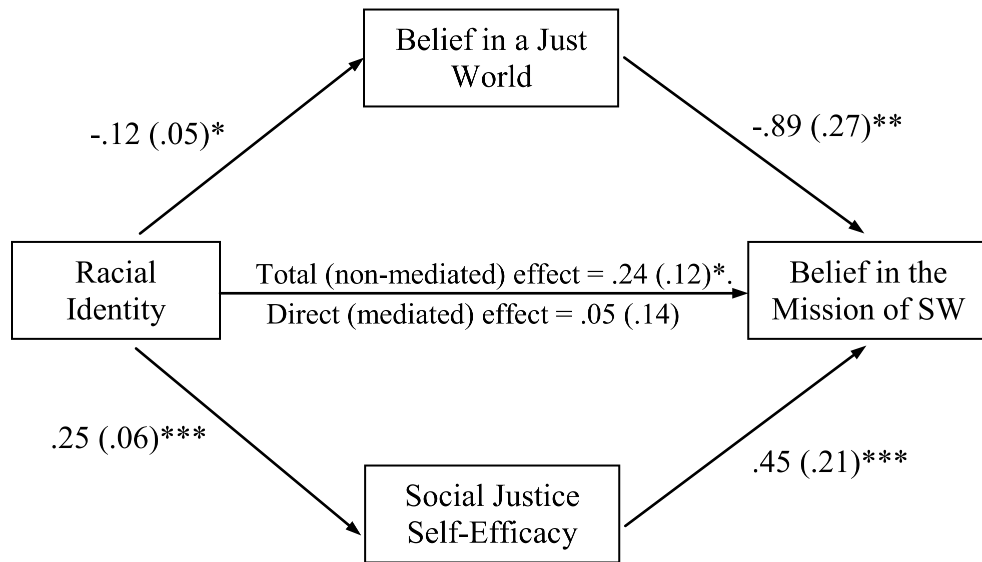

Figure 4. Estimated multiple mediation model of racial identity and belief in the mission of social work through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

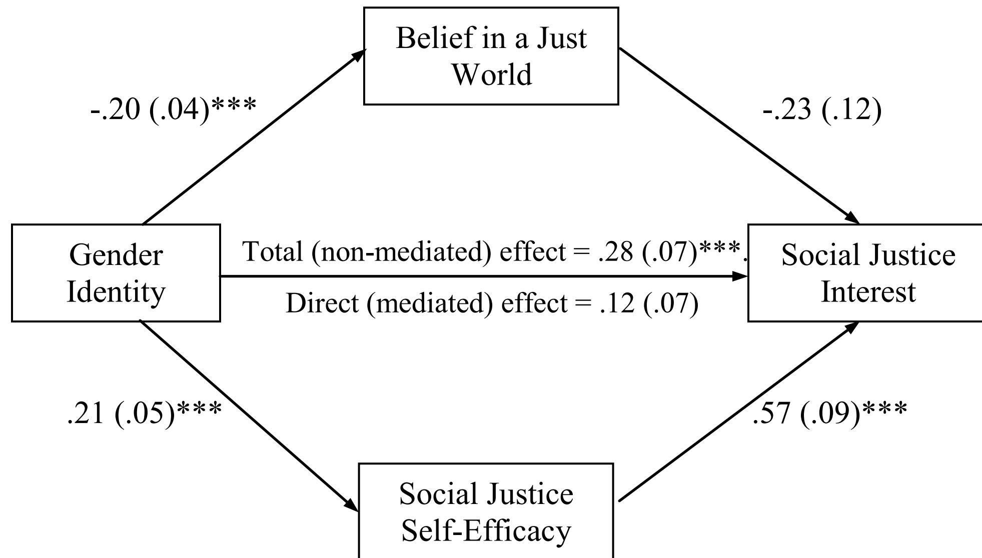

Figure 5. Estimated multiple mediation model of gender identity and social justice interest through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard errors * $p <$ .05. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

