

THE EFFECTS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS' ATTITUDES/BELIEFS ABOUT
MARRIAGE ON THEIR DESIRE TO MARRY

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THE EFFECTS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS' ATTITUDES/BELIEFS ABOUT
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THESIS ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS' ATTITUDES/BELIEFS ABOUT MARRIAGE ON THEIR DESIRE TO MARRY

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To address the state of marriage and family life in the African-American community, the purpose of this study was to gain understanding as to why many African-American singles are not choosing marriage. The primary predictor for determining one's hope/desire to marry was traditional beliefs toward marriage. Additionally, the effects of relational (age at first sex/pregnancy, approval of premarital sex, cohabitation, parents' marital status, and father involvement) and resource variables (education, household income, geographic mobility, and public aid) on traditional beliefs and one's hope/desire to marry were also determined. A moderation between gender and traditional beliefs in the prediction of hope/desire to marry was also tested. To address the latent effects of slavery on the current relational functioning of African-Americans, this study

hypothesized that the effects of slavery would be manifested presently through lower levels of relational and resource functioning. This study is one of the first of its kind to conceptualize and investigate the latent effects of slavery on the current relational functioning of African-Americans.

The analytic sample for this study included only unmarried African-American ($N= 738$) men ($n=242$, 33%) and women ($n=496$, 67%) from ages 18 to 43. A stratified probability sample of census tracts was used, which consisted of individuals from impoverished areas in the city of Chicago (UPFLS; Wilson, 1987). The sample used for this study is a subsample from the Urban Poverty and Family Life Survey of Chicago (UPFLS; Wilson, 1987) that was conducted in 1987 via personal and telephone interviews by the National Opinion Research Center. The final sample of the UPFLS was composed of 2,490 respondents, and minorities were oversampled.

Findings from this study indicated that traditional beliefs toward marriage did not predict one's hope/desire to marry in this sample. However, relational and resource variables did predict African-Americans traditional beliefs toward marriage. A significant moderation between gender and traditional beliefs was not found in the prediction of hope/desire to marry.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW	9
Effects of Slavery.....	9
Cohabitation.....	15
Marriageable African-American Men.....	18
Beliefs and Desire to Marry.....	24
Present Study	30
CHAPTER III. METHODS.....	32
Sample.....	32
Variables	33
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS.....	36
Univariate Statistics	36
Principal Component Analysis	36
Bivariate Statistics	42
Path Analysis	43
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION.....	52
Summary of Findings.....	53

Limitations	62
Strengths	62
Future Research	62
REFERENCES	66
APPENDIX A. Measures for Outcome and Primary Predictor	71
APPENDIX B. Measures for Relational Variables	73
APPENDIX C. Measures for Resource Variables	75
APPENDIX D. Path Diagram for Model 4.....	78

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Description of Variables	38
Table 2. Univariates for Non-composited Variables	40
Table 3. Univariates for Composited Variables.....	40
Table 4. Pearson Correlation Coefficients—Matrix of Variables	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Path Diagram for Model 1	44
Figure 2. Path Diagram for Model 2.....	47
Figure 3: Path Diagram for Model 3.....	50

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a part of the social fabric that exists in America to provide security for children, adults, and the community. However, it appears that certain roadblocks prevent marriage from being woven into the lives of many African-Americans. Obstacles such as unbalanced sex ratios of males to females, poverty, unwed parenthood, the latent effects of slavery, and educational difficulties are some of the sources that defer young African-Americans' entrance into marriage (Clarkwest, 2006; Hill, 2006; Lichter, McLaughlin & Ribar, 1997; Sassler & Schoen, 1999; South, 1996). The current decline in marriage rates appears to be both involuntary and voluntary. The way in which this decline is involuntary is that many African-Americans face difficulty in finding a suitable marital partner (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995; McLaughlin & Lichter, 1997; South, 1996). And this difficulty appears to be more salient for African-American females (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995). Skewed sex ratios in which single African-American women outnumber men create an imbalance between the supply of marriageable men and the desire that these women have for marriage (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991). For example, Albrecht and Albrecht (2001) examined sex ratios for African-Americans, European-Americans, and Hispanics in their study of Census data from 2,334 counties throughout the United States. The sex ratio they found for African-Americans was 82 African-American males existed for every 100 African-American females (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2001). Similarly, 93 European-American men existed for every 100

European-American women, and 109 Hispanic men existed for every 100 Hispanic women (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2001). Albrecht and Albrecht's (2001) results indicated that in counties with higher male to female sex ratios, more females reported being married. Overall, only 48% of females and 58% of males were married in counties with low male to female sex ratios; however, 57% of females and 63% of males were married in counties with average male to female sex ratios (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2001).

Skewed sex ratios are especially problematic for most women desiring to marry; however, it appears that African-American women are more likely to encounter sex ratio imbalances than are European-American women. The context of poverty helps to provide a basis for understanding this occurrence. African-American men who live in poverty are more likely to have their opportunities for marriage totally eradicated by being murdered or incarcerated (Huebner, 2007). Homicide is ranked the number one killer of African-American males ages 15-34 (National Vital Statistics, 2005). In addition to this disheartening reality, the incarceration rate for African-American men is over seven times the rate for European-American men (Arias, 2007). Given the prevalence of the incarceration of African-American men, I wonder the degree to which this occurrence affects African-American marriage rates. In considering how African-American women have few African-American men to choose from, are African-American women more likely to marry an ex-convict? This is an important aspect to consider in regard to the unique situation where African-American women find a shortage of marriageable African-American men. Overall, the startling fact is that marriageable African-American men are becoming an endangered species.

Not only does there appear to be an involuntary deterrent to marriage, but many African-Americans are opting out of marriage on a voluntary basis (Allen & Olson, 2001). This voluntary retreat from marriage is evidenced in the low marriage rates in the African-American community (Allen & Olson, 2001; Clarkwest, 2001), and little is known as to why many African-Americans are choosing alternatives to marriage. However, cohabitation is a common occurrence that provides at least one explanation for the low marriage rates in the African-American community, and it appears that African-Americans are cohabitating as an alternative route to adulthood. Additionally, out-of-wedlock birth is another route to adulthood for some young African-Americans (Manning & Smock, 1995; Stier & Tienda, 1997).

Beliefs about marriage and one's desire to marry have been studied by very few researchers. South (1993) conducted a study of 2,214 unmarried, non-cohabiting participants aged 19 to 35 who participated in the National Survey of Families and Households during 1987 and 1988 in which minorities were oversampled. His findings indicated that only 20% of African-American males desired to marry (South, 1993). These findings were attributed to African-American males perceiving negative effects of marriage on their personal friendships and sex life. African-American men already have more potential sexual partners due to the unbalanced sex ratios; thus, marriage would eliminate for them variety in sexual partners (South, 1993). The evolutionary perspective would consider men desiring to have intimate relationships with more than one woman as typical—from this vantage point, all men, not just African-American men would desire to have multiple partners because this would increase the probability that their genes would

be passed on to the next generation (Hughes, Harrison & Gallup, 2004). Therefore, reproductive success of males would be enhanced by having multiple female partners (Hughes, Harrison & Gallup, 2004). In looking at the differences between African-American women and European-American women, most of the variance in the desire to marry was insignificant after controlling for educational and socioeconomic factors (South, 1993). When looking at the desire to marry collectively for European-American and African-Americans, African-Americans are less likely to desire marriage; however, most of the variation was attributable to African-American men's lack of desire (South, 1993). More research is needed to verify that these differences rest primarily with African-American men rather than African-American women.

The low marriage rate in the African-American community is problematic because it decreases the likelihood that young children will be raised in two-parent homes. And living in a single parent home increases one's probability of living in poverty, experiencing academic difficulties, and incurring social problems (Krein & Beller, 1988; Page & Stevens, 2005). More specifically, Page and Stevens (2005) found that the economic consequences for living in a single-parent home are greater for African-American children in comparison to European-American children. It is not being inferred that two-parent homes are not absent of problems, or that single-parent families cannot be successful, but, being raised by both parents has been shown to promote academic, economic, and social success of children (Waite, 1995). Therefore, it is imperative to obtain more understanding as to why marriage is not being chosen by many

African-Americans as a possible route to familial quality and economic stability (Lichter, McLaughlin & Ribar, 1997).

In order to present a clear picture of marriage in the African-American community, it is important to indicate that most studies concentrate on African-Americans who live in poverty (Demo, 1990). Little is known as to how marriage functions in the lives of middle and upper class African-Americans. Moreover, most of the relational and economic difficulties are experienced by African-Americans with lower socioeconomic status levels and educational attainment (Allen & Olson, 2001; Clarkwest, 2006). For example, Allen and Olson (2001) conducted a study on a national sample of 415 African-American married couples, and they observed five different marital types through a cluster analysis of positive couple agreement (PCA). PCA was the degree to which couples agreed on a relationship domain in the ENRICH assessment (Allen & Olson, 2001). ENRICH is a marital assessment measure that surveys an individual's attitude for relational issues—ten scales were used from the ENRICH measure: personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, children and parenting, family and friends, egalitarian roles, and religious orientation (Allen & Olson, 2001). The couples who were identified as having very stable and happy marriages—Vitalized and Harmonious couples—were more likely to report professional occupations, higher incomes, and graduate educations (Allen & Olson, 2001). In looking at the most dissatisfied couples, the Devitalized couples, were most likely to report larger families with three or more children, lower educational attainment, and part-time employment (Allen & Olson, 2001). An important

concept to gather from this study is that the experiences of African-Americans are heavily influenced by the contextual environment in which they live, and the resources they bring into these settings. The percentages for each marital type in this study were as follows: Vitalized, 7%; Harmonious, 12%; Traditional, 15%; Conflicted, 27%; and Devitalized, 40%. In observing how socioeconomic status and education heavily influenced a couples' marital type in this study, we can see from the varying percentages of the marital types that there is a wealth of diverse environments in which African-Americans live. The influence of one's environment is not unique to the African-American community, for this concept is true for all individuals regardless of their ethnic background. However, African-Americans have shared experiences that are specific to the black community: racism and discrimination are the defining contextual agents that have continuously played a central role in the lives of African-Americans.

It has also been argued that a distortion of African-American families is presented in the social sciences (Demo, 1990). Demo (1990) completed a review of 283 empirical articles about African-Americans that were published in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family (JMF)* from 1939 to 1987. She indicated that “a distorted or problematic view of black Americans is directly perpetuated through the substantive focus of studies and indirectly reinforced through methodological practices, federal funding emphases, and a shift in the institutional affiliation of scholars” (Demo, 1990, p. 604). With regard to the focus of research on African-Americans in *JMF* articles, one-fifth of the studies concentrated on the culture of poverty in the African-American community; furthermore, topic areas tended to present African-American families as a “social pathology” (Demo,

1990, p. 605). Additionally, fertility and family planning were heavily researched in African-Americans (Demo, 1990). This article also observed that the research on African-American families is starting to become more comprehensive and less stigmatizing; however, there are still tendencies to present a problematic view of the differences that are observed in African-American families in comparison to other families (Demo, 1990). This review article highlights what was identified in the Allen and Olson study (2001): a diversity of within group differences exist in marriages and families in the African-American community. Much of the diversity that exists in the African-American community has not been fully researched due to the concentrated focus on impoverished African-Americans. In considering this concentrated focus, it will be important to consider this caveat in the literature review.

