

RACIAL SOCIALIZATION, RACIAL IDENTITY, AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE
CONTEXT OF PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION: UNDERSTANDING THE
DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH

by
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ABSTRACT

Taniesha A. Woods: Racial Socialization, Racial Identity, and Achievement in the Context of Perceived Discrimination: Understanding the Development of African American Middle School Youth
(Under the direction of Beth Kurtz-Costes)

Relationships among racial socialization, racial identity, perceived discrimination, and achievement were examined in 126 African American youth and their parents. A subsample of parents ($n = 8$) also completed qualitative interviews which were used to expand upon the quantitative findings. Perceived racial discrimination was positively related to preparation for discrimination socialization. Racial identity was positively related to academic achievement. Data obtained from the qualitative interviews prompted an investigation of preparation for discrimination as a function of adolescents' self-reliance. Results showed that self-reliance was positively related to preparation for discrimination socialization. The results illustrate factors that precipitate racial socialization and achievement in African American youth. Implications for future research and educational policy are discussed.

DEDICATION

To my mother, Renae Warrior-Woods, my brother, Patrick Woods, and my grandfather, Zenephon Warrior, Sr.; all of whom have been supportive of me for as long as I can remember. My faith was also instrumental in the completion of this project.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. is rapidly growing into one of the most racially and ethnically diverse nations in the industrialized world; thus, an important question for researchers in child development is how racial socialization influences children's developmental trajectories. Moreover, racial socialization in the lives of African American youth may be especially important to their development because of the nature of our society's social and economic stratification (Hughes & Chen, 1999).

Racial socialization is believed to be one of the most important tasks of African American parents (McAdoo, 2002) because it prepares African American children to be psychologically and physically healthy in spite of racism and discrimination (Marshall, 1995; Peters, 1985). Further, socialization about race teaches African American children about cultural pride and provides information about their individual and group identities. Although racial socialization has been found to occur within most African American families, there is not a single socialization experience (Boykin, 1986; Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Teaching children about what it means to be African American occurs through both implicit and explicit teachings. Generally speaking, African American parents are concerned with the issues that all parents face (e.g., drugs, peer influences, academics). However, they must also prepare their children to be productive members in a society that often views African Americans negatively, as well as transmit information about cultural traditions and pride (Boykin, 1986; Marshall, 1995; Peters, 1985). Racial

socialization practices have been found to be related to various child outcomes, including youth's motivation, achievement, academic self-esteem, and prospects for upward mobility (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Marshall, 1995). In addition, racial socialization may promote resiliency in African American adolescents (Miller, 1999). One of the most fundamental goals of parental racial socialization is teaching children that a good education can lead to equality for African Americans (Peters, 1985).

Another reason it is important for psychologists to understand racial socialization is because of its close relationship to parent and child identity (Demo & Hughes, 1990; Marshall, 1995; Thomas & Speight, 1999). It could be argued that racial socialization is one of the mechanisms responsible for the development of one's racial identity. Racial identity provides African Americans with a frame in which to interpret their racial group, their place in their racial group, environment, and experiences (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, and Zimmerman, 2003; Sanders-Thompson, 2001). For example, racial identity informs the individual about the world, and this information is used in making significant life choices (e.g., which university to attend, whom to marry, child rearing beliefs).

Racial socialization and racial identity may also shed light on how African Americans cope with racial discrimination. In U.S. society African Americans face racial discrimination in housing, employment, educational opportunities, and health care (Jones, 2000; Niemann & Maruyama, 2005). Several theorists have suggested that a more developed racial identity as defined by feelings of belongingness with one's racial group is a protective factor in the lives of African American youth (e.g., Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Central aims of the current project are to examine age and gender differences in the messages children receive and the relationships among racial socialization, racial identity, and achievement. A unique aspect of this project is the examination of how these relationships may vary as a function of contextual factors, specifically racial discrimination as perceived by the parent and the adolescent. At present, very few studies have examined how racial discrimination as perceived by African American adolescents may be related to racial socialization and racial identity. This study will also make an original contribution to the literature because I will use qualitative data to inform our understanding of implicit racial socialization. Furthermore, data from the qualitative interviews raise new questions about how child psychological variables might influence racial socialization practices.

Theoretical Orientation

The Triple Quandary theory of Boykin and Toms (1985) provides a framework for understanding the content and purpose of racial socialization messages. This study is also grounded in developmental contextualism theory, which states that development does not take place in a vacuum; rather contextual factors and interactions between parents and children influence development. First, I will summarize the basic tenets of the Triple Quandary Theory, and then the ideas of developmental contextualism will be discussed.

The Triple Quandary Theory. According to the Triple Quandary theory, three agendas shape the manner in which African Americans socialize their children: mainstream experience, Black cultural experience, and minority experience (Boykin, 1986; Boykin and Toms, 1985). A dynamic interplay occurs among the three competing socialization agendas and each African American family negotiates socialization differently. However, all African Americans participate in mainstream society and thus are likely to have some shared

experiences as a result of being Black in America. For example, racial discrimination is directly and/or indirectly felt in the lives of all African Americans, regardless of social class, region, or age (Gougis, 1987; Jones, 2000).

