



*Reflections on Equitable Self-regulated Learning
Research*

Editors
Anna Brady
Lauren Cabrera

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Abraham Flanigan & Divya Varier

Georgia Southern University & George Mason University



Abraham Flanigan



Divya Varier

Thank you so much to Anna and Lauren, our wonderful newsletter co-editors, for putting together such an insightful Fall edition of our SSRL SIG newsletter!

Our SIG has turned its attention this Fall towards reflecting on how well existing SSRL theory and research can and cannot be used to understand the learning experiences of students from traditionally marginalized and minoritized communities. On Friday, November 3rd, we are hosting our ***Applying Self-Regulated Learning Theory and Research to Communities of Color: Current Shortcomings and How to Address*** panel discussion on Zoom. As you read through the pages of this newsletter, you will be treated to a sampling of the kinds of issues, ideas, and remedies that will be unpacked during that panel discussion. We thank Anna and Lauren for using this edition of the SIG newsletter as another avenue to help stimulate this important conversation.

We would also like to recognize the hard work being done by Michelle Taub and Kendall Hartley—our senior and junior program chairs—to process submissions and build our programming for AERA 2024! We know they have put a lot of time and energy into this process and appreciate everything that they do for our SIG!

Finally, as we all move closer and closer to the end of 2023, we hope that everyone has had a fulfilling and productive year, but also hope that everyone has been able to offset their professional responsibilities and stressors with a healthy amount of leisure and self-care.

Wishing everyone the best! – Abe and Divya

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Anna Brady & Lauren Cabrera

Georgia Southern University & Michigan State University



Anna Brady



Lauren Cabrera

Welcome to our Fall 2023 edition of the Studying and Self-regulated Learning SIG Newsletter. This issue focuses on the ways we can challenge prior work focused on self-regulated learning to push our field forward in supporting communities of color.

There are a few themes that emerge from these contributions.

- The importance of evaluating existing bodies of self-regulated learning research using a critical lens to interrogate the ways the theory may harm communities of color (Varier; Vassallo).
- The pitfalls of the emphasis on “self” in self-regulated learning (Nguyen, Vassallo).
- The pressing need to integrate existing research and perspectives that examines how educational structures, in general, harm communities of color (e.g., critical theories, culturally relevant teaching, culturally responsive teaching) into frameworks of self-regulated learning (Nguyen; Varier).
- The importance of using ideas from frameworks that emphasize context (e.g., complex dynamic systems approach, socio-contextual theories) to accurately capture students’ experiences (Eisman, Nguyen).
- When designing interventions or translating this work to practice, the importance of recognizing students’ context (Eisman).

A huge thank you to our contributors for their insightful thoughts! We are always interested in your feedback on this issue and upcoming issues of the newsletter. Please feel free to send us an email if you have any suggestions for future topics.

THE FUTURE OF SSRL RESEARCH FOR EQUITABLE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT



Divya Varier

Assistant Professor, George Mason University

My work in Studying and Self-Regulated Learning (SSRL) is centered on assessment practices that support and improve student learning. I examine teachers' and student experiences related to assessment. To this end, one of my recent projects focused on college students' self-efficacy for engaging in self-assessment of their writing. With a research team, we developed a scale from existing rubrics to examine self-efficacy for self-assessment as a construct (Varier et al., 2021) and are currently examining patterns of responses by gender and native speaker status. Another project focused on teachers has examined their use of various assessment strategies including assessment *for* and *as* learning that are closely connected to fostering student self-regulation. Prior to this work, I have contributed to projects related to K-12 students' writing self-efficacy and self-regulatory strategies in writing.

Because SRL theory and research are well established, I have been able to apply these theories deductively to make sense of student and teacher experiences in assessment. More generally, they have been immensely helpful in connecting SRL to formative assessment practices that are beneficial to students. As assessment practices become more integrated with instruction (Shepard, 2000; Brookhart, 2013), there is great potential to apply SRL theory and research to developing effective and equitable assessment. Having said that, a major concern is whether and to what extent the knowledge base is inclusive of diverse cultural values and practices (Zusho & Kumar, 2018). Applying established SRL theory and research

without a critical lens might perpetuate meritocratic, White, middle-class values of teaching, learning, and schooling.