The low marriage rate in the African-American community is a product of both contextual and individual factors. In essence, the retreat from marriage in the African-American community is the result of environmental circumstances and personal preferences. An important environmental influence on the low marriage rate is the unequal balance between African-American men to women, where African-American women outnumber African-American men (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2001; Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991). It appears that there is a voluntary retreat from marriage, which is evidenced by many African-Americans taking alternative routes to adulthood—cohabitation and unwed childbearing (Manning & Smock, 1995; Stier & Tienda, 1997). In regard to unwed childbearing, the context of poverty also helps to provide understanding the prevalence of unwed parents (Stier & Tienda, 1997). A

disproportionate amount of single African-American mothers live in poverty, and the presence of children within the home further exacerbates their frail economic state (Stier & Tienda, 1997). A lack of desire for marriage also aids in explaining the low marriage rate in the African-American community; however, this low desire for marriage appears to be more salient for African-American males than females (South, 1993).

Even though a low marriage rate exists in the African-American community, marriage continues to be a part of the lives of many African-Americans. With regard to the dynamics of married African-American couples, it appears that certain demographic factors are related to marital quality. Higher levels of education and income have been shown to be associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction (Allen & Olson, 2001). Also, happily married African-Americans are more likely to report smaller families—3 or less children (Allen & Olson, 2001). Overall, marriage and the lack of marriage in the African-American community are multifaceted phenomena that require a comprehensive approach in order to gain more insight in this area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

High divorce rates, incarceration rates, poverty rates, and out-of-wedlock pregnancies are all indicators of the marital and familial difficulties that exist in the African-American community (Clarkwest, 2006; Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995; Huebner, 2007; King, 1999; Lichter, McLaughlin & Ribar, 1997; McLaughlin & Lichter, 1997; Sassler & Schoen, 1999). These difficulties are experienced through instability in marriages, families, and the greater society. The effects of slavery and poverty have been proposed by researchers as possible explanations for why African-Americans are more likely to divorce, remain single, and struggle economically. Overall, many African-American families continue to struggle in order to experience family life as safe, secure, and nurturing.

Effects of Slavery

The current state of marriage and family life in the black community is heavily influenced by the historical/cultural norms that were created during slavery (Hill, 2006). One norm that was created during slavery was the peripheral position of the African-American father and husband in the family (Pinderhughes, 2002). During slavery, African-American fathers were not permitted to have their names on the birth records of

their biological children—only the name of the mother and the slave owner were listed (Pinderhughes, 2002). Slave owners prevented slave fathers from fulfilling the traditional duties of a husband and father by providing the food, clothing, and shelter for slave families (Frankel, 1999). In addition, African-American husbands and wives were not permitted to legalize their unions because marriage among slaves was against the law in most states (Pinderhughes, 2002). Despite marriages being illegitimate, many slaves desired to marry and create families because it was the only arena in which they had a sense of control; however, the process for obtaining this goal was hindered due to the fact that most slaves had to receive consent from their slave owner in order to marry (Frankel, 1999). Ironically, masters were proponents of marriage between slaves because it was believed that marriage would create stability on the plantation and discourage runaways (Frankel, 1999). Other slave couples did not have a marriage ceremony but received consent from their master to live together, and this arrangement was termed a “took up” (Frankel, 1999, p. 9). In examining the history of slave relationships, it was observed that stability in marriages and families was undermined by the instituted discrimination involved in slavery. And consequently, the instability that resulted from slavery continued after emancipation because many freed slaves rooted their views toward marriage in their experiences as slaves (Frankel, 1999).

Most historians agree that the two-parent home was the norm during slavery, and the idea that single-parent families prevailed has been deemed a myth (Malone, 1987). A controversial explanation for the development of the idea of the strong matriarch in African-American families has been provided by the matriarch thesis. This theory

proposes that slavery emasculated African-American men; and concomitantly, African-American women were given a higher status in comparison to African-American men (Hill, 2006). However, there was not a large disparity in the allocation of power between African-American men and women during slavery (Hill, 2006). Even though African-American men were respected by their wives, there was an incessant attack against the manhood of African-American men by the dominant society (Frankel, 1999). Part of this attack consisted of the brutal disciplinary tactics that were used against African-American men who would not tolerate the injustices of slavery (Frankel, 1999). In an effort to make an example out of these men, slave owners would humiliate them in front of their entire family. For example, the infamous Willie Lynch, who was a British slave owner, presented a speech entitled “The Making of a Slave” in 1712 in Virginia; his intent was to teach other slave owners how to deal with their slaves. The term “lynching” also comes from his last name. In this speech, Lynch stated the following:

“Take the meanest and most restless nigger, strip him of his clothes in front of the remaining male niggers, the female, and the nigger infant, tar and feather him, tie each leg to a different horse faced in opposite directions, set him a fire and beat both horses to pull him apart in front of the remaining niggers. The next step is to take a bull whip and beat the remaining nigger male to the point of death, in front of the female and the infant. Don't kill him, but put the fear of God in him... We reversed nature by burning and pulling a civilized nigger apart and bull whipping the other to the point of death, all in her presence. By her being left alone, unprotected, with the male image destroyed, the ordeal caused her to move from

her psychological dependent state to a frozen independent state. In this frozen psychological state of independence, she will raise her male and female offspring in reversed roles. For fear of the young males life she will psychologically train him to be mentally weak and dependent, but physically strong.”

(http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/BPP_Books/pdf/The_Willie_Lynch_Letter_The_Making_Of_A_Slave!.pdf).

These instances were designed to cause the children to look to their mothers instead of their fathers for strength. Strong black men were severely punished for objecting to the injustices of slavery, and in order to prevent future rebellion and insubordination, these men were made to be examples for what would happen to a rebelling male.

After the civil war, kinship networks increased due to the disruptions to family life that the war caused, and support from extended family members became an alternative for the provisions of a husband in the home (Frankel, 1999). Even during slavery, kinship networks were a necessity—while mothers were working in the fields—the older women and younger children would provide childcare for infants (Frankel, 1999). In effort to secure financial aid from the government, some widows would forgo remarriage; however, some widows did choose to cohabit (Frankel, 1999). This occurrence mirrors the observations that we see currently with unmarried single African-American mothers receiving aid from the government (Lichter, McLaughlin, & Ribar, 1997).

In effort to foster stability in African-American families after the end of slavery, a marriage campaign was endorsed by the Freedmen's Bureau (Hill, 2006). Black men especially wanted to marry because it was a route to authority; they were officially allowed to assume the leadership role in their families without the interference of slave owners (Hill, 2006). The desire to marry was also high for the newly emerging middle class African-American families; they viewed marriage as a way to look respectable in the eyes of European-Americans, and the desire to marry was especially high for educated black women (Hill, 2006). However, there was resistance to this pro-marriage movement, for poor black women knew that marriage would not protect them from hard labor, and these women saw few benefits to marriage (Hill, 2006). Additionally, some African-American women were in non-legal relationships with white men, and they did not want to jeopardize receiving benefits from their white companions by marrying (Hill, 2006).

Slavery ended over 150 years ago; however, the effects of this dehumanizing experience continue to negatively affect the lives of African-Americans. In reference to the words that were spoken by Willie Lynch (1712):

“I have a full proof method for controlling your black slaves. I guarantee every one of you that if installed correctly, it will control the slaves for at least 300 hundred years. The black slaves after receiving this indoctrination shall carry on and will become self-refueling and self-generating for hundreds of years, maybe thousands.”

(http://www.itsabouttimebpp.com/BPP_Books/pdf/The_Willie_Lynch_Letter_The_Making_Of_A_Slave!.pdf)

There are opposing views for the overall effects that slavery had and continues to have on African-American families. Some scholars believe that slavery destroyed the stability of African-American families, while other scholars argue that slavery produced resiliency and strength within African-American families (Schweninger, 1975). Slavery was a complex institution that encompassed a great deal of diverse experiences for African-Americans. Oftentimes, the characteristics of the plantation dictated the experience of the slaves, and smaller plantations tended to have the most hostile living conditions that threatened the welfare of enslaved families—constant selling of slaves, sexual relationships between masters and slaves, teenage childbirths, and female-headed homes (Hill, 2006). In order to obtain a clearer understanding of how the latent effects of slavery currently influence marriage and family life in the African-American community, it would be important to examine the research in this area. Unfortunately, because only historical resources rather than empirical research appear to be available, an analysis that investigates African-Americans' views on the effects that slavery has on current day family life in the African-American community will need to be undertaken at a later date. For this study, it might be argued that access to resources in American society could possibly be a proxy for the effects of slavery on present day African-Americans.

Out of Wedlock Births/Welfare

African-American women are more likely to enter adult family life via childbirth than marriage (Stier & Tienda, 1997). For example, Stier and Tienda (1997) conducted a study that examined the effects of race and poverty on the two different pathways to family formation: marriage or childbirth. In their sample of 1,523 mothers in Chicago—1,186 (78%) of whom were African-American women—they found that African-American women of all ages were 3 to 8 times more likely to experience the childbirth route to adulthood than the marriage route in comparison to European-American respondents (Stier & Tienda, 1997). However, it appeared that one's minority status was not the most distinctive factor for the differences that were observed; the effects of one's household income were more significant than the effects of minority status, education, age, and family background variables (Stier & Tienda, 1997). Additionally, Stier and Tienda (1997) found that mothers who were raised in poverty were twice as likely to become unwed mothers during adolescence and young adulthood in comparison to women who were not raised in poverty; and consequently, the greatest economic setbacks were experienced by women who had children prior to marriage (Stier & Tienda, 1997). One of the buffers to entering adulthood via childbirth was being raised in a two-parent home which delayed family formation and increased the likelihood that one would enter adulthood through marriage (Stier & Tienda, 1997). However, African-American women were more likely to have been reared in single-parent homes (Stier & Tienda, 1997). Franklin, Smith and McMiller (1995) found similar results for the effects of poverty in their study of 1,459 women: impoverished African-American mothers were more likely

to have children outside of marriage, and this occurrence oftentimes resulted in a reliance on welfare as their primary means of financial support for their children.