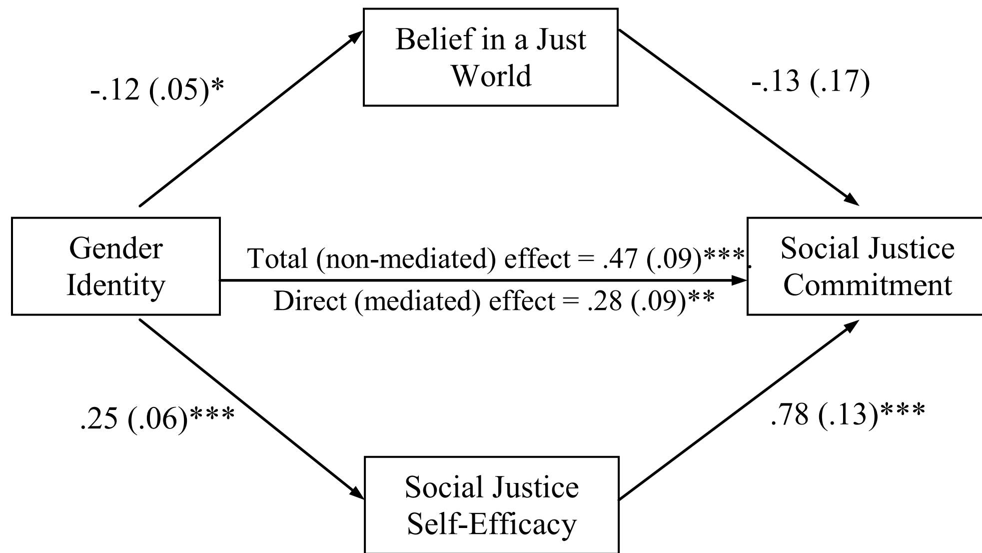

Figure 6. Estimated multiple mediation model of gender identity and social justice commitment through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard error errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

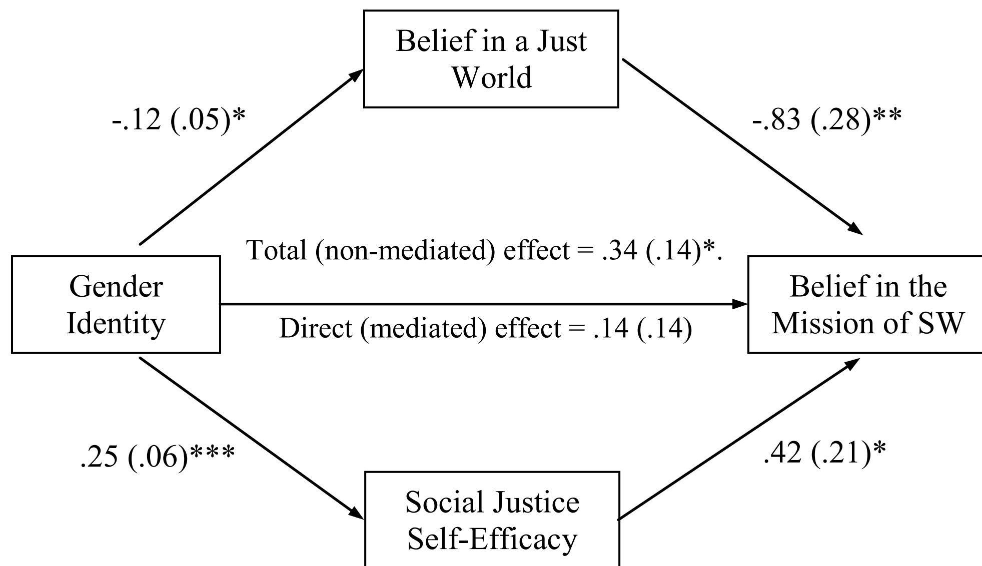

Figure 7. Estimated multiple mediation model of gender identity and belief in the mission of social work through belief in a just world and social justice self-efficacy. *Note.* Values shown in the model are non-standardized regression coefficients and their standard errors. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Recruitment Email Script

Hello Social Workers!

My name is Cathryn Fabian and I am a doctoral student in Social Work and Psychology at University of Michigan. I am conducting a dissertation study on social justice attitudes and practice preferences among Master of Social Work students. It is hoped that this study will provide insight into how social work students think about inequality and social justice, and help to inform ways in which social work programs encourage students to become advocates for social justice.