In terms of how future SRL research can serve communities of color, first, I think it is important to engage with the wealth of knowledge and research about how structures and systems actively undermine the educational needs and experiences of students and families of color. Researchers should also become familiar with and apply the vast knowledge produced by critical scholars. This manifests in citing the work of critical scholars, collaborating and consulting with experts in educational equity to inform SSRL research agendas (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014). We must recognize the limitations of SSRL research and make efforts to dismantle unexamined theories and practices to rebuild the knowledge base to reflect the diversity of human learning experiences. In order to do that, more inductive work using diverse methodological approaches are needed. Finally, I wonder if the field is ready to think about "radical collaboration" in SSRL research where students, teachers, and families of color are no longer objects or subjects of study but co-designers in understanding and addressing SSRL research.

Brookhart, S. (2012). Classroom assessment in the context of motivation theory and research. In J.H. McMillan (Ed.) *SAGE Handbook of Research on Classroom Assessment*: 35-54.

DeCuir-Gunby, J. T., & Schutz, P. A. (2014). Researching race within educational psychology contexts. *Educational Psychologist*, 49(4), 244-260.

Shepard, L. A. (2000). The role of assessment in a learning culture. *Educational Researcher*, 29(7), 4-14.

Zusho, A., & Kumar, R. (2018). Introduction to the special issue: Critical reflections and future directions in the study of race, ethnicity, and motivation. *Educational Psychologist*, 53(2), 61-63.

THE COMPLEXITY OF SELF-REGULATION



Joseph I. Eisman

Doctoral Candidate and Adjunct Faculty, Temple University College of Education and Human Development

I am a White cis-gender male. My family reared me in a politically liberal upper middle-class household in ethno-racially diverse suburban metro Detroit, Michigan as a practicing Conservative Jew. These early life experiences imparted beliefs, values, and virtues that elevated Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as a positive attribute, which I should embody, enact, and exude in all aspects of my life. Moreover, my parents own and operate a chiropractic clinic in the city of Detroit, where I learned about social and racial inequities at a young age. Those experiences and a shift in the cultural zeitgeist – raising the country’s consciousness to social, political, racial, and religious inequity, antagonism, and apathy – became motivating factors for identifying and considering how race and ethnicity inform and are informed by the phenomena I study. I often conduct this research using a complex dynamic systems approach.

My research interests center on the relationship between emotions/empathy and motivation, identity, and creativity in educational settings. I am inspired to conduct this research following my teaching experiences, where I noticed how my students’ emotions, identities, motivations, and self-regulation overlap to constitute the core of their learning and development. I use a complex dynamic systems perspective to reconceptualize self-regulation and describe teacher self-regulation in a classroom context. This approach foregrounds the situated, dynamic interactions of the teacher’s self-regulated actions, emotions, motivations, and student actions. Specifically, we found that the teacher’s inferred appraisals, goals, self-perceptions, and consequent self-regulated actions shifted within several classroom activities (e.g., classroom management, discussion facilitation), in

response to contextual factors, and through the dynamic social interaction with the students. These results highlight the cultural, complex, dynamic, situated, and relational nature of the cognitive, motivational, and emotional processes that undergird a teacher’s self-regulation.

What are existing strengths in SRL theory related to understanding the needs of students from communities of color and their unique manifestation of SRL processes?

Self-regulation learning theories provide profound insights into a person’s motivation, actions, decisions, goals, etc. Recent conceptualizations of self-regulated learning have pushed the field to consider important factors such as context, social dynamics, and the identities of our participants. These new ways of thinking have benefitted researchers who aim to support students and communities of Color by highlighting personal, temporal, and social factors that were previously masked. By attending to these salient features of the classroom setting, we can support marginalized populations, who are underrepresented in research. Moreover, these new approaches lend themselves toward integration with other theories – including critical and complex dynamic systems theories that can be sensitive to issues of race and racism. Specifically, self-regulated learning theories provide a useful framework and lexicon to describe phenomena, while other theories serve as a template in which to situate the socio-historical-cultural context. For example, aligning the integrated Self-Regulated Learning (Ben-Eliyahu & Bernacki, 2015; Ben-Eliyahu & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2015) with the Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (Kaplan & Garner, 2017). Integration of these frameworks provides a sophisticated, relational, and hierarchical view of self-regulated learning that will benefit our research, participants, and communities.