A positive relationship between welfare benefits and female-headed households does appear to exist (Lichter, McLaughlin & Ribar, 1997). However, welfare is not the all encompassing cause/answer to the prevalence of female-headed households in the African-American community (McLaughlin & Lichter, 1997). When examining the project conducted by McLaughlin and Lichter (1997), which included a sample of 6,288 women ages 14-22 in 1979 from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth where African-Americans (24%) and impoverished European-Americans (14%) were oversampled. It was observed that being on welfare was related to single-parenthood for young impoverished mothers; however, when controlling for the effects of welfare on marriage rates in the African-American community, much of the variance in marriage rates was left unexplained (McLaughlin & Lichter, 1997). It appears that a difference does exist between marriage rates of African-American women and non-black women, but on further examination, these differences disappear when poverty, welfare, and educational factors are controlled. The welfare explanation does provide insight about how these impoverished individuals are able to function financially as single mothers, but it does not fully explain why some African-American women are not choosing marriage. Furthermore, when poverty-related variables such as education, poverty, welfare, and family background were controlled, African-American women were just as likely to desire marriage as European-American women in the study reviewed previously that was conducted by South (1993).

Cohabitation

Oftentimes, when discussing the issue of low marriage rates in the African-American community, cohabitation is usually overlooked (Manning & Smock, 1995). Cohabitation is commonly used by unmarried couples as a precursor to marriage, and Bumpass et al. (1991) indicated that cohabitation was the precursor to about half of all first time marriages the 1980s. However, Manning and Smock (1995) found in their subsample of 1,332 (78%) European-American men/women and 385 (24%) African-American men/women from the National Survey of Families and Households that European-Americans who were cohabitating were 129% more likely to marry than African-Americans. Some of the factors that were associated with the failure of cohabitation to lead to marriage for African-Americans were the following: 54% of the cohabiting African-Americans were pregnant or had a child in the first month of cohabitation; African-American cohabiters were less likely to live with both biological parents as a child; African-American cohabiters were more likely to receive public assistance as a child; and cohabiting African-Americans had lower levels of education and employment (Manning & Smock, 1995). It appears that even though African-Americans cohabiters were in an arrangement that oftentimes leads to marriage—which is cohabitation—there were other factors such as parenthood, receiving public assistance, and lower socioeconomic status/educational levels that led to the failure of cohabitation serving as antecedent to marriage.

Franklin, Smith and McMiller (1995) examined the marital status among of 1,033 African-American mothers in Chicago neighborhoods of concentrated poverty and found

rates for cohabitation that seem to contradict the basis of cohabitation serving as a precursor to marriage. Never-married women (10%) were more likely to be cohabitating in comparison to ever-married women (6%), and European-American women were 1.5 times more likely to cohabit than African-American women (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995). With cohabitation serving as a precursor to marriage, it would be expected that ever-married women would have higher rates of cohabitation than never-married women. When considering the current retreat from marriage in the black community, it may be unsafe to conclude that African-Americans are retreating from all forms of couple relationships due to decreasing marriage rates. In looking at cohabitation, it is observed that African-Americans are choosing intimate relationships; however, many of these relationships do not continue on to marriage.

Marriageable African-American Men

The outlook for marriage markets shows that many African-Americans will have difficulty with finding a suitable mate. As Lichter et.al (1992) says:

“The local marriage market is a spatial arena where prospective partners seek to “hire” a suitable marital partner. Prospective marital partners search for the best match among potential partners available in local marriage markets. Individuals evaluate their own assets (e.g., attractiveness, earnings, and so on) and trade in the marriage market for a partner whose assets compliment or substitute for their own.” (p. 782)

In regard to the trading or substitution of economic assets, many African-American men are at a disadvantage (Tienda & Stier, 1996), and this causes African-American women to have fewer prospects in comparison to women of other ethnic or racial backgrounds (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2001). Job opportunities and high incarceration rates are two factors that have influenced African-American men's marketability in local marriage pools (Hueber, 2007; Tienda & Stier, 1996). For example, Tienda and Stier (1996) conducted a study on employment opportunities and the accumulation of disadvantage for inner city parents in comparison to a national representative sample. The sample of inner city parents consisted of 2,490 individuals who participated in the Urban Poverty and Family Life Survey of Chicago—1,186 (48%) of whom were African-American, 368 (15%) European-American, 484 (19%) Mexican-American, and 453 (18%) Puerto-Rican. Their comparison sample was from the National Survey of Families and Households, which contained a national representation of ethnic/racial minorities (Tienda & Stier, 1996).

African-American fathers in the inner city sample had the least amount of job experience up to age 39 in comparison to Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and European-American men (Tienda & Stier, 1996). In addition, 10% of African-American fathers in the inner city between the ages of 18-45 reported no labor market experience (Tienda & Stier, 1996). Tienda and Stier (1996) indicated that the racial differences in work experience were not a direct consequence of one's minority status, for minority group status did not have a direct influence on labor participation. In one of their analytic models they conducted a statistical interaction between race/ethnicity and work

experience, which revealed that inner city African-American men without work experience were only .79 times as likely to be in the labor force during any given year as European-American men without work experience (Tienda & Stier, 1996). Additionally, the lack of workforce experience for inner city males was higher than what was experienced for urban fathers: inner city fathers averaged 12-13 years of workforce participation between ages 18-40, while urban fathers averaged 16 years of work experience during the same time period (Tienda & Stier, 1996). However, marriage was shown to promote work force participation for inner city fathers (Tienda & Stier, 1996). Overall, it appears that minority status in conjunction with labor market experience give a clearer picture of why inner city males report lower levels of workforce participation.

Mate availability can have a twofold outcome. A high abundance of males can promote both marriage prior to parenthood and unwed parenthood (South, 1996). South (1996) conducted a study of 2,352 (73%) European-American and 886 (27%) African-American women from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth and the Public Use Micro-data Samples. Sixty-four percent (64%) of European-American women married prior to childbearing, and 8% of European-American women had a premarital birth; while 42% of African-American women married prior to childbearing, and 38% of African-American women had a premarital birth (South, 1996). Different environmental contexts explained African-American women's higher probability of having a child prior to marriage than European-American women. When the marriage pool contained employed African-American men, the likelihood that African-American women would marry increased. In addition, the percentage of African-American men in secondary

school increased the risk of premarital birth for the African-American women in school. For example, for African-American women, the difference between 1 standard deviation below to 1 standard deviation above the mean percent of males in school increased the predicted yearly probability that African-American women would experience a premarital birth by 70% (South, 1996). However, there was only a 44% increase for European-American women (South, 1996). South (1996) indicated that the dramatic increase was prevalent among African-American women but not European-American women because housing segregation reduces African American women's arena for social activity, thereby confining their relationships to males from their local school or neighborhood (South, 1996). South (1996) also found that demographic factors such as educational attainment and family background had more of an impact on a female's transition to wed or unwed parenthood than did mate availability (South, 1996). Therefore, the individual characteristics of females are more consequential to premarital and marital parenthood than the availability of males.

Lichter, LeClere, and McLaughlin (1991) found that mate availability did not fully explain the differences observed in marriage rates for African-American and European-American women. Census data was used to look at 382 labor market areas—women aged 20 to 29 were analyzed from across the United States (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991). Female marriage rates were highest in areas that did not have “economic alternatives to marriage,” which were high female earnings and high averages for public assistance (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991, p. 856). For African-American women, female employment and income rates were negatively related to being

married, and the opposite was true for black males (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991) Lichter, LeClere and McLaughlin (1991) concluded that African-American women may fall more in line with the female economic independence argument which proposes that high economic opportunities for females provide alternatives to the financial provisions of marriage, and subsequently, lessening the financial incentives of marriage for women (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991). The differences in marriage rates for African-American and European-American women were independent from the differences of their respective marriage market when racial differences in the local marriage market were controlled; the percentage of ever-married African-American women was .15 lower than the proportion of ever-married European-American women (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991). Therefore, the results of this study are comparable to what South (1996) found in that the availability of males serves more as a secondary influence on marriage rates of African-American and European-American women (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin 1991).

Sasser and Schoen (1999) examined the effects of economic activity and marital beliefs on marriage for their sample of 1,432 individuals aged 18-34: 908 (63%) European-American men and women, 393 (27%) African-American men and women, and 131 (9%) Asian-, Hispanic-, and Native-American men and women. African-American women were significantly more likely to wed than their European-American counterparts if they were employed full-time (Sasser & Schoen, 1999). This finding suggests that economic independence of African-American females promotes marriage, and this negates previous conclusions that have suggested that economic independence

depresses marriage for African-American women (Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991; Sasser & Schoen, 1999). Considering how employment of African-American females has been historically consistent, I suspect that the results of my study will also indicate that the economic independence of African-American women promotes marriage.

Incarceration has been an unrelenting barrier to marriage for many African-American men, and has removed numerous African-American males from the marriage pool (Huebner, 2007). For example, Huebner (2007) conducted a study of 4,395 men of whom 443 were incarcerated that examined the effect of incarceration on the racial differences in the likelihood of marriage. In a subsample from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 2,210 (50%) were European-American, 1,289 (29%) were African-American, and 896 (20%) were Hispanic (Huebner, 2007). However, between 1983 and 2000, 4% of European-American males, 20% of African-American males, and 11% of Hispanic males were incarcerated (Huebner, 2007). African-American males had the highest rate of incarceration, and incarceration was shown to decrease the probability of marriage for all males; however, the effects of incarceration varied by race (Huebner, 2007). For example, the odds of an incarcerated European-American male marrying was reduced by over 50%, and incarceration reduced the chances of African-American and Hispanic males by 25% and 33%, respectively (Huebner, 2007). Furthermore, African-American women are more likely to marry a former inmate than both European-American and Hispanic women (Huebner, 2007). It appears that due to the high incidence of incarceration among African-American males, African-American women

are more likely to marry a former inmate in comparison to women from other ethnic backgrounds. But even with higher percentages of African-American women marrying former inmates, incarceration does depress marriage for African-American males. These findings answer the question that was presented earlier about the degree to which incarceration affects marriage for African-American males and females: incarceration decreases the probability of marriage for African-American men; concomitantly, African-American women are more likely to marry an ex-convict in comparison to women from other ethnic backgrounds.

Beliefs and Desire to Marry

Much variety exists in the African-American community with regard to the beliefs and attitudes of African-Americans toward marriage (King, 1999). King (1999) conducted a study of 317 African-American women from Ohio and Pennsylvania, and their attitudes toward marriage were assessed. He examined global attitudes toward marriage, the belief of how marriage would affect one's personal growth, and the value they placed on marriage compared to a successful career (King, 1999). Fifty-eight percent (58%) of all respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statement: "Everyone should want to get married" (King, 1999, p. 428). With regard to a successful career versus a successful marriage, 83% of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement that "A successful career should be more important than a successful marriage" (King, 1999, p. 428). And 60% of all respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that "There are fewer advantages to marriage now than there were in the past" (King, 1999, p. 428). Overall, most African-American women in this sample valued

marriage and believed that it promotes personal maturity (King, 1999). However, the way in which attitudes toward marriage varied was dependent upon demographic background (King, 1999). African-American women who were highly educated, older, and had higher incomes reported the most positive attitudes toward marriage; and conversely, less educated, unmarried, and younger respondents reported the most negative attitudes toward marriage (King, 1999). Age influenced these attitudes; that is, older women were more likely to be raised during a time when marriage was more valued than occupational success (King, 1999). However, King (1999) concluded that the younger generation of women was raised during a time in which success in the workplace was highly valued, and in turn, this caused these women to place a greater emphasis on occupational success. In addition, the older women were more likely to have been raised by both a male and female, and this occurrence was correlated with more positive attitudes toward marriage.