The mainstream experience refers to African Americans' aspirations of achieving the American dream (Boykin & Toms, 1985). For example, most individuals hope to obtain a good job with middle class economic standing. Socializing children about the mainstream experience is common among Americans of all racial/ethnic groups. The Black cultural experience refers to the cultural modes of African Americans that are linked to West African traditions. There are nine dimensions of the Black cultural domain: spirituality, harmony, movement, verve, affect, communalism, expressive individualism, oral tradition, and social time perspective (Boykin & Toms, 1985). The entire West African cultural system has not been preserved completely intact, but nevertheless influences Black family life. Many African Americans do not articulate the link between their current cultural practices and West African culture; however, the connections exist (Boykin & Toms, 1985). For example, many African American parents use oral traditions in socializing their children. Specifically, parents may tell their children stories about their family's history and the accomplishments of other African Americans to teach them about their culture and heritage (Thornton, 1997). Black cultural socialization is typically passed on through a tacit/implicit cultural conditioning process, a process through which children pick up "modes, sequences, and styles of behaviors" that are displayed through their day-to-day encounters with parents and other family members (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985). The abovementioned modes, sequences, and styles of behavior are displayed to young children in a consistent and persistent fashion. Thus, implicit racial socialization likely plays an important role in

African American child development. A unique aspect of the current study is the inclusion of qualitative data that expand on the quantitative analyses and speak to implicit racial socialization.

The minority experience is based on exposure to social, economic, and political oppression, with this oppression linked to race for African Americans. Minority socialization is believed to serve as a buffer for racism (Boykin & Toms, 1985). The status of being a member of an oppressed group produces compensatory strategies and adaptive responses to help one cope. Boykin and Toms (1985) describe three adaptive orientations, noting that individuals may use a mixture of the coping styles: 1) One can take an active versus passive role when confronting the realities of racism and oppression. 2) One can participate in system engagement or disengagement: namely, one can be oriented toward participation in mainstream institutions or one can seek to function independently of mainstream society. 3) One can be oriented toward system change or system maintenance. The third adaptive orientation can be further broken down into whether one engages in system blame or person blame.

The Triple Quandary theory is useful for the current study because it provides a framework for understanding the content of racial socialization messages and how parents socialize their children about what it means to be African American. For example, the minority experience gives insight about how parents may prepare their children for racial discrimination. Additionally, the nine dimensions of the Black cultural domain provide information about the implicit and explicit cultural modes that parents use to teach their children about what it means to be African American. The mainstream experience was not assessed in the current study. In addition to understanding the content of racial socialization

messages it is important to consider how children's individual distinctiveness may shape parents' racial socialization practices. Developmental contextualism provides a framework for interpreting how characteristics of children may influence parents' racial socialization practices.

Developmental Contextualism Theory. Parents communicate racial socialization messages to children, but children also influence the socialization practices of parents (Lerner, Castellino, Terry, Villarruel, & McKinney, 1995). Developmental contextualism theory states that changing, reciprocal relations (or dynamic interactions) between individuals and the multiple contexts within which they live comprise the essential process of human development. The ways in which parents racially socialize their children are affected by children's individual distinctiveness (e.g., temperament) as well as the environments in which development occurs. For example, parents may not want to tell a child whom they believe to have low self-esteem about the discrimination s/he may face as s/he matures. Very little research has examined ways in which the racial socialization process is shaped by child psychological variables. Additionally, different children within the same family may receive varied racial socialization messages as a function of individual characteristics such as age and gender. The child's style of behavior exerts an important influence on the significant others in his/her life, which would subsequently influence racial socialization. Some research has suggested that context does indeed influence racial socialization practices (Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). For example, Hughes and Johnson (2001) found that parents of third, fourth, and fifth graders who experienced more discrimination and those parents who perceived their child as

being treated unfairly by adults were more likely to provide cultural pride socialization and preparation for discrimination messages, respectively.

Developmental contextualism is applied in the current study by examining racial socialization as a function of child age and gender as well as parents' and adolescents' experiences of discrimination. Although developmental contextualism is not specific to racial socialization, it appropriately describes the transmission of values, beliefs, and attitudes from parents to children, bi-directional influences that occur, as well as contextual influences. The environment in which a child develops, including contextual factors and individual distinctiveness, likely shapes parents' racial socialization practices.

Parental Racial Socialization Messages across Childhood

As children mature and have more interactions with others in our diverse society, parents' and youth's awareness of contextual factors such as racial discrimination may influence parental socialization practices. Additionally, as youth become more socially and cognitively sophisticated the nature of racial socialization likely changes.