What are shortcomings in SRL theory related to understanding the needs and SRL processes of students from communities of color?

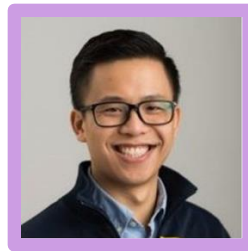
Self-regulated learning theory has made strides in providing clear recommendations for administrators, educators, and policymakers interested in improving student motivation and achievement. However, like many education

theories, self-regulated learning methods are limited in their ability to fully capture the phenomenon of interest. Though, it is important to acknowledge that some contemporary theories do indeed include context (cf. Bronfenbrennian stylized perspectives). This is most striking when considering that issues of race, domain, society, and other social and contextual issues may be missing from our analyses. In response, I believe that self-regulated learning theory combines current methods with complex dynamic systems approaches. Embedding self-regulated learning theories in complex methods and approaches will allow us to examine how social and contextual dynamics influence self-regulated processes. From that work, I believe we can respond to growing societal inequities and develop recommendations that improve learning for students, especially those from marginalized populations.

How can we translate SRL research to support students from communities of color in the classroom?

Applied researchers should work toward translating and communicating their studies for the benefit of practitioners and their students. We have seen that imprecise communication of a construct can contribute to confusion between researchers and practitioners about the best self-regulated learning strategies for classroom instruction. For example, misapplication or misunderstanding of teacher self-regulated empathic action (e.g., becoming flexible) can lower teachers' expectations and feedback (Nicolai et al., 2023; Warren, 2018) for students, particularly students of Color, which can hinder their achievement. We must recognize the limitations of promoting theories to practitioners without careful consideration of their context and clear strategies for implementation. Taking a note from Newman's (2020) edited collection of science communication, I believe telling stories is a useful strategy. Storytelling reduces jargon and engages people through social interactions. Thus, instead of showing graphs and explaining the subtlety of our research and interventions, we should just tell stories to exemplify the utility of our work.

SELF(-IN-CONTEXT)-REGULATED LEARNING



Huy Nguyen

PhD Student, The Ohio State University

My research interests include how to promote SRL in learners, particularly college students in transition (e.g., first-year, transfer students, etc.) through instructional interventions and methods. I am also interested in the sociocultural determinants of motivation and SRL, particularly how and the extent to which race and racism can influence motivation for students of color and other marginalized communities. Another line of research I'm working on involves examining motivation and achievement in college STEM contexts.

What are shortcomings in SRL theory related to understanding the needs and SRL processes of students from communities of color?

When we talk about students and communities of color, it is important to unpack what that really means beyond a group label. These are learners and communities who have been historically, and in many ways continue to be, marginalized and minoritized within our education system (in the US) in multiple ways; our current theories and models do not adequately acknowledge nor explain how marginalization and minoritization at a structural level may affect motivational and SRL processes (Usher, 2018). Historically, SRL theory tends to focus on the individual learner in terms of how they *self*-regulate their learning and how to promote *self*-regulation. Co-regulation and socially shared regulation of learning shifted the focus to social interactions and groups, but they do not always account for the unique sociocultural contexts that learners are situated within and how those contexts shape the development and manifestation of SRL.

How can future SRL research be designed to generate findings that better serve communities of color?

One direction future SRL research can go in is to examine SRL processes from social-contextual and or socio-ecological perspectives. Learners are situated within interconnected contexts and systems (micro, meso, exo, macro, and chrono) of individuals, communities, institutions, and socioeconomic and sociopolitical factors that directly or indirectly influence SRL at the individual task level. A better understanding of how these influencing contextual factors interact in distinct ways across different communities to facilitate or hinder students' development of SRL to different extents. This is an opportunity to work more closely with communities and groups through community engaged and action research. Another opportunity in terms of bridging research and practice lies in the broader push to make education more culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of diverse learners. There are many ways to promote learners' SRL based on decades of theory and research, but the extent to which such practices culturally sensitive and responsive will require careful assessment and perhaps eventual revision so that they are more inclusive of learners' cultural fluencies and capital.