This brings into consideration the findings of how traditional beliefs about marriage have had an impact on the outcome of marriage for African-Americans. Sassler and Schoen (1999) conducted a study of 1,432 individuals aged 18-34: 908 (63%) European-American men and women, 393 (27%) African-American men and women, and 131 (9%) Asian-, Hispanic-, and Native-American men and women in the National Survey of Families and Households in which they observed the effects of traditional marital beliefs on the outcome of marriage. Traditional beliefs toward marriage were assessed by asking the following question on a 5 point Likert-type scale: “(a) It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the

home and family” (Sassler & Schoen, 1999, p. 151). For views on marriage, the following question was asked: (b) “It’s better for a person to get married than to go through life being single” (Sassler & Schoen, 1999, p. 151). And for financial stability, respondents were asked to score, on a scale of 0 to 20, the degree in which they believed that marriage would alter the following aspects of their life: “(a) standard of living, (b) economic security (c) overall happiness” (Sassler & Schoen, 1999, p. 151). Higher scores indicated the belief that marriage would improve these aspects (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). African-American men and women differed from European-American men and women in that African-American males and females did not significantly differ in role expectations; however, there was a significant difference that was found between European-American men and women (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). European-American men were more traditional in regard to gender role expectation—European-American men had mean scores of 2.91 for the traditional views on the marriage measure while European-American females had a mean score of 2.68 (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). African-American men showed similar beliefs to European-American males in that they both had a more positive view of marriage than their female counterparts (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). It was also found that being financially stable was highly valued for both African-American males and females (Sassler & Schoen, 1999).

There appears to be conflicting views on the differences that African-American men and women have toward marriage. In reference to the previous study, African-American males were more likely to have a positive view of marriage than African-American females (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). However, South (1993) found that African-

American males had a more negative view of marriage and its effects on one's future than African-American females. And this view was assessed by asking the participants to indicate how their lives would be altered by marriage on the following areas: "overall happiness," "standard of living," "economic security," "sex life," "friendships with others," and "relations with parents" (South, 1993, p. 361). Responses ranged from "much worse" to "much better" (South, 1993, p. 361). South (1993) used the National Survey of Families and Households to sample 2,214 unmarried individuals ages 19 to 35—African-Americans and Hispanics were oversampled. South (1993) found that African-American males were the least desirous of marriage compared to European-American and Hispanic males and females, and African-American females. There was a 36% difference in means between African-American and European-American males for their desires to marry, and this was double the difference that was observed between African-American and European-American females (South, 1993). In this study they observed differences between African-Americans' and European-Americans' value/desire to marry, and most of the difference that was found was mostly due to the differing views of African-American males. More research needs to be conducted to verify whether African-American males value marriage more or less than European-American males and African-American females.

In regard to the voluntary retreat from marriage, individual value systems may also have an impact on whether or not African-Americans enter marriage or desire to marry (Clarkwest, 2006). Clarkwest (2006) conducted a study that examined decision to marry in a sample of 2,076 individuals from the first two waves of the National Survey of

Families and Households—minorities and non-traditional families were oversampled (Sweet & Bumpass, 1997). The married African-Americans reported more conservative views for premarital sex and divorce, and these individuals were more likely to report being childless before marriage, frequent church attendance, and higher incomes (Clarkwest, 2006). The finding of being childless before marriage coincides with how Manning and Smock (1995) found that having a child before marriage was correlated to the failure of cohabitation to lead to marriage for African-American cohabiters. Furthermore, the finding of higher incomes for married couples gives further evidence of the positive effects of economic stability on marriage in the African-American community.

Overall, there are a few conflicting conclusions drawn in regard to African-American males' desire for marriage. South (1993) found that African-American males tend to believe that marriage will negatively affect their lives, while Sassler and Schoen (1999) found that African-American males are more likely to report a positive view of marriage. This discrepancy does not appear in the findings for how African-American females view marriage: after educational and socioeconomic factors are controlled, African-American females do not diverge from European-American females in their positive view of marriage (South, 1993). African-American men and women report similar views for marital role expectations and the importance of financial stability being a prerequisite for marriage (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). In regard to how African-American women value marriage, it appears that age is an influential factor. Older African-American women—those of whom reached adulthood in the 1940s and 1950s—

tend to value marriage more highly than younger African-American women—those of whom reached adulthood in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. What is left unexplained is how African-Americans' beliefs about marriage may be influenced by contextual factors such as a socioeconomic status, family background, and sexual history.

What makes all of the reviewed research so interesting and complex is that many different conclusions could be drawn. I pose that no easy explanation exists as to why many African-Americans are not getting married. This is a multifaceted issue. I suggest that due to the effects of slavery, poverty, early parenthood, and welfare—the attitudes that African-Americans have toward their success in marriage are fairly negative. These issues suggested to African-Americans that a successful marriage is not attainable. African-Americans may truly value marriage: Clarkwest (2006) found little racial differences in how African-Americans and European-Americans valued marriage. I hypothesize that many African-Americans fear that they may not be successful in creating a stable marriage. And these fears are grounded in many aspects of the present and past. For example, Hatchett (1991) found that 40% of the African-Americans in his study indicated that they did not know if they desired marriage because they felt they had seen very few examples of good marriages. The feasibility of marriage may appear low in the eyes of many African-Americans, and this poor outlook may be related to the economic and relational context in which they live, including the perceived marriage market. We know what is occurring in the African-American community in regard to the lowering of marriage rates and the occurrence of cohabitation—now it is time to figure out why this is occurring. And the intent of this research project is to provide valuable

insight on how the beliefs/attitudes toward marriage have affected the lowering marriage rates in the African-American community.

Present Study

The previous literature review has shed some light on why we see such a low marriage rate in the African-American community; however, many questions were left unanswered. It is still unclear as to why some African-Americans do not desire to marry; is it due to African-American men being less desirous of marriage than African-American women or other factors? Some of the studies pointed to how race may not be the all encompassing answer for the low marriage rate in the African-American community. Other factors such as family background and socioeconomic status have been shown to largely affect premarital births, welfare receipt, and marriage. With regard to what we do not know, a large gap exists in the literature on the effects of slavery on marriage in the African-American community because studies related to the latent effects of slavery on marriage are practically nonexistent. In order to understand the low marriage rate in the African-American community, the specific questions that this study will address are the following: 1) Does a relationship exist between African-Americans' attitudes/beliefs about marriage and their actual desire to marry? 2) Are African-Americans' access to resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility) and relational history (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status) related to their beliefs toward marriage? 3) Do attitudes/beliefs about marriage mediate the effects relational history (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents'

marital status) and lack of resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility) on desire to marry? 4) Does gender moderate the relationship between traditional beliefs and hope/desire to marry, and how does gender affect one's hope/desire to marry? The following model hypothesizes that poverty, a lack of resources, low educational attainment, being raised in a single parent home, early sexual initiation/premarital parenthood, and cohabitation will have a negative relationship with African-Americans' desires to marry. High educational attainment is perceived to have a positive association with African-Americans' desire to marry. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that the effects of poverty, cohabitation, education, and family background on the desire/hope to marry are mediated by the beliefs toward marriage. Also, gender will serve as a moderating variable. Additionally, it is hypothesized that gender will have a significant effect on African-Americans' desire for marriage.

METHODS

Sample

We used the Urban Poverty and Family Life Survey of Chicago (UPFLS; Wilson, 1987) that was conducted in 1987 via personal and telephone interviews by the National Opinion Research Center. The final sample of the UPFLS was composed of 2,490 respondents, and minorities were oversampled. The analytic sample for this study included only unmarried African-American ($N= 738$) men ($n=242$, 33%) and women ($n=496$, 67%) from ages 18 to 43. A stratified probability sample of census tracts was used, which consisted of individuals from impoverished areas in the city of Chicago (UPFLS; Wilson, 1987). A prerequisite for each census tract was having at least 20% of the residents reporting yearly household incomes that fell below the federal poverty line (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995). The sampling procedure included dividing the census tracts into segments, which resulted in a sufficient amount of African-Americans (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995). In order to obtain sufficient representation for other ethnicities, a second sampling procedure was conducted in which participants were selected from census tracts that were densely populated by Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and European-Americans (Franklin, Smith & McMiller, 1995). Weights were used to in order to rectify issues related to discrepancies in sampling methods and missing data (Franklin,

Smith & McMiller, 1995). The weighted data are being used for this study. Given the specificity and concentrated focus of this sample being on impoverished Chicago residents, findings from this study will not be generalizable to the entire African-American population in the United States.

Variables

The outcome variable for this study was “desire to marry” which was determined by how respondents answered the question: Do you expect to marry in the future? A ‘1’ on this item will mean “expect to marry,” and a ‘0’ will mean ‘do not expect to marry.’

The major question/predictor of greatest interest was the variable of beliefs/attitudes about marriage. Traditional beliefs toward marriage was the variable used to measure this construct. The following question was administered to respondents in order to measure their traditional beliefs toward marriage: “It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family.” A four-point Likert-type scale was used to determine one’s traditional beliefs—answers ranged from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). Values of 1 indicated nontraditional views toward marriage, and values of 4 indicated traditional views toward marriage.

Relational history was measured by the following variables: age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, and parents’ marital status. Age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, and father involvement were composite variables. Age at first coitus and age at first pregnancy were used to create the age at first

sex/pregnancy composite variable. The sexual values variable was a composite of approval of premarital sex for a 16-year-old female and approval of premarital sex for a 16-year-old male. The following questions measured these variables: 1) “In general, would you say you approve, or disapprove of a 16 year old female having sex with someone she is not married to?” 2) In general, would you say you approve, or disapprove of a 16 year old male having sex with someone he is not married to?” Responses ranged from approve, disapprove, or neither. The father involvement variable was a composite of the respondent’s biological father being the male who raised him/her and the respondent’s father living with him/her from birth to age 21 years. Cohabitation was measured by one item: “Have you ever lived with your current partner?” Parents’ marital status was measured by the following item: “Were your parents ever married to each other?”

Lack of resources variables that were used are the following: educational attainment, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility. Educational attainment and public aid were composite variables. For educational attainment, attending college and the highest degree received were used to create this composite variable. Public aid was a composite of the frequency of public assistance during childhood for the respondent and whether or not the respondent received public assistance during childhood until the age of 14 years. Household income was the yearly household income for the respondent. Geographic mobility was measured by the following item: How often do you travel outside of your neighborhood for work, movies,

classes, shopping, or any other reason?” Responses ranged from 1 to 6—1 indicating less than once a month and 6 indicating everyday.