Child Age and Socialization. As children mature they spend increasingly more time interacting with individuals and in contexts outside of their more proximal family environment. Prior research has found the age of the child to be predictive of the content of racial socialization messages transmitted by parents (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995). Hughes and Chen (1997) found older children received more racial socialization messages than younger children. Specifically, parents of older children (9 to 14 years) reported more preparation for discrimination and promotion of mistrust of Whites than did parents of younger children (4 to 8 years). Hughes and Chen (1997) found that parents taught their children about African American culture regardless of child age. It is important to note that

in general racial socialization messages were transmitted infrequently, which the authors suggest is a result of the multitude of socialization goals of African American parents. One major limitation of this study is related to the sample. All participants were married and had middle income backgrounds; therefore, the generalizability of the results to low income and/or single parents is questionable. Single parent and low income families may transmit different messages to their children based on their experiences. For example, poor African American parents—compared to more affluent parents—may experience more discrimination because they are poor (e.g., racism and classism) and therefore provide children with more preparation for discrimination. The current study will include participants from single and married families with socioeconomically diverse backgrounds.

Providing age-appropriate racial socialization messages to children can be a challenging task for many parents. Young children's lack of cognitive sophistication could lead to serious misunderstandings about what racism is and how it might affect the lives of African Americans. Peters (1985) found that the majority of parents of 2 ½ -to-3½ year old children had engaged in explicit racial socialization with their children. Dominant themes transmitted from parents to children were those of cultural pride, understanding that fair play may not be reciprocated, the value of a good education, and the importance of love and security. Parents appeared to transmit messages that were more positive and that affirmed the pre-schoolers' individual and group racial identities. Marshall (1995) notes that parents believe their children should be racially socialized, but socialization messages should be age appropriate. Providing children with information about racism before they have the cognitive abilities to process such information would probably not serve to prepare the child

for interactions with others, but rather would have a negative impact on psychological well-being.

Parents racially socialize their children, but just as importantly children influence parents' racial socialization messages. Young children are more likely to have limited social experiences and less sophisticated cognitive abilities than older children (Quintana, 1994), and thus would likely elicit different racial socialization messages. In contrast, discussions about cultural pride occur with younger and older children (Hughes & Chen, 1997). By discussing cultural pride with younger children, parents may begin to establish a positive African American identity for their children and promote healthy self-esteem. African American parents probably recognize that younger children are able to understand racial socialization messages that are positive and serve to affirm identity, whereas negative messages may be developmentally inappropriate. Establishing a positive African American identity may prepare children to effectively cope with future racism as well as enhance self-esteem through pride in one's cultural background. Furthermore, older children may be more likely than younger children to ask parents about how they should deal with issues related to race.

Child Age and Socialization: The Special Case of Middle School. The current study will examine racial socialization as a function of grade in middle school adolescents (6th, 7th, and 8th grades). Grade differences are expected in the reports of these young adolescents because of changes in context and the adolescents' experiences associated with these changes. As adolescents in the eighth grade prepare to transition from middle school to high school, racial socialization messages may change as a function of parents' high school expectations. Parents may view high school academics and sports as more competitive and

important in terms of life outcomes than middle school academics and sports. For example, high schools have increased stratification in terms of honors and advanced placement classes. Mickelson and Heath (1999) found that African American high school students were disproportionately found in lower tracks and that tracking undermines desegregation efforts. Therefore, parents of eighth graders may be more invested in preparing their children for sensitive racial situations related to academics (e.g., Black students being treated as if they were not smart).

Social-cognition in older adolescents is more complex than in younger adolescents; thus older adolescents may begin to think about race and its implications for their lives in a more sophisticated way (Quintana, 1994). Eighth grade students' more sophisticated social-cognitive skills may give rise to questions about the nature of race relations. For example, eighth graders looking ahead to the transition to high school are more likely to be interested in dating than are younger middle school students. Typically, high schools are larger and more ethnically/racially diverse than middle schools. For many families interracial dating is a sensitive topic that older middle school students and parents are likely to discuss, and racial socialization messages probably accompany these discussions.

Parental Racial Socialization as a Function of Child Gender. Because of the gendered nature of our society, the present application of developmental contextualism would lead one to expect racial socialization to vary as a function of child gender. Research suggests that stereotypes about African Americans are more negatively biased toward males than females (Sellers & Shelton, 2003), thus African American boys may be more likely to be treated in a discriminatory manner. Furthermore, African American males are more likely than females to be viewed as violent, suspicious, and dangerous, and more African American

young men are in jail or prison settings than in college, university, or military settings (Oyserman, Gant, & Ager, 1995; Pettit & Western, 2004). These alarming statistics probably encourage parents to educate their sons about the racial barriers and discriminatory encounters they may have in the broader society more so than their daughters. Because African American boys appear to be at greater risk for experiencing discrimination and subsequent negative life outcomes, parents may be more likely to provide explicit racial socialization messages about racial barriers and discrimination to sons than to daughters. Further, African American sons may be more likely than daughters to initiate conversations about racial discrimination.