You are eligible to participate if you are at least 18 years old and a currently enrolled student in the MSW program at the University of Michigan. If you would like to participate, please click on the link below and you will be directed to an online survey.

http://umichssw.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0rmEdsCnyEeNBNG

The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. As a token of appreciation for your participation, you will receive a $10 Visa gift card upon completion of the survey. You will receive detailed instruction on how to receive the gift card at the conclusion of the survey. This study has been approved by the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board for Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences (HUM00055977).

Please feel free to contact me at cgfabian@umich.edu if you have any questions, or would prefer a printed copy of the survey.

Thank you very much, and have a wonderful day!

Appendix B. Online Informed Consent Agreement

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Social Justice Attitudes among Social Work Students

You are invited to participate in a research study about social justice attitudes among social work students. If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to answer several questionnaires online.

There is no direct benefit of the research to the people who participate in this online survey. However, information that you provide will be very useful and informative in learning about how social work students think about inequality and social justice, and may help to inform ways in which social work programs encourage students to become advocates for social justice.

Risks and discomforts involved in participating in this online survey are minimal to none. The nature of the questions being asked may be sensitive and may create negative emotions. Although we expect no such instances, we want to let you know that participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any part of survey for any reason.

In order to receive a $10 Visa gift card, you complete the survey, please leave your name and mailing address once you complete the survey. In an effort to maintain complete anonymity of your participation, your name and mailing address will not be linked to the answers you provided in the questionnaire portion of the online survey and will not be used in any other way other than for reimbursement purposes.

If you have questions about this research study, you may contact me, Cathryn Fabian, by emailing at cgfabian@umich.edu, or my dissertation chairs, Dr. Michael Spencer at spencerm@umich.edu and Dr. Lorraine Gutierrez at lorraing@umich.edu.

The University of Michigan Institutional Review Board Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences has determined that this study is exempt from IRB oversight [HUM00055977].

If you agree to continue on and begin filling out questionnaires part of the online survey, please check the box below and click the ">>" button at the bottom of the screen to continue.

☐ I acknowledge that I have been informed of the information given above. I agree that I am at least 18 years of age. I understand that my participation in this online survey is voluntary and that I may stop at any time. Cathryn Fabian has offered to answer any questions I may have regarding this survey. I hereby consent to participate in the online survey.

Appendix C. Survey Instrument

We are interested in learning about your interest in pursuing a social work career, your knowledge of issues related to social inequality, and your interest in engaging in social justice activities that seek to reduce and eliminate injustice and inequality. Your responses are anonymous so please answer as honestly as possible.

If you prefer, you may stop and continue completing the survey at a later time, provided you do so using the same computer. Once you have started a survey, your responses will be saved for two weeks.

What is your age?

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Your Racial/Ethnic Identification (Please mark all that apply):

- African American or Black
- Asian American or Pacific Islander
- Latina(o)/Hispanic American
- Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native
- Arab American or Arab
- White/European American
- Other (Please specify)

How would you describe the socioeconomic status of your family growing up?

- Lower
- Lower Middle
- Middle
- Upper Middle
- Upper

Your religious affiliation (Please check all that apply).

- Spiritual, not religious
- Atheist/Agnostic
- Evangelical Christian
- Non-evangelical Protestant
- Roman Catholic
- LDS/Mormon
- Orthodox Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Other (please specify)

Do consider yourself to be one or more of the following? (Please check all that apply).

- Heterosexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Transgendered
- Other (please describe)
- I'd rather not say

Social Identity

We are all members of different social groups (race, ethnicity, gender, and so on). The questions in this section ask you to refer to these social identity groups.

How often do you think about yourself as a member of each of the following social groups?

	Never	Rarely	Once in a While	Some-times	Often	Almost Always	Always
Race/Ethnicity	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gender	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Socioeconomic Status	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sexual Orientation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ability/Disability Status	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Religion/Spirituality	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
National Origin	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

For each of your social identity group(s), how much does the way people in this group are treated in the United States affect what happens in your life?