What other branches of cognitive and motivational research tie into SRL processes and how can multiple branches collaborate to advance this line of critical scholarship?

Fortunately, we have other educational psychologists who are already doing cross- or interdisciplinary work to serve as examples. There is a small but slowly growing body of work examining race-focused and race-reimagined constructs in our field (Decuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014). Take social identity threat, a race-focused concept from social psychology as an example; the work in that area has consistently found that minoritized individuals experience psychological threat from both other individuals and environments, which places additional psychological and cognitive burdens on those experiencing threat. It would then make sense that the consequences of psychological threat can also have negative effects on the cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational processes central to SRL. We can take a similar approach to examining the effects of chronic race-related

stress or racial microaggressions on SRL processes or consider these processes in the context of intersecting identities (e.g., race, gender, social class, etc.) and across different domains (e.g., STEM, higher education, etc.). Such research will not only help us better understand SRL among diverse learners, but is also an opportunity to advocate for institutional and systemic change in line with critical theories.

MOVING BEYOND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY



Stephen Vassallo

Associate Professor, American University

Psychology is not neutral or value-free. To support anti-racism in schools, educational psychology needs to be critically interrogated, which means contextualizing truth claims within historical, political, philosophical, and ideological narratives. In my study of self-regulated learning (SRL), I have argued that certain ways of thinking about this concept: (1) is informed by class-based values; (2) aligns with a neoliberal vision of selfhood; (3) can be a mechanism to reproduce inequality; (4) is underpinned by a Western view of being; and (5) may serve as a mechanism of conformity to institutional structures. Currently, I am exploring ways that SRL (mis)aligns with anti-racism. My research is not about whether certain groups of students are self-regulated. Rather, the focus is on the consequences of using the lens of SRL to both make sense of students and inform pedagogical decision-making.

A major shortcoming of current research, especially for communities of color, is the emphasis on individual responsibility, which is foundational to neoliberal ideology. Marginalized and disenfranchised groups receive the message that the right qualities and quantities of self-regulation are the instruments

for mitigating educational and economic disparities. This message over responsabilizes persons by attributing the social reproduction of inequality to processes and mechanisms that are ostensibly within their control. The danger is that problematic educational structures are preserved and unquestioned while students through self-regulation are taught to adapt and function within those structures.

To minimize dangers for communities of color, there must be an openness to challenge SRL as an internal category of persons that is responsible for empowering persons to challenge unjust educational structures. There is a place for SRL to be practiced but students' "success" or "failure" should not be attributed to their SRL without the simultaneous interrogation and transformation of the spaces in which they participate. There must also be an openness to transform the language and conceptualization of SRL in order to validate views of being that may not align with the self of SRL. The kind of self that informs conceptions of SRL aligns with middle-class values for personhood. This line of critical examination can be extended by considering intersections of race and class as it pertains to the (mis)alignments between cultural conceptions of being and the self of SRL.

APPLYING SELF-REGULATED LEARNING THEORY AND RESEARCH TO COMMUNITIES OF COLOR: CURRENT SHORTCOMINGS AND HOW TO ADDRESS

Introducing our Panelists

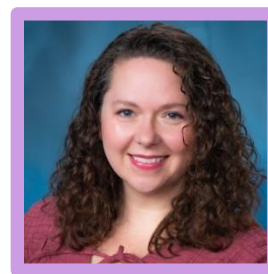
The SSRL SIG Executive Board is proud to present a Panel Discussion on November 3rd, 2023 at 2:30-4:00 Eastern. The board has brought together a panel of scholars to provide insights on this important and timely topic. Below are brief introductions of each of our esteemed panelists.



Yeo-eun Kim is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Learning Systems at Florida State University. Before joining FSU, she worked as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Washington University in St. Louis. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology along with an interdisciplinary specialization in Quantitative Research Methods from The Ohio State University. Her research focuses on understanding and improving students' motivation and self-regulated learning in diverse personal and social settings. Many of her projects highlight various types of motivational challenges that students experience and self-regulatory processes that students can engage in to overcome them. She is particularly interested in supporting all students to pursue and achieve multiple goals including academic, social, and well-being goals.