The work of Bowman and Howard (1985) was one of the first research studies to investigate gender differences in racial socialization messages. Results indicated that females were more likely than males to report that their parents had taught them nothing about their racial status. Those girls who were taught about race indicated they received more cultural pride messages, whereas racial barrier messages were more frequent for boys. Thomas and Speight (1999) also found that parents reported boys received more messages about negative stereotypes and coping strategies to deal with racism, while girls were given more messages on the importance of achievement and cultural pride. In contrast, a recent study by Hughes and her colleagues yielded the opposite result: young adolescent girls reported more racial socialization overall than boys, and also reported more preparation for discrimination (Hughes, 2005). Clearly, additional research on this question is warranted.

Racial Discrimination and African American Youth

While individual characteristics such as children's age and gender likely influence parents' racial socialization practices, contextual factors such as perceived racial

discrimination may also inform what parents teach their children about race. Ethnic and racial group members in America have varying experiences in terms of racial/ethnic discrimination. Racial discrimination is negatively related to numerous psychological outcomes in African American children and adults (Sanders-Thompson, 1996; Simons, Murry, McLoyd, Lin, Cutrona, & Conger, 2002; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). For example, Wong and colleagues (2003) found that African American youth who experience more racial discrimination were placed at greater risk for lowered academic motivation. Research suggests that racial discrimination is pervasive in the lives of African Americans and poses a real problem.

African American adolescents report experiencing more racial discrimination than do White, Mexican-American, and Vietnamese-American adolescents (Romero & Roberts, 1998). African American students also report being wrongly disciplined as a result of racial discrimination more often than White students (Fisher et al., 2000). Furthermore, observational data show that for Black children racial discrimination occurs in the disciplinary practices of teachers and school administrators (Gregory, 1995). Thus, research suggests that African American youth are aware of racial discrimination and recognize when they are the targets of discrimination. Given African American youth's experiences with racial discrimination how might parents adjust their racial socialization practices? The present study will examine this question and provide insight about how African American racial identity may buffer youth from the deleterious effects of racial discrimination.

Coping with Perceived Discrimination: The Role of Racial Socialization. Cultural pride teachings and moderate levels of preparation for discrimination socialization may prepare youth to deal with racial discrimination. In the presence of perceived racial bias,

preparation for discrimination messages may serve as a psychological buffer for youth, especially when these messages are coupled with concrete coping strategies. If children perceive racial discrimination, it is probably important for parents to prepare and teach them how to deal with it. A risk of this type of socialization is that it might lead to a sense of pessimism, cynicism, or helplessness, thus contributing to negative psychological and academic outcomes. Parents who discuss racism in conjunction with coping strategies, and who also transmit group pride probably create a sense of confidence and self-assuredness in their children. To date very few published studies have examined how adolescents' perceptions of discrimination are related to racial socialization. The current study will examine how racism as perceived by adolescents is related to parental preparation for discrimination socialization.

Parents' perception of racial discrimination in their child's school is also likely to have an effect on their racial socialization practices and their child's subsequent academic achievement. When parents perceive their child's school as a welcoming place, they are more likely to be involved in their child's education. Parental involvement in children's school activities has been related to positive academic outcomes (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Overstreet, Devine, Bevans, & Efreom, 2005). Parents who believe that teachers and staff are supportive and culturally sensitive probably convey to their children that school settings and personnel are fair. Conversely, parents who perceive their child's school as hostile toward African Americans may provide their child with increased preparation for discrimination socialization in an effort to prepare the child to deal with unfair treatment. These messages may be adaptive if they help children effectively cope with racial

discrimination. The present study investigates how parents' perceptions of their child's school racial climate are related to preparation for discrimination messages.

Racial Socialization: The Building Blocks for Racial Identity

The way in which parents racially socialize their children is likely to influence the adolescent's developing racial identity. Racial identity is defined as the part of the person's self-concept that is related to membership within the Black racial group (Sellers, Morgan, & Brown, 2001; Sellers, Smith, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). An individual's racial identity includes the significance and qualitative meaning that he/she ascribes to his/her racial group.

Cross sectional research examining the relationship between racial socialization and racial identity has shown the two constructs to be significantly related (Hughes & Chen, 1999). In studies examining parents' racial identity and the relation to racial socialization, parents who held more pro-Black attitudes and also reported an appreciation for the cultures of other individuals engaged in more frequent racial socialization than those parents who reported less developed racial identities (Thomas & Speight, 1999). While these studies did not examine racial socialization in the parents' families of origin and the relation to their current racial identities, a significant relationship existed between racial socialization of the target child and parent racial identity.

By the same token, one would expect that children's developing racial identities are related to the racial socialization messages they receive. For example, children who learn about the shared experiences of African Americans through oral history and cultural traditions may have more developed racial identities as defined by feelings of closeness to their racial group than youth who learn very little about African American cultural traditions. Adolescents who receive racial socialization messages stressing a humanistic viewpoint

would probably feel less connected to their racial group than youth who receive pro-Black messages. The current study will examine the relationship between parental racial socialization and children's racial identity as defined by positive feelings about and closeness to their racial group.

