Renowned economist and Duke University Professor Dr. William “Sandy” Darity Jr. co-authored a study that shows negative racial stereotypes have little to no impact on the performance of Black students who attend historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Published in the Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, the study relied on data from lab experiments at a Texas-based HBCU that looked specifically at how negative stereotypes — including the belief that Black people are less intelligent than their white counterparts — affected students’ performance.

During their research, Darity, the study’s lead author Mackenzie Alston and other researchers asked Black students 18 questions from the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE). Prior to answering the questions, the students were told the tests were to measure their intelligence and asked about their race or ethnicity.

They found that while prior studies have shown these factors have an impact at predominately white institutions (PWI), reinforcing the same stereotypes at HBCUs didn’t.

“The results of this study, although based solely on experimental findings at a single Historically Black College and University (HBCU), lead us to ask whether the HBCU experience insulates Black students from susceptibility to stereotype threat,” said Darity, who specializes in public policy and economics and is the founding director of the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity.

The study was also innovative in its focus on an HBCU over a PWI as most prior studies were done at PWIs.

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“Our study, in contrast, relies upon students from a historically Black university,” said Alston, an assistant professor of economics at Florida State University. “These students specifically chose to go to a school with a large Black student population, and HBCUs, generally, provide a different learning environment than predominantly white institutions. We thought that either of these factors could affect how Black students respond to subtle reminders of the negative stereotypes about Black people’s intelligence.”

Thus far, findings have supported their theory. However, due to the limitations of the data, more studies are needed.

“I would love to see future research on how specific features of HBCUs like Black instructors, inclusive curriculum, and strong community help defuse the effects of stereotype threat — and if those features can be replicated at PWIs to make a difference there,” Alston said.

New research that I will add to a number of recent studies showing benefits of attending an HBCU. HBCUs would be a good fit for many students who are mismatched right now. 1/2

https://t.co/1MTkePQ8f3
Top Reparations Scholar And Economist Dr. Darity: Black Students May Be Less Damaged By Stereotypes At HCBUs :: Reader View

— Walter M. Kimbrough (@HipHopPrez) January 29, 2022