For the purposes of this study, we hypothesized that the latent effects of slavery might be revealed in the lack of resources variables and relational history variables. Considering how discrimination is one of the effects of slavery, it would have been an optimal variable to use to measure the effects of slavery; however, the data set for this study did not have a specific variable to measure the effects of discrimination. Therefore, it is believed that the effects of discrimination should be manifested in lack of resources and relational history.

Gender is a dummy variable that will be scored ‘0’ for males and ‘1’ for females.

In order to predict the probable effects of the independent variables on the relationship between African-Americans’ beliefs about marriage and African-Americans’ desire to marry, path analysis was the chosen method of analysis. This form of analysis will allow the opportunity to test the effects of each independent variable while controlling for the effects of all of the other independent variables in each model. In addition, mediation and moderation hypotheses will be tested within the framework of path analysis.

RESULTS

Univariate Statistics

The definitions of the predictor variables and the outcome variable are provided in Table 1. The univariate statistics were analyzed using SAS, and the univariate statistics for the non-composited variables are displayed in Table 2. The data for all of the predictor variables were fairly symmetrically distributed in their respective histograms and box plots. Therefore, no transformations were needed for any of the variables. Table 3 shows the univariate statistics for the variables that were composited. A discussion for how they were composited is provided below.

Principal Component Analysis

Prior to conducting PCA for the composite variables, inter-correlations for the variables for each construct for potential composites were conducted. Based on the Cronbach alpha reliabilities that were generated from the inter-correlations, the appropriate variables were included in the PCA. The purpose of PCA is to simplify a collective representation of inter-correlated variables (Afifi, Clark & May, 2004). Table 3 displays the eigenvalues for the composite variables which are all greater than 1, which indicates that among the variables used for each composite variable, there was one primary construct that was being measured. The two original variables that were used to create one of the composite variables for lack of resources, in this case, dependence on public aid (pub_aid; $\alpha = 0.94$) were the frequency that the respondent's family of origin

received aid (fami_aid) and whether the respondent's family of origin received aid from the time of infancy to 14 years of age (teen_aid). For the composite variable educational attainment (educ_atn; $\alpha = 0.92$)—a lack of resources variable, whether the respondent attended college (Atn_d_coll) and the highest degree received by the respondent (HI_cdegr) were used to create this composite. Approval of a 16-year-old female participating in premarital sex (apg_16sx) and approval of a 16-year-old male participating in premarital sex (apb_16sx) were used to create the composite for approval of premarital sex/sexual values (sex_vals; $\alpha = 0.81$), which was a relational variable. Whether the respondent was raised by his/her biological father (fat_rais) and whether the respondent live continuously with his/her father from childhood to age 21 years (liv_da21) were used to create the father involvement (fath_inv; $\alpha = 0.58$) variable. Lastly, the age of the respondent at first coitus (age_1sex) and the age of the respondent at first pregnancy (age_preg) were used to create age at first sexual experience/consequence (age_sexp; $\alpha = 0.80$).

Table 1

Description of variables

Variable	Description	Values
Mar_hope	Respondent's desire to marry in future.	Yes = 1, No = 0
trad_bel	Respondent has traditional beliefs toward marriage.	1 = untraditional, 4 = traditional
<u>Relational Variables</u>		
pmar_sta	Marital status of respondent's parents.	0 = unmarried, 1 = married
cohb_ptr	Respondent is cohabiting with partner.	0 = no, 1 = yes
fath_inv (composite)	Respondent's father was involved in rearing R during childhood.	Low score = not very involved, high score = very involved
fat_rais	Respondent's biological father raised him/her	0 = no, 1 = yes
liv_da21	Respondent lived with biological father from birth to 21 years of age	0 = no, 1 = yes
age_sexp (composite)	Age at first sexual experience/consequence	Low score = younger age at sex/consequence, high score = R was older at first sex/consequence
age_sex1	Age of respondent at first coitus	Chronological age of respondent at first sex.
age_preg	Age of respondent at first pregnancy	Chronological age of respondent at first pregnancy
sex_vals (composite)	Approval of premarital sex/sexual values	Low score = less approving of premarital sex, high scores = more approving of premarital sex
apg_16sx	Approval of premarital sex for a 16-year-old female	1 = disapprove, 3 = approve
apb_16sx	Approval of premarital sex for a 16-year-old male	1 = disapprove, 3 = approve

Lack of Resources

Variables

educ_atn (composite)	Educational attainment of respondent.	Low = less educated, high = more educated
Atnd_coll	Respondent attended college	0 = no, 1 = yes
HI_cdegr	Highest degree received by the respondent	0 = Respondent did not graduate HS, 3 = graduate education
pub_aid (composite)	Receipt of public aid during respondent's childhood	Low = did not receive aid, High = frequently received aid
fami_aid	Frequency that respondent's family of origin received public aid	0 = no aid received, 5 = received aid almost all the time
teen_aid	Respondent's family of origin received aid until R was 14-years-old	0 = no, 1 = yes
hh_incom	Household income (yearly)	1 = less than \$2,500, 12 = more than \$45,000
res_trav	Geographic mobility-Frequency respondent travels outside of neighborhood.	1 = less than monthly, 6 = everyday

Table 2

Univariate statistics for non-composited variables

	mar_hope	trad_bel	hh_incom	res_trav	pmar_sta	cohb_ptr
N	690	726	711	737	734	377
Mean	0.61	2.56	4.71	4.84	0.83	0.37
SD	0.49	0.95	2.96	1.45	0.37	0.48
Range	0.0-1.0	1.0-4.0	1.0-12.0	1.0-6.0	0.0-1.0	0.0-1.0

Table 3

Univariate statistics for composited variables

	pub_aid	educ_atn	sex_vals	fath_inv	age_sexp
N	723	738	734	730	447
Mean	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.22
SD	1.95	1.92	1.83	1.68	1.69
Range	1.41-5.96	1.47-8.28	6.72-1.84	2.32-6.87	0.12-12.96
Eigenvalue	1.90	1.84	1.68	1.41	1.63
Alpha	0.94	0.92	0.81	0.58	0.80

Table 4

Pearson correlation coefficients: matrix for variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Mar_hope	--										
2. trad_bel	-.06	--									
<u>Relational:</u>											
3. pmar_sta	.05	-.09	--								
4. cohb_ptr	-.08	.11	.01	--							
5. fath_inv	-.01	-.02	.31***	-.11	--						
6. age_sexp	.01	-.22**	.02	.00	-.03	--					
7. sex_vals	.00	-.08	-.05	-.12~	.05	-.21**	--				
<u>Resources:</u>											
8. educ_atn	.07	-.01	.13*	-.05	-.03	.11~	-.04	--			
9. pub_aid	.02	.06	-.19**	.11	-.23***	-.22**	.02	-.20**	---		
10. hh_incom	.09	-.18**	.12~	-.08	.14*	.15*	-.12~	.28***	-.16*	--	
11. res_trav	-.03	-.12~	-.01	-.01	.05	.06	.03	.27***	-.09	.35***	--

~ $p < .10$ * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Bivariate Statistics

It is important to preface the bivariate analysis with the understanding that correlations do not infer causality—they are simply helpful in indicating the relationships that exist between variables (Light, Singer & Willett, 1990). A correlation matrix was estimated for all of the predictor variables—the outcome variable, *mar_hope*, was also included. Pearson correlation analysis was utilized, and all missing data were excluded; therefore, ($N=213$) is the sample size for this correlation analysis. This reduced the sample size for the bivariate analysis to about a quarter of the original sample ($N=738$). Table 4 displays how *mar_hope* is not correlated with any of the variables, which may be due to the small sample size of this bivariate analysis and the fact that the effects of other variables are not being controlled. This observation warrants the use of path analysis in the multivariate analysis in order to address this issue.

Table 4 shows seven moderate to fairly moderate correlations. A correlation that indicates that fathers are more involved in the lives of their children when they are married to their child's mother is the positive correlation that was found between parents' marital status (*pmar_sta*) and father involvement (*fath_inv*) ($r = .31$; $p < .001$). Additionally, parents' marital status was negatively correlated with public aid (*pub_aid*) ($r = -.19$; $p < .001$), which means that married households are less reliant on financial support from the government. Conversely, single parent households are often more reliant on public aid. The higher reliance on public assistance by single parents is a function of their lower household incomes. A statistically significant negative relationship was found between household income (*hh_incom*) and public aid ($r = -0.16$;

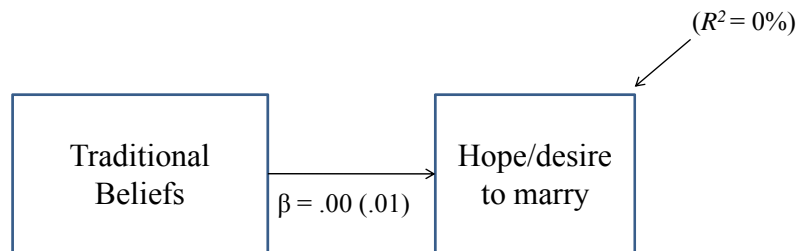
$p < .05$), which indicates that at higher levels of household income the usage of public assistance is lower and vice versa. Furthermore, public aid was also found to be negatively correlated to father involvement ($r = -.23; p < .001$). When fathers are more involved with their children, there is a lower use of public assistance and vice versa. I infer that father involvement could potentially include financial support for the child. Educational attainment is a resource variable that had a positive relationship with household income ($r = .28; p < .001$). Additionally, higher levels of education were correlated with more geographic mobility—res_trav ($r = .27, p < .001$) and vice versa. Overall, the significant correlations that were observed further support previous research findings in the relationships between father presence, public assistance, mobility, marital status, and the more traditional demographic variables—education and household income.

Path Analysis

MPlus was the statistical software that was used to fit path models that addressed the research questions of this study. Desire/hope to marry (mar_hope) was regressed on traditional beliefs toward marriage in the first model. For the second model, traditional beliefs was regressed on the variables that represent Relational History (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status) and Lack of Resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility). The third model regressed hope for marriage on traditional beliefs while controlling Lack of Resources and Relational History.

Research Question 1: Does a relationship exist between African-Americans' attitudes/beliefs about marriage and their actual desire to marry? The first model regressed desire/hope to marry on traditional beliefs toward marriage. The path diagram for Model 1(Figure 1) shows that a significant relationship between hope/desire for marriage and traditional beliefs was not found. Traditional beliefs toward marriage did not explain any of the variance for hope/desire to marry ($R^2 = .00$).