Perceived Discrimination and Achievement: Racial Identity as Psychological Buffer. Gains in academic achievement may have broad consequences for the overall well being of African Americans (Gougis, 1987). Thus, it is important that psychologists have a better understanding of how racial socialization and racial identity in the context of racial discrimination might be related to achievement outcomes.

Racial discrimination has been found to be negatively related to achievement related outcomes (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). Racial identity as defined by feelings of belongingness may serve as a protective factor for adolescents who encounter racism at school that would otherwise make them feel as if they were "outsiders." Peers and schools that devalue the individual because of racial group membership undermine the adolescent's relatedness to that context, and thus, the adolescent is at an increased likelihood for negative developmental outcomes. Wong et al. (2003) found that African American middle school students with a stronger connection to their racial group who also perceived high levels of discrimination in their schools reported higher self-competency beliefs, had higher GPAs, reported fewer problem behaviors, and rated their friends as possessing more positive school characteristics than students with a lower connection to their racial group who perceived equally high levels of discrimination. Thus, a strong connection to one's racial group appears to serve as a psychological buffer for African American youth in discriminatory

settings. Students who feel their culture is devalued and not recognized as legitimate are likely to respond negatively in the classroom (Boateng, 1990).

In a qualitative study conducted with high school students of color, Phelan, Yu, and Davidson (1990) found that perceived ethnic discrimination was negatively related to some students' school participation and socioemotional adjustment. Racial/ethnic discrimination is believed to cause the adolescent to feel as if s/he is different and not part of the in-group (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). Rather, the adolescent has feelings of unrelatedness to the particular context (e.g., school). Thus, adolescents with racial identities that are defined by feelings of belonging and connection with their racial group may be buffered against racial discrimination.

Hypotheses

The current study was based on an integration of developmental contextualism and the Triple Quandary Theory. The study hypotheses were tested in African American parents and middle school youth (i.e., 6th, 7th, and 8th graders). This age group was selected because adolescence is a time of change in contextual factors (e.g., perceived discrimination) as well as marked development in social and cognitive processes. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework for this study.

Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesized that racial socialization would vary as a function of child grade. Specifically, parents of older children would engage in more preparation for discrimination than parents of younger children. No grade differences were anticipated in parent reports of cultural pride messages.

Hypothesis 2: The frequency and content of racial socialization messages were expected to vary as a function of child gender. Specifically, boys were expected to receive

higher levels of racial socialization with more messages focused on preparation for discrimination, while girls were expected to receive racial socialization messages focused on cultural socialization and pride.

Hypothesis 3: Youths' perceptions of discrimination were believed to moderate the relationship between grade and preparation for discrimination socialization. Specifically, younger adolescents who reported higher levels of discrimination would receive more preparation for discrimination messages than age-mates who perceived lower levels of discrimination. Age differences in preparation for discrimination socialization were anticipated only for youth who reported low levels of perceived discrimination.

Hypothesis 4: Parents' perceptions of their child's school racial climate were expected to moderate the relationship between grade and preparation for discrimination socialization. Specifically, parents of younger adolescents who perceived their child's school to be discriminatory toward African Americans would provide more preparation for discrimination messages than would parents of younger adolescents who perceived their child's school as fair. Thus, grade differences in preparation for discrimination will appear for youth in schools with a positive climate, but not among youth in negative climate schools.

Hypothesis 5: Racial socialization would be related to youth's racial identity. That is, parents who report engaging in more cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization would have children who reported a stronger connection and a greater sense of belonging to the Black racial group than youth who received lower levels of racial socialization.

Hypothesis 6: Cultural pride messages and moderate amounts of preparation for discrimination socialization were expected to be positively related to achievement.

Hypothesis 7: Racial identity was believed to moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination and achievement. Specifically, high levels of perceived discrimination were believed to be negatively related to achievement. However, for youth who reported high racial identities this relationship would be weakened. That is, racial identity would serve as a psychological buffer.

The current study will make an important contribution to the literature in several ways. First, the relationship between discrimination as perceived by the adolescent and racial socialization will be examined across the middle school years—a time when youth are learning much about discrimination and when contextual factors begin to place them on achievement trajectories that will determine their long-term educational and employment outcomes. Second, in an era of re-segregation of schools, this study will examine how parents' perceptions of their child's school racial climate may influence racial socialization and subsequent achievement outcomes. Third, gender differences in received racial socialization messages will be examined—a topic that has produced contradictory findings in prior research. Fourth, the study will provide data on the different roles played by cultural/pride socialization and preparation for discrimination in shaping achievement striving and identity. Fifth, the current study will investigate the role of racial identity as a protective factor for the achievement of African American youth. Finally, qualitative interviews from this study can be used to inform our understanding of implicit racial socialization and how child psychological variables may be related to racial socialization. Information gleaned from the qualitative study can also help in further refining measures of racial socialization. These topics are important in understanding the development and educational outcomes of African American youth.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 126 African American students (58 girls, 68 boys) in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Forty-four students were recruited during Wave 1 and 82 students were recruited during Wave 2. The sample included 39 sixth (19 girls, 20 boys; $M = 11.9$ years, $SD = 0.66$), 39 seventh (19 girls, 20 boys; $M = 12.7$ years, $SD = 0.77$), and 48 eighth grade students (20 girls, 28 boys; $M = 13.4$ years, $SD = 0.74$).