	Not at All	Not Very Much	A Little Bit	Some-what	A Fair Amount	Quite a Lot	Very Much
Race/Ethnicity	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gender	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Socioeconomic Status	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sexual Orientation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ability/Disability Status	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Religion/Spirituality	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
National Origin	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Belief in a Just World

Please read each statement below and indicate which response best corresponds with your beliefs.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that people get what they are entitled to have.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I feel that a person's efforts are noticed and rewarded.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I feel that people earn the rewards and punishments they get.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I feel that people get what they deserve.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I feel that rewards and punishments are fairly given.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I feel that the world is basically a fair place.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Social Justice Self-Efficacy

The following is a list of social justice activities. Please indicate how much confidence you have in your ability to complete each activity. Use the 0-9 point scale below (where 0 = "no confidence at all" and 9 = "complete confidence") to indicate your degree of confidence.

How much confidence do you have in your ability to:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
respond to social injustice (e.g., discrimination, racism, religious intolerance) with nonviolent actions.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
examine your own worldview, biases, and prejudicial attitudes after witnessing or hearing about social injustice.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
actively support needs of marginalized social groups.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
help members from marginalized groups create more opportunities for success (e.g., educational, career) by developing relevant skills.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
raise others' awareness of the oppression and marginalization of minority groups.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
confront others that speak disparagingly about members of underprivileged groups.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
challenge an individual who displays racial, ethnic, and/or religious intolerance.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
convince others as to the importance of social justice.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

discuss issues related to racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism with your friends.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
volunteer as a tutor or mentor with youth from an underserved and underprivileged group.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
support efforts to reduce social injustice through your own local fundraising efforts.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
identify the unique social, economic, political, and/or cultural needs of a marginalized group in your own community.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
encourage and convince others to participate in community-specific social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
develop and implement a solution to a community social issue such as unemployment, homelessness, or racial tension.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
challenge or address institutional policies that are covertly or overtly discriminatory.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
lead a group of coworkers in an effort to eliminate workplace discrimination in your place of employment.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
serve as a consultant for an institutional committee aimed at providing equal opportunities for underrepresented groups.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

advocate for social justice issues by becoming involved in local government.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
address structural inequalities and barriers facing racial and ethnic minorities by becoming politically active (e.g., helping to create government policy).	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
raise awareness of social issues (e.g., inequality, discrimination) by engaging in political discourses or debates.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Social Justice Interest

Please indicate your degree of interest in doing each of the following activities. Use the 0–9 scale below where 0 = “Very low interest” to 9 = “Very high interest” to show how much interest you have in each activity.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
volunteering your time at a community agency (e.g. Big Brother/Big Sister; volunteering at a homeless shelter).	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
reading about social issues (e.g., racism, oppression, inequality).	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
going on a weeklong service or work project.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
enrolling in a course on social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
watching television programs that cover social issues (e.g., history of marginalized group).	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
supporting a political candidate on the basis of her or his stance on social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
donating money to an organization committed to social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
talking to others about social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
selecting a career or job that deals with social issues.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Social Justice Commitment

Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement where 0 = “Strongly disagree” to 9 = “Strongly agree” with each of the following statements.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
In the future, I intend to engage in social justice activities.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I have a plan of action for ways I will remain or become involved in social justice activities over the next year.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I think engaging in social justice activities is a realistic goal for me.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
I am fully committed to engaging in social justice activities.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Mission of Social Work

Some social workers feel that social work should help the individual find a mode of adaptation to the world around him/her, and others feel that social work should place emphasis on societal/institutional change. While both approaches are valuable and not necessarily in conflict with one another, which would you favor if you had to make a choice? (Check ONE of the following).

Individual Adaptation	Societal/Institutional Change

What year are you in the MSW program?

- First Year
- Second Year
- Out-of-sequence/Other

Which curriculum track are you enrolled in?

- 12-Month (Advanced Standing)
- 16-Month
- 20-Month
- Other

What is your practice method concentration?

- Interpersonal Practice
- Community Organization
- Management of Human Services
- Social Policy and Evaluation

If applicable, what is your minor practice method concentration?

- Interpersonal Practice
- Community Organization
- Management of Human Services
- Social Policy and Evaluation
- I don't have a minor

What is your practice area concentration?

- Aging in Families and Society
- Children and Youth
- Community and Social Systems
- Health
- Mental Health

Are you a dual degree student?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which dual degree program are you enrolled in?

- MSW/JD
- MSW/MBA
- MSW/MPH
- MSW/MPP
- MSW/MSI
- MSW/MUP
- Other:

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