

# Social Influences and Student Behavior: Why Students Behave the Way They Do on Campus

Herman Williams IV & Jomarcus Frank  
Department of Sociology & Child Studies, Bowie State University



## HYPOTHESES

Students reported higher social ability are less likely to conform.



## RESULTS

- ❖ Students reported higher social ability are less likely to conform.
  - Totsocial x totconform  $r(40) = .200, p = .217$  Not significant

*However...*

- ❖ Totconform x social 1 (first question of the social scale = "I usually get along well with other students.")
  - Totconform x social 1  $r(44) = .729, p < .001$
  - Students who get along well with others are more likely to conform with university codes of behavior.



## PARTICIPANTS

❖ N = 49 students

❖ Gender

- ❖ 67.3% Female (n = 33)
- ❖ 30.6% Male (n = 15)

❖ Race

- ❖ Black/African American: 87.8% (n = 43)
- ❖ Latino/Hispanic: 4.1% (n = 2)
- ❖ Asian: 2.0% (n = 1)
- ❖ White/European: 2.0% (n = 1)

❖ Age

- ❖ Mean = 25.60
- ❖ Range = 20–66



## MEASURES

Behavioral Conformity (Composite Score)  
Range: 6–20  
Measures overall tendency to follow behavioral guidelines (4 items)  
M = 2.89

Social Skills (Competence)  
Range 10–24  
Measures overall perception of likability by peers (5 items)  
M = 3.66



## DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest the following:

- ❖ Rule enforcement is the strongest influence on student behavior, as participants were more likely to follow guidelines when they perceived themselves as well liked by their peers.
- ❖ Following rules appears to be related to social acceptance.
- ❖ Overall these findings highlight that clear consequences and enforcement are more reliable predictors of student behavior than peer influence again.