Students attended 32 schools that are located in rural ($n = 17$), urban ($n = 49$), and suburban ($n = 56$) areas of North Carolina. The school districts of 4 students were unknown. The schools' racial compositions ranged from 11% to 100% African American ($M = 41.6$, $SD = 25.8$). European Americans were the second largest group at schools with a majority African American student body and were the majority group in schools for which African American students were in the minority. The percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch at schools ranged from 0% to 79% ($M = 34.5$, $SD = 18.6$). Free/reduced lunch percentages were equally distributed across schools that had a high percentage of African American students and those with a high percentage of European American students.

In addition, 119 caregivers (106 mothers, 6 grandmothers, 2 aunts, 4 fathers, 1 uncle) participated in the project. Six parents had two children participate in the study; therefore, 113 households are represented in the sample. Sixty-four families consisted of single parent households, 47 families were comprised of two parent households, and two families did not

report their family status. Forty-seven parents/caregivers reported they were currently married, 35 parents/caregivers had never been married, 15 parents/caregivers were divorced, 11 parents/caregivers reported they were separated, and 5 parents/caregivers reported they were widowed. For both single and two-parent families, only one parent/caregiver was interviewed for this study. All parents/caregivers (i.e., fathers, aunts, uncle, grandmothers) interviewed were a primary caregiver of participating youth. Thus, it is expected that these parents/caregivers played a significant role in the socialization of the youth. From this point forward parents and caregivers will simply be described as parents. Information is provided below about parent education and income.

Procedure

Parents and adolescents were recruited by African American research assistants at public activities and events that might be frequented by African Americans (e.g., street fairs, jazz festivals, and community centers) and schools. Additionally, referrals from participating families were used to recruit participants. In order for adolescents and parents to participate in the study they were required to sign an assent and consent form, respectively. Self-report questionnaires were administered by African American research assistants to adolescents in their homes or in group settings at community centers or schools. Interviews in the home were conducted separately for parents and youth. Parents whose children were interviewed at a community center or school were interviewed by phone. Research assistants read aloud items for adolescents and parents with reading difficulties. Youth and parents were each given either a DVD or a \$5 gift certificate for their participation in the study.

Adolescent Measures

Adolescents completed the following measures: the Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index; a subscale from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure; a Racial Socialization Measure; two subscales from the Behavioral Assessment System for Children, and the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire. In addition, they reported their gender, age, and school grades. Adolescents were also asked to indicate who they considered to be their father/male caregiver and mother/female caregiver. End of Grade (EOG) Test Scores for Reading and Math were obtained from the North Carolina Data Center for youth who were interviewed during Wave 2.

The Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (ADDI). The ADDI is a measure used to tap adolescent experiences of racial discrimination and distress in response to perceived instances of racially motivated discrimination in educational, (e.g., teacher evaluations), institutional (e.g., being harassed in a store by security guards), and peer contexts (e.g., being called racially insulting names) (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000). Adolescents were asked to indicate whether they had experienced each type of discrimination in the last 3 months because of their *race or ethnicity* with possible responses being “yes” or “no.” The number of “yes/no” responses were summed to yield a single score, with higher scores indicating more experiences of discrimination.

Items were originally constructed based upon existing literature of discrimination towards American ethnic groups, reports in the media of discrimination, personal experiences of the multiethnic research team, and the Racial Discrimination Index designed for African Americans (Fisher et al., 2000). Items were revised after they were reviewed by 28 high

school students of African American, Hispanic, East Asian, South Asian, and non-Hispanic White descent. Interitem reliability for the ADDI was excellent, $\alpha = .80$.

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). The MEIM was constructed to tap three aspects of ethnic identity—positive ethnic attitudes and sense of belonging; ethnic identity achievement, including both exploration and resolution of identity issues; and ethnic behaviors or practices (Phinney, 1992). The 5 item positive ethnic attitudes and belonging subscale was used in the current study. Items were rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Scores were averaged and ranged from 1 (indicating low ethnic identity) to 5 (high ethnic identity).

Development of the MEIM was informed by a review of the literature on ethnic and racial identity development and studies conducted by Phinney and her colleagues examining ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1990, 1992). Phinney (1992) designed the MEIM to measure aspects of ethnic identity that are common to all members of ethnic minority groups, thus allowing intra- and inter-group comparison. Phinney (1992) confirmed the construct validity of the ethnic identity items using factor analysis, and reliability for the current sample was excellent, $\alpha = .88$.