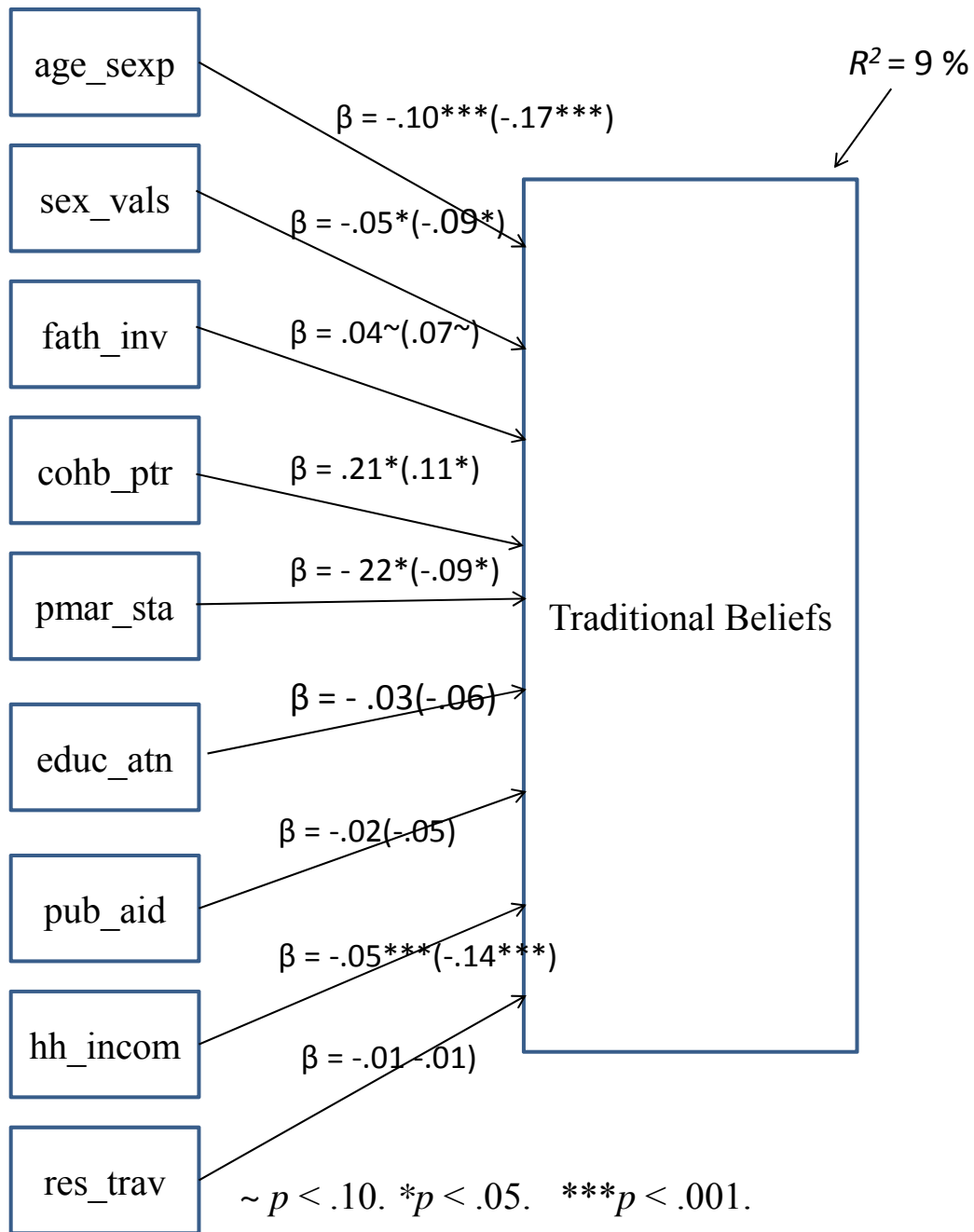
Figure 1: Path model of non-standardized parameter estimates (standardized estimates in parentheses) of traditional beliefs and hope/desire to marry (Model 1).



Research Question 2: Are African-Americans' access to resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility) and relational history (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status) related to their beliefs toward marriage? Model 2 (Figure 2) shows the results. Six variables were significant predictors of traditional beliefs—age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status, and household income. A significant relationship between traditional beliefs and education, public aid, and geographic mobility was not found. A significant negative relationship was found between age at first sex/pregnancy and traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.10, p < .001$). More specifically, for every year older one was at first sex/pregnancy, there was a negative .10 difference in traditional beliefs when controlling for all else in the model. Therefore, if pregnancy occurred early (low levels of age at first sex/pregnancy) respondents had more traditional beliefs and vice versa. A significant negative relationship was also found between approval of premarital sex/sexual values and traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.05, p < .05$). When controlling for all other variables in the model, a one unit difference in premarital sex/sexual values was coupled with a negative .05 difference in traditional beliefs. Therefore, at higher levels of approval for premarital sex/sexual values there were lower traditional values and vice versa. Father involvement had a marginally positive relationship with traditional beliefs ($\beta = .04, p < .10$), which indicates that with a one unit difference in father involvement, a positive .04 unit difference was observed for traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in the model. Indicating that at higher levels of father involvement, there were high levels of traditional beliefs and vice versa.

Cohabitation was found to have a significant positive relationship with traditional beliefs ($\beta = .21, p < .05$). When there was cohabitation, traditional beliefs had a positive .21 unit difference—controlling for all else in the model. Therefore, when there was cohabitation there were high levels of traditional beliefs existed and vice versa. A significant negative relationship was found between traditional beliefs and parents' marital status ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$). Meaning that when respondents' parents remained married, there was a negative .22 difference in traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in model. Household income was found to have a negative relationship with traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.05, p < .001$); indicating that when there was a one unit difference in household income; there was a negative .05 difference in traditional beliefs. Indicating that at high levels of household income, there were lower levels of traditional beliefs and vice versa. Overall, the relational and resource variables explained 9% of the variance in traditional beliefs ($R^2 = .094$).

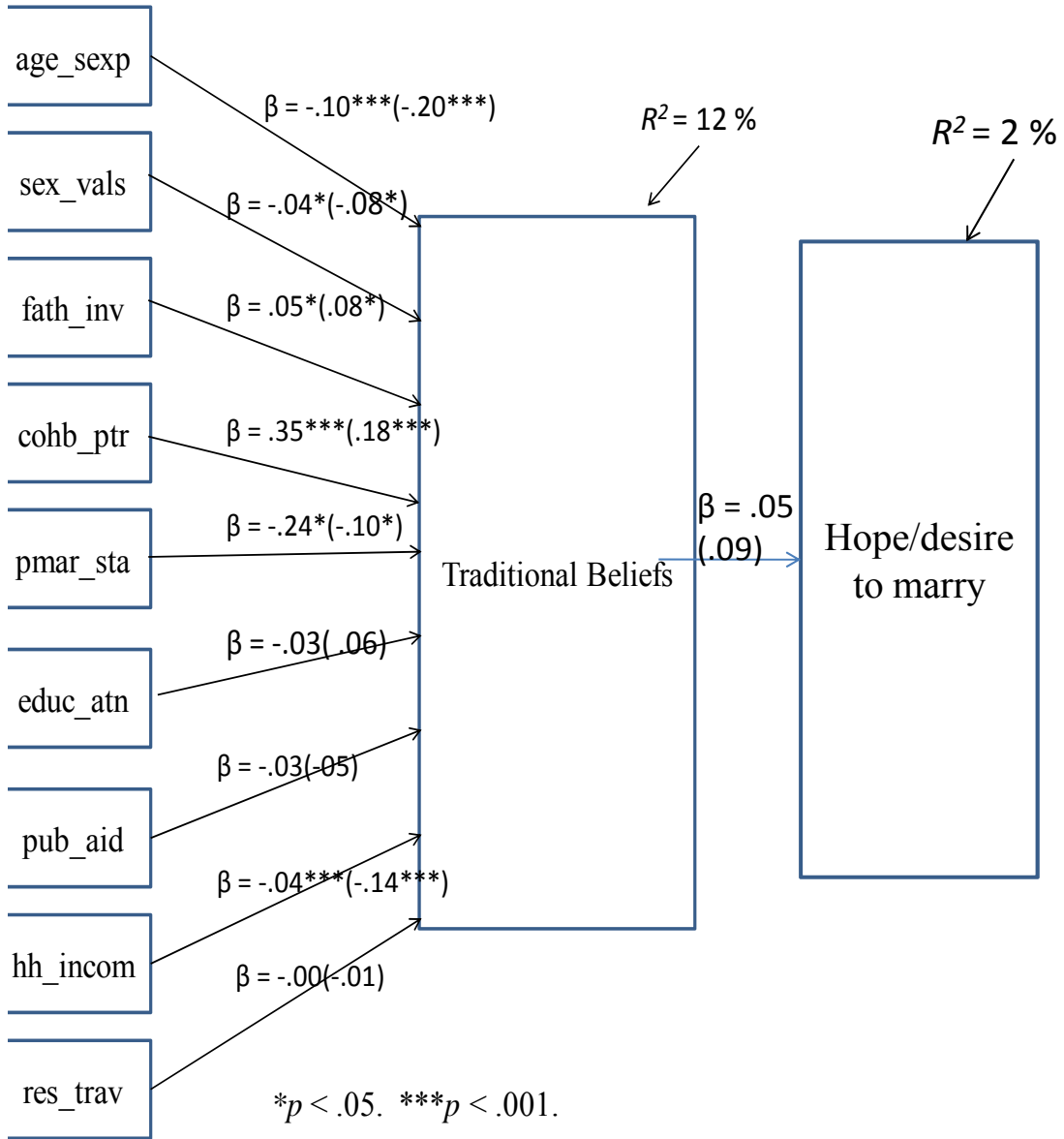
Figure 2: Path model of non-standardized parameter estimates (standardized estimates are in parentheses) of age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status, education, public aid, household income, geographic mobility, and traditional beliefs (Model 2).



Research Question 3: Do attitudes/beliefs about marriage mediate the effects Relational History (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status) and Lack of Resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility) on desire to marry? Model 3 was used to address this question. This model added hope/desire to marry to Model 2 (See Figure 3). Hope/desire to marry was regressed on traditional beliefs. There was no significant relationship between traditional beliefs and hope/desire to marry when controlling for all of the other relationships in the model. However, the following results detail the significant relationships that were found in this model: There was a negative relationship between age at first sex/pregnancy and traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.10, p < .001$)—with all else controlled in the model—which means that for every year older one was at first sex/pregnancy, there was a negative .10 difference in traditional beliefs when controlling for all else in the model. Indicating that at younger ages of first sex/pregnancy, there were higher levels of traditional beliefs and vice versa. There was a significant negative relationship between sexual values and traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.04, p < .05$). Meaning that with each one unit difference in approval of premarital sex/sexual values, there was a negative .04 difference in traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in the model. In essence, at higher levels of approval for premarital sex/sexual values, there were lower levels of traditional beliefs and vice versa. There was a positive relationship between father involvement and traditional beliefs ($\beta = .05, p < .05$)—the effects of all other relationships were controlled. This demonstrates that at a one unit difference in father involvement, there was a positive .05 difference in traditional beliefs. Therefore, higher

levels of father involvement were related to higher traditional beliefs and vice versa. Cohabitation also had a positive relationship with traditional beliefs ($\beta = .35, p < .001$), and when there was cohabitation, there was a positive .35 difference in traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in the model. Indicating that when cohabitation occurred, there were high levels of traditional beliefs existed and vice versa. Parents' marital status had a negative relationship with traditional beliefs ($\beta = -.24, p < .05$). Meaning that when respondents' parents remained married, there was a negative .24 difference in traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in the model. Therefore, when the respondents' parents remained married, there were lower levels of traditional beliefs and vice versa. Household income also had a negative relationship with traditional beliefs in this model ($\beta = -.04, p < .001$). When there was a one unit difference in household income, there was a negative .04 difference in traditional beliefs—when controlling for all else in the model. Specifying that at high levels of household income, there were low levels of traditional beliefs and visa versa. Overall, lack of resources (education, public aid, household income, and geographic mobility) and relational history (age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status) explained 12% ($R^2 = .12$) of the variance for traditional beliefs toward marriage.