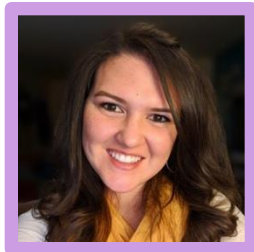


Akane Zusho is a Professor in the Graduate School of Education at Fordham University. Her award-winning research focuses on empowering students and teachers to transform the learning environment from one where only *some* students feel competent, think, and learn to one where *all* students feel competent, think, and build deep and flexible understandings. To that end, she has written extensively on the intersection of culture, achievement motivation and self-regulated learning (SRL), and has conducted numerous studies exploring the relation of cultural, cognitive, and motivational processes to learning. With Rhonda Bondie, she is a co-author of the textbook, *Differentiated Instruction made Practical*.



Carey E. Andrzejewski is Emily R. and Gerald S. Leischuck Endowed Professor of Social Foundations of Education and Educational Research in the College of Education and Education Consultant in the Office of Research Compliance at Auburn University. She joined the Auburn faculty in 2008 following the completion of her PhD in Teacher Education Policy and Leadership at The Ohio State University. As a critical scholar and former high school teacher, she explores and facilitates the work of educators and researchers toward more socially just and ethical professional practice. Recent collaborative research projects have focused on school discipline as an anti-Black project, educational psychology and its entanglements with racism, and participatory research

approaches in alternative school settings. You can find her work in *Educational Psychologist*, *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *Whiteness and Education*, and *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*.



Cristina Zepeda is an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Human Development at Vanderbilt University, where she directs the [Advancing Learning Lab \(ALL\)](#). In her research, Dr. Zepeda applies theories of cognition and motivation to educational practice and investigates how students regulate and adapt their learning processes. In particular, she examines how metacognition, motivation, and other instructional techniques can inform our understanding of learning and transfer with the goal of making education more equitable. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 2018, where she worked in the Learning Research and Development Center. Afterwards she completed her postdoctoral training in Education and Psychological & Brain Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis.



Aloysius Anyichie is an Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology and Students Services at Brandon University. During his PhD program at the University of British Columbia (UBC), Vancouver, Aloy developed a *Culturally Responsive Self-Regulated Learning Framework* that guides educators in designing instructional practices to support culturally diverse learners. His research “*Supporting all Learners’*

Engagement in a Multicultural Classroom Using a Culturally Responsive Self-Regulated Learning Framework” won the 2019 award for the best dissertation in Educational Psychology in Canada. His interest around social justice and equity led to the establishment of the Cultural Diversity Support Office in UBC.

Dr. Anyichie’s research focuses around two major goals: (1) supporting culturally diverse students’ regulation of learning, engagement and motivation, and (b) collaborating with educators to design learning environments that integrate culturally responsive teaching and Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) pedagogical practices to support SRL, engagement and motivation for all learners.



Alana Kennedy is an Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology in the College of Education at Northern Arizona University. Her research and expertise focus on designing effective learning experiences in formal and informal learning environments as well as examining self-regulated learning strategies, particularly those used by students of color. Her most recent work centers around academic help-seeking and how culture and identity impact how and when help-seeking is enacted. Dr. Kennedy earned her Ph.D. in Urban Education Policy with an emphasis on Educational Psychology and M.Ed. in Learning Design and Technology from the University of Southern California.



Revathy Kumar is a professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Toledo. She earned a Ph.D. in Education and Psychology from the Combined Program in Education and Psychology, University of Michigan and was an Assistant Research Scientist at the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan. She is a Fulbright Specialist Scholar, and Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA). Over the past 25 years, her research and teaching focus on issues of diversity, equity, culturally responsive teaching, and exploring how schools, administrators, and teachers can promote an environment in which all students flourish. In light of the rising tide of racism and anti-immigrant sentiments, she recently co-edited special issues, for *Educational Psychologist and Learning and Instruction*, respectively, on race, motivation and teacher expectations. Her work is published in *American Educational Research Journal*, *Educational Psychologist*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Journal of Teacher Education*, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *Learning and Instruction* and *Educational Studies*.

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Reflections on Self-regulated Learning Research