Report of Male/Female Caregiver. Youth were asked to report who they considered to be their male and female caregiver. If youth lived in a two parent home they were asked to indicate the adults who lived with them as their male and female caregivers. If youth lived in a single parent home they were asked to indicate the person who lived with them as one of their caregivers and the person who played a significant role in their lives as the second caregiver (e.g., person who takes care of them, person who gives them advice when they

need help). This item was presented before youth completed the Racial Socialization Measure and the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire.

Responses for female caregiver were as follows: Biological or adoptive mother ($n = 108$); Stepmother ($n = 1$); Grandmother ($n = 9$); Aunt ($n = 2$); Missing ($n = 6$). Responses for male caregiver were as follows: Biological or adoptive father ($n = 52$); Stepfather ($n = 21$); Grandfather ($n = 8$); Uncle ($n = 9$); Brother ($n = 2$); No father figure ($n = 14$); Other ($n = 4$); Missing ($n = 16$). Youth who reported they did not have a male caregiver were told not to complete items about a male caregiver.

Racial Socialization Measure. The Hughes and Chen (1997) Racial Socialization measure was designed to tap three dimensions of racial socialization—cultural socialization, preparation for discrimination, and the promotion of mistrust. For the current study the preparation for discrimination subscale and a modified version of the cultural socialization subscale, which includes racial pride teachings, were used to measure racial socialization. The promotion of mistrust subscale was not included because past research has found that parents report very little if any promotion of mistrust socialization messages (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995). Youth may be even less likely to report promotion of mistrust either because the conversations do not occur or because of social desirability. For each item adolescents reported how often they had engaged in said behavior with their mother and father in the past four months. Possible responses were 1 = Never; 2 = once or twice; 3 = three to five times; 4 = 6 to 10 times; and 5 = more than 10 times. Scores were averaged within each subscale.

Item content of the racial socialization measure was derived from stories and events described by a sample of African American parents who participated in focus group

interviews that were previously conducted by Hughes. Furthermore, the Triple Quandary theory of Boykin and Toms (1985) was used to inform the dimensions of the Hughes and Chen (1997) Racial Socialization measure. Hughes and Chen (1997) examined the construct validity for the three dimensions using factor analysis, and a three factor solution was supported. Reliability estimates for the current sample were excellent ($\alpha = .81$ for the cultural/pride socialization and $\alpha = .92$ for preparation of discrimination).

Behavioral Assessment System for Children. The Behavioral Assessment for Children Self-Report Personality (BASC-SRP) is a measure designed to tap adaptive behaviors, emotional disorders, and behavioral disorders in children from ages 8 years to 18 years of age (Reynolds & Kamphaus, 2002). Data from the BASC-SRP self-esteem and self-reliance subscales were collected for the current study. Items from the Self-Report of Personality component were developed based on what is known from the relevant literature and clinical experience. Reynolds and Kamphaus developed norms for the BASC SRP scales using data from 116 sites across the U.S. with White children and children of color in Grades 3-12.

The self-esteem subscale is comprised of 8 items, which are designed to tap adolescents' feelings of self-esteem, self-respect, and self-acceptance. Many of the items focus on adolescents' beliefs about their appearance. For example, "My looks bother me." This subscale provides information on the adolescent's view of self ranging from poor to exceptional. The self-reliance subscale is comprised of 7 items and provides information about feelings of irresponsibility or personal agency (e.g., "I am good at making decisions.") (Ramsay, Reynolds, & Kamphaus, 2002). Possible answers for the subscales were "true" or "false." Subscale mean raw scores represented self-esteem and self-reliance with higher

scores denoting higher self-esteem and self-reliance. Interitem reliability was good for self-esteem ($\alpha = .72$) and acceptable for self-reliance ($\alpha = .55$).

Conflict Behavior Questionnaire. Adolescents completed the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire (CBQ-20), which was labeled “Interaction Behavior Questionnaire” so that youth would not be influenced by the name of the measure. Data collected on the nature of the parent-adolescent relationship were used as covariates/control variables in some analyses. The CBQ-20 assesses communication and conflict between the adolescent and his/her mother and father (Robin & Foster, 1989). Adolescents reported (true/false) whether or not each item was characteristic of their relationship with their mother and father (e.g., “My father doesn’t understand me.”). Higher scores on the CBQ-20 indicate more conflict between the adolescent and parent. The reliability estimates for the CBQ-20 were excellent: $\alpha = .92$ for communication and conflict with the father and $\alpha = .81$ for items about the mother.