Figure 3: Path model of non-standardized parameter estimates (standardized parameter estimates are in parentheses) of age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status, education, public aid, household income, geographic mobility, traditional beliefs, and hope/desire to marry (Model 3).



Research Question 4: Does gender moderate the relationship between traditional beliefs and hope/desire to marry, and how does gender affect one's hope/desire to marry? A significant moderation between gender and traditional beliefs was not found in the prediction of hope/desire to marry. This model can be found in Appendix D.

DISCUSSION

The positive effects of a healthy marriage extend to many different areas of life—emotional well-being, economic stability, and physical health. And its reach is not limited to the individuals involved in marriage, but the benefits of healthy marriages are felt by children, the community, and society at large. Considering the importance of this institution for the global health of society, it is alarming to see that many African-Americans are not entering marriage. In addition, African-Americans are faring poorly in regard to emotional (more mental health issues) (Miranda, Siddique, Belin, & Kohn-Wood, 2005), economic (high levels of economic instability) (Nichols-Casebolt, 1988; Tienda & Stier, 1996), and physical wellbeing (higher reported cases status of life threatening illnesses)—(Hall, 2007; Covelli, 2007). Given these observations, research that investigates why many African-Americans are not entering marriage is not only valid but it is a necessity.

In an effort to investigate potential links to the low marriage rate in the African-American community, the primary purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between traditional beliefs about marriage and hope/desire for marriage. To address the economic and relational state of African-Americans, this study explored how relational history and lack of resources related to traditional beliefs about

marriage. The current levels for lack of resources and relational history served as a proxy for the latent effects of slavery. This is groundbreaking in regard to the conceptualization of exploring the effects of slavery on the current relational wellbeing of African-Americans. Considering how previous research findings have been inconsistent in regard observing differences in African-American males' and females' desire for marriage (Sassler & Schoen, 1999; South, 1993), gender was used as a moderating variable for the relationship between traditional beliefs toward marriage and hope/desire for marriage. A discussion of the results is provided below.

Summary of Findings

To answer the primary purpose of this study—does a relationship between traditional beliefs toward marriage and hope/desire to marry exist—the first model indicated that there was no significant relationship between traditional beliefs and desire to marry. When considering how the item that was used to measure traditional beliefs toward marriage was the degree to which the respondent agreed with the following statement: “It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family,” it is not surprising that this variable did not predict African-Americans hope/desire to marry. The traditional norm of the breadwinner male and homemaker wife has never been the prevalent family structure of African-American families, and this norm is more consistent with Eurocentric ideals. Throughout African-American history, African-American women have continuously participated in the workforce (Spaights & Whitaker, 1995). Their incomes have been a staple for providing for black families; therefore, opting out of workforce participation has not been a viable

option for many African-African women. Furthermore, African-American men have experienced and continue to experience discrimination in regard to job opportunities and income discrepancies (Tienda & Stier, 1996) and have oftentimes relied on the income of their spouses.

In consideration of how many African-Americans have never witnessed the male breadwinner/female homemaker structure for marriage, African-Americans may not associate this structure with their marital aspirations. Therefore, traditional beliefs about marriage may be unrelated to African-American desire for marriage, and this conclusion was supported by the non-significant relationship that was found between traditional beliefs and hope/desire to marry in this study.

One of the most important findings from this study is that relational history and lack of resources do indeed predict some of the variance for traditional beliefs toward marriage. In the final model (Model 3), it was observed that the relational history variables—age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, and parents' marital status, and the lack of resource variables—educational attainment, public aid, household income and geographic mobility, predicted 12% of the variance for traditional beliefs. More specifically, it was observed that age at first sex/pregnancy had a significant negative relationship with traditional beliefs. Being older at first sex/pregnancy was related to having less traditional beliefs toward marriage. Oftentimes, women who wait to have their first child are usually more educated (Schmidt, 2008), and research findings have shown that higher levels of education are related to having more egalitarian beliefs toward marriage (Allen & Olson, 2001). Additionally, considering

how a woman who has a child at an earlier age also has a greater likelihood of being unmarried. This brings attention to the research that has indicated that traditional individuals are more likely to desire to have children and childbearing can lead to more traditional gender beliefs (Cowan & Cowan, 1989; Kaufman, 2000). However, when individuals are married for at least a year before the birth of a child, the pull toward traditional gender roles is less extreme. I suggest that since younger women are less likely to be married a year before the birth of their child, they are more likely to experience a dramatic pull towards the traditional extreme for gender roles.

For sexual values, it was found that being more approving of premarital sex/having more liberal sexual values was negatively related to traditional beliefs and vice versa. Therefore, individuals with liberal sexual beliefs were also less traditional in their beliefs toward marriage. In general, African-Americans are more accepting of premarital sex and childbirth (East, 1998), which leads to the assumption that African Americans, collectively, are more likely to have traditional beliefs toward marriage. Having nontraditional beliefs about marriage would be considered as a liberal position in regard to beliefs about marriage, and being approving of premarital sex would also be considered a liberal position on sexual values. Therefore, the negative relationship that was found between sexual values and traditional beliefs makes sense because if one is more liberal in sexual values it would be expected for that individual also to exhibit less conservative/traditional beliefs toward marriage.

Father involvement had a significant positive relationship with traditional beliefs. Respondents whose fathers were involved in their lives during childhood, they had more

traditional beliefs toward marriage. And conversely, for participants whose fathers were not involved in their lives during childhood, they had less traditional beliefs toward marriage. Stier and Tienda (1997) found that father presence during childhood served as a buffer to having a child outside of wedlock. In addition Stier and Tienda (1997) found that the teenaged women in their sample were more likely to have been raised in a single-parent home and have a child outside of wedlock. The present study found that a lower age at first sex/pregnancy was related to having more traditional beliefs toward marriage, which negates the possible conclusions that would be drawn the findings from Stier and Tienda's (1997) study—father presence decreases the likelihood of an earlier age of childbirth; therefore, participants with involved fathers would be more traditional in their beliefs toward marriage. The inference of this conclusion is based on the strength a negative relationship between father involvement and age at first sex/pregnancy. However, this relationship was not tested in this study, and it is unknown as to what degree father involvement influences age at first sex/pregnancy.

A historical perspective on the occurrence of father involvement being related to more traditional beliefs would include the consideration of how many women strongly endorsed the marriage campaign by the Freedman's bureau after emancipation in order to gain merit in the eyes of mainstream—European-Americans (Hill, 2006). These women were committed to following societal norms—having a father involved in a child's life via marriage—therefore, I suggest that they taught these norms to their children, which may have included more traditional beliefs toward marriage. Additionally, this trend may have been passed on throughout the generations. Therefore, it would be expected that a

person who had an involved father would also have more traditional beliefs toward marriage.

Cohabitation was shown to have a significant positive relationship with traditional beliefs indicating that cohabiters had more traditional beliefs toward marriage, and non-cohabiters had less traditional beliefs toward marriage. Smock and Manning's (1995) finding that cohabitation is often a precursor to marriage helps to give understanding to the positive relationship between cohabitation and traditional beliefs toward marriage. There is the potential that cohabitation serves as a new norm into a traditional transition in life—marriage—which serves as the most traditional institution to raise a family. On the other hand, researchers have also found that married African-Americans are more likely to be disapproving of cohabitation than their unmarried counterparts (Clarkwest, 1996). Therefore, cohabitation may have a positive relationship with traditional beliefs toward marriage, but it also appears—by the conclusions of previous research findings—that cohabitation is negatively related to being married. This is an interesting finding, and more investigation should be conducted to see how cohabitation affects beliefs about marriage and the probability that one will marry in the future.

A significant negative relationship was found between parents' marital status and traditional beliefs. Respondents whose parents were married also had less traditional beliefs toward marriage. For respondents whose parents were not married, they had more traditional beliefs toward marriage. Considering the research that the effect of having a child after 1 year of marriage leads to less traditional gender role behaviors of the parents (Cowan & Cowan, 1989), respondents whose parents were married might have less

traditional beliefs toward marriage because of the less traditional gender roles that were exhibited by their parents. In addition, African-Americans who marry tend to have more economic resources. And higher levels of economic resources (household income) were shown to be negatively related traditional beliefs toward marriage in this present study. This finding is consistent with what Allen and Olson (2001) found in regard to higher economic resources being related to more egalitarian beliefs.

The lack of resources variable, household income, had a negative relationship with traditional beliefs. Respondents with higher household incomes had less traditional views toward marriage, and vice versa. Having more financial resources has also been found to be linked to egalitarian beliefs toward marriage for African American (Allen & Olson, 2001). This finding is consistent with what was observed in the African-American typology study that was conducted by Allen and Olson (2001). Household income has been proven to be a very important predictor for entering marriage for African-Americans (Clarkwest, 1996; Lichter, LeClere & McLaughlin, 1991; Stier & Tienda, 1997). Stier and Tienda (1997) found that household income was more significant in determining whether respondents married prior to the birth of their first child than more traditional demographics—minority status, education, age, and family background variables. In the case of this study, it appears to also be a significant predictor for traditional beliefs toward marriage.

Educational attainment was not a significant predictor of traditional beliefs toward marriage. In regard to resources, it could possibly be that household income is more influential in predicting traditional beliefs than educational attainment, which this study

showed. And household income could potentially serve as a proxy for educational attainment. This connection comes from the assumption that educational attainment is positively related to one's household income.

Geographic mobility also did not predict traditional beliefs toward marriage. It could possibly be that the item used to measure this construct was not appropriate for geographic mobility because the amount of mobility measured was limited to measuring mobility in and out of one's neighborhood. A measure for mobility in and out of one's city, state, and/or country could have provided a better measure for this construct.

In addition, public aid was not found to be a significant predictor of traditional beliefs toward marriage. This finding is consistent with what McLaughlin and Lichter(1997) found in their study when they controlled for the effects of public assistance on marriage rates in the African-American community; they found that much of the variance remained unexplained. Therefore, from this finding, I would posit that the non-significant relationship that was observed between public assistance and traditional beliefs toward marriage is not unusual.

Previous research studies have shown that gender is a significant predictor for desire to marry (Manning & Smock, 1995; South, 1993), some studies have found African-American females desire marriage more than African-American males (South, 1993), while other studies show that African-American males have a more positive view of marriage in comparison to African-American females (Sassler & Schoen, 1999). Model 4 was used to address the discrepancy in findings for African-American males and

females in regard to their desire to marry. However, this study indicated that gender is not a significant predictor for hope/desire to marry. This finding contradicts what South (1993) found in regard to African-American males having less hope for marriage than African-American women because they perceived negative outcomes on their sex life and peer relationships. The non-significant relationship that was found between gender and hope/desire to marry for this study is noteworthy, for it indicates that there is no difference in African-American males and females desire for marriage.

When considering the collective effects of the variables, an individual with higher levels for most of the significant relational history predictor variables—older age for sex/pregnancy, highly liberal sexual values, and parents who are still married would have less traditional beliefs toward marriage. What is interesting is that respondents with high values on the relational history variables—father involvement and cohabitation—were more likely to report more traditional values. And conversely, an individual with low values on the relational history variables—an early age for sex/pregnancy, more conservative sexual values, and separated parents—had more traditional beliefs toward marriage than individuals who scored highly on these measures. Individuals who did not cohabit or have a residential father during childhood were more likely to report less traditional views toward marriage. In regard to an individual who had a high score for lack of resources—household income—meaning that they had a high household income, also had less traditional beliefs toward marriage.

In regard to lack of resources and relational history serving as a proxy for the latent effects of slavery, it was conceptualized that the latent effects of slavery would be

related to respondents having poorer relational history and fewer economic resources. In this study, having a child at a young age, having parents who were not married, and not believing in premarital sex were associated with having more traditional beliefs toward marriage. It is somewhat paradoxical that an individual who has a child at a younger age would be less approving of premarital sex. But previous research has shown that individuals who are less approving of premarital sex are less likely to have protection against pregnancy when sexual encounters surface—this is especially true for females who fear the perception of appearing loose if they carry contraceptives (Crockett, Raffaelli, & Moilanen, 2003); therefore, increasing the likelihood that they will get pregnant if a sexual situation occurs.

In conclusion, more knowledge was gained in regard to the aspects that affect traditional beliefs toward marriage. However, the main question for this study—does a relationship between traditional beliefs toward marriage and hope/desire exist?—has been answered, but the answer was surprising. We do know that in conjunction with relational factors and resource factors, traditional beliefs explain none of the variance in whether an African-American desires to marry, which is potentially due to the Eurocentric nature traditional gender roles. Additionally, the latent effects of slavery reverberate throughout time in relational and economic consequences for African-Americans. What is fortunate is that a little more is known about the phenomenon of why many African-Americans are not marrying. And this study helped to serve as the inception for new research questions and the quest for more knowledge in this area.

Limitations

The sample from this study consisted of African-Americans who live in poverty-stricken census tracts in Chicago. Given this occurrence, this sample is not representative of all African-Americans in the United States. Therefore, the findings from this study may not be generalizable to African-Americans who do not live in an urban poverty-stricken area.

Strengths

One notable strength from this study was the large sample size ($N = 738$) of African-American singles. The exploration of how beliefs about marriage affect the marital behavior of African-Americans provides more understanding of why many African-Americans are opting out of marriage on a voluntary basis. Having an emphasis on relational and resource related variables addressed both involuntary and voluntary aspects of the retreat from marriage in the African-American community. Additionally, this study serves as a trailblazer in regard to exploring the depths of the effects of slavery on current day relationships in the African-American community.

Future Research

Considering how traditional beliefs toward marriage along with relational history did not hope/desire to marry, it is imperative that future studies examine other predictors that may influence hope/desire to marry in the African-American community. More importantly, measures should look at beliefs that are applicable to the African-American community; hence, the use of Afro-centric measures instead of Eurocentric measures that

have been used with predominantly European-American samples. In regard to beliefs about marriage, it would be noteworthy for researchers to investigate the belief that one should be economically stable before entering marriage. Sassler and Schoen (1999) found that both African-American males and females viewed economic stability as an important factor for the consideration of marriage. Therefore, it would prove to be interesting to see how one's belief about economic stability would influence his/her desire to marry.

It appears that many African-Americans may be apprehensive about entering marriage due to the lack of positive marriage roles models. As previously mentioned, Hatchett (1991) found that 40% of the African-Americans in his study indicated that they were uncertain if they desired marriage because they felt they had seen very few examples of good marriages. Future studies should observe how parents' marital quality affects African-Americans' desire to marry. Additionally, there is a valid need for studies to examine the influence of the presence of positive marital relationships/models on African-Americans' desire to marry.

Examining the effects of traditional beliefs about marriage on marital satisfaction and stability would be helpful in expanding the findings from this study. This extension would prove to be very essential for clinical outcomes for African-American couples. Some studies have found that traditional beliefs toward marriage are preferred by some African-Americans (Cazenave, 1983). However, most of the literature finds that African-American marriages tend to be more egalitarian in comparison to other ethnic groups, this is especially true for middle class African Americans (Boyd-Franklin, 2006; Kane,

2000)—and egalitarian marriages tend to have higher levels of satisfaction (Allen & Olson, 2001; Kaufman, 2000). Considering this factor, it appears that individuals with higher values for the relational history variables—age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, and parents’ marital status—and lack of resources variables may be in a better position relationally to experience higher levels of satisfaction in marriage. Having a high resources—household resources has been supported by the literature as being an influential factor for marital satisfaction (Allen & Olson, 2001; Clarkwest, 2006). For example, Allen and Olson (2001) found that the couples with professional occupations were more likely to report higher levels of marital satisfaction. Considering how financial security is an important factor for African-Americans in considering marriage (Sassler & Schoen, 1999), it would be important for future research to observe how resource variables relate to African-Americans’ desire to marry.

Studies that examine the latent effects of slavery on the relational functioning of African-Americans are practically nonexistent. The whole concept of looking at the effects of slavery on the current relational functioning of African-Americans is ambitious and would necessitate the use of creative research strategies to determine the starting point of this endeavor. Upon further examination of the construct of slavery and its latent influences, it would be important to assess the route by which the effects of slavery affect the relational wellbeing of African-Americans. I suggest that the effects of slavery are directly manifested in the current economic functioning of African-Americans—essentially in the lack of financial resources—which influence the relational functioning of African-Americans. For example, Allen and Olson (2001) also found in their study of

marital typology for African-Americans that socioeconomic and educational factors—resource based variables—heavily influenced the type of marriage that was observed for the participants. Furthermore, African-Americans with lower levels of financial and educational resources were more likely to experience relational difficulties (Allen & Olson, 2001).

Taken all together, the first step of action for understanding the effects of slavery on the relational wellbeing of African-Americans would involve pilot studies. These studies would aid in the creation of measures that would examine the effects of slavery. Discrimination would be an important construct to include when measuring the latent effects of slavery. Additionally, resource-based constructs should also be included. Exploration of the familial and marital norms that were created during slavery that have been transferred throughout generations should also be examined. Ultimately, more qualitative studies must be conducted in order to reveal how African-Americans believe the effects of slavery have influenced familial and marital functioning in the African-American community. The importance of understanding this phenomenon has already proven itself to be paramount by the current consequences that stem from its occurrence. Now it is time for researchers to answer the call for positive change in the lives of African-Americans, and the most powerful force to start this change will be empirical knowledge.

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APPENDIX A

Measures for Outcome and Primary Predictor

1. Do you expect to get married to anyone in the future?

Yes..... 1

No 0

DON'T KNOW ..8

2. I will read you a few statements and I would like you to tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. It is much better for everyone if the man earns the main living and the woman takes care of the home and family. (REPEAT RESPONSE CATEGORIES IF NECESSARY)

Strongly agree.....4

Agree3

Disagree2

Strongly disagree1

DK8

APPENDIX B

Measures for Relational Variables

3. How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse? (RECORD AGE)
Do you remember what month of the year it was?

IF DK MONTH CODE SEASON

WINTER...13

SPRING....14

SUMMER...15

FALL16

DK98

HAVEN'T HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE YET....00

REFUSED97

4. How old were you the very first time you were pregnant, even if YOU didn't carry that pregnancy to full term? If you can, please tell me about what month of the year you got pregnant. RECORD AGE AND MONTH

BELOW

IF DK MONTH CODE SEASON 7-8/

MONTH

WINTER...13 SUMMER..15

SPRING...14 FALL16

5. In general, would you say you approve, or disapprove of a 16 year old female having sex with someone she is not married to? Approve, Disapprove, NEITHER APPROVE NOR DISAPPROVE

6. In general, would you say you approve, or disapprove of a 16 year old male having sex with someone he is not married to?

Approve, Disapprove, NEITHER APPROVE NOR DISAPPROVE

48. Is your father the man who mostly lived with and raised you?

Yes1

No0

46. Did you live continuously with your father from birth until you were 21 years old?

Yes.....1

No.....0

14. Did you ever live together (WITH PARTNER) outside of marriage?

Yes1

No0

APPENDIX C

Measures for Resource Variables

25. Did you ever attend a college or university?

Yes1

No0

28. What is the highest degree you have ever received?

High school diploma or GED.....1

Two-year college, associate degree02

4 or 5 year college degree or bachelor's degree.....03

Master's degree04

PhD, MD, or other advanced professional degree.....05

1. Now I'd like to ask you about any public assistance that you or your family may have received through government grants. As far as you know, during the time you were growing up until you were about 14 years old -- did your family ever receive public aid?

Yes1

No0

2. The time they were receiving public aid – would you say almost all of the time, most of the time, about half of the time, some of the time, or almost none of the time?

Almost all of the time..... 5

Most of the time 4

About half of the time.... 3

Some of the time 2

Almost none of the time 1

10. Think about all the different types of income we've talked about. Last year, into what category did the total income fall for everyone?

(CIRCLE ONE ONLY)

SHOW

CARD

B

living in this household? Just tell me the letter.

a. Less than \$2 ,5001

b. \$2,500 - \$5,000.....2

c. \$5,001 - \$7,500.....3

d. \$7,501 - \$10,0004

e. \$10,001 - \$15,0005

f. \$15,001 - \$20,0006

g. \$20,001 - \$25,0007

h. \$25,001 - \$30,0008

i. \$30,001 - \$35,000	9
j. \$35,001 - \$40,000	10
k. \$40,001 - \$45,000	11
l. More than \$45,000	12
REFUSED	97

1. How often do you travel outside your neighborhood for work, movies, classes, shopping, or for any other reason? Would you say . . . (READ LIST)

Every day	6
Several times a week	5
Once a week	4
Once every two weeks	3
Once a month	2
Less than once a month ..	1

APPENDIX D

Path Diagram for Model 4

Figure 4: Path model of standardized parameter estimates of age at first sex/pregnancy, sexual values, father involvement, cohabitation, parents' marital status, education, public aid, household income, geographic mobility, traditional beliefs, and hope/desire to marry (Model 4). Gender was a moderating variable.