Achievement Measures. Adolescents were asked to report their grades in Language Arts/English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Possible responses and corresponding codes are 7 = “mostly A’s”; 6 = “A’s and B’s”; 5 = “mostly B’s”; 4 = “B’s and C’s”; 3 = “mostly C’s”; 2 = “C’s and D’s”; 1 = “mostly D’s”; and 0 = “D’s and F’s.” A composite variable representing the student’s overall G.P.A. was created by averaging scores across the four academic domains. In addition, state End Of Grade (EOG) Reading and Math test scores for students interviewed during Wave 2 were obtained from the North Carolina Data Center. A composite variable was created from the scaled EOG Reading and Math test scores. Higher EOG test scores indicate better performance.

Demographics. All adolescents were asked to provide demographic information about themselves (e.g., gender, age, grade in school) and their education (e.g., name of

school). Additionally, adolescents were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity. Possible race/ethnic categories were African American, Caribbean, African, and Other. One hundred and twenty-five adolescents indicated they were African American and one adolescent indicated she was biracial (i.e., African American and White). All youth were born in the U.S. except one student; however, this student reported that she had lived in the U.S. for the majority of her life.

Parent/Caregiver Measures

Parents/caregivers completed the Family-School Mesosystem Scale, a parent version of the Racial Socialization measure, and demographic information.

Family-School Mesosystem Scale. Based on the work of Eccles and Harold (1993), a measure of parent perceptions of their child's school was developed (Szapocznik & Robbins, 1997). The 5-item subscale used for this study measured parents' perceptions of their child's school in regard to race/ethnicity (e.g., "Students are treated the same regardless of ethnicity."). For each item parents reported on a 1 to 5 point scale how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Scores were derived by calculating the mean, with higher scores indicating a more positive view of the school's racial climate. Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was excellent, $\alpha = .86$.

Racial Socialization Measure. Racial socialization was measured with a modified version of the Racial Socialization Measure (Hughes & Chen, 1997). The measure for the current study consisted of 2 dimensions: cultural/pride socialization and preparation for discrimination. The promotion of mistrust subscale was not included in the current study because parents rarely report these behaviors. Parents were asked to report how often they engaged in a particular behavior with the target child (1 = Never; 5 = Very Often).

Cronbach's alphas for cultural/pride socialization ($\alpha = .79$) and preparation for discrimination ($\alpha = .90$) were excellent.

Demographics. One hundred and ten parents/caregivers reported they were born in the United States (U.S.) and lived in the U.S. all of their lives. Two parents who were not born in the U.S. had lived here a significant amount of time (i.e., at least 24 years). On average, parents had lived in North Carolina for 29 years ($SD = 15$).

Parents were also asked to report their highest level of education with possible answers ranging from "never attended school" or "only attended kindergarten" to "doctorate". Parents' educational attainment was as follows: 2% had some elementary school (Grades 1 through 8); 6% had some high school (Grades 9 through 11); 15% graduated from high school; 38% had some college or technical school; 8% completed their associate's degree; 16% completed their bachelor's degree; 5% had some graduate school; and 3% had a master's degree. Parent education was evenly distributed across student participants' age groups.

Parents were also given an open-ended question that asked them to report their yearly family income. Answers ranged from \$297 to \$137,500 ($M = 41,389.05$, $SD = 24,687.81$). Approximately 17% of participants reported annual incomes of less than \$14,999; 11% reported incomes between \$15,000 and \$24,999; 17% reported incomes of \$25,000 to \$34,999; 22% reported incomes between \$35,000 and \$49,999; 17% reported incomes between \$50,000 and \$64,999; 12% reported incomes between \$65,000 and \$79,999, and approximately 4% reported annual incomes greater than \$80,000. Additionally, parents were asked if they have ever received public assistance in the form of welfare or food stamps.

Twenty-two percent of parents reported receipt of public assistance. Six percent of respondents did not answer this question.

Qualitative Data

In addition to self-report questionnaires, a subsample ($n = 8$) of parents participated in a qualitative interview. All participants answered 19 open-ended questions that focused on their explicit and implicit racial socialization practices, with some participants answering follow-up questions. The interviews provide a meaningful understanding of racial socialization that is not possible with the quantitative data alone.

A diverse group of families were included in the qualitative interview sample. Specifically, five of the parents were from two-parent homes and three were single parents. One mother-father dyad was interviewed. The number of families with sons and daughters was evenly split at 4, and youth were evenly distributed across age groups. Family incomes ranged from \$4,485 to \$70,000 per year. Two families reported that they received public assistance. Parents participating in the qualitative interview received an additional \$20 gift certificate.

Qualitative interviews took place in participants' homes immediately after parents finished the self-report questionnaire. During the interviews children and other family members were not present. Generally, interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and one hour. However, two interviews last for more than one hour. The qualitative interviews were more conversational in nature with the questions listed in Appendix 1 serving as a guide for the interview. Most parents appeared comfortable with the interview procedure based on the candor of their responses and how much they talked. One parent was less talkative and this

interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. Occasionally, questions were rephrased if parents said they did not understand what was being asked of them.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Preliminary Quantitative Analysis

The statistical package STATA 9 was used to test for non-independence among sibling pairs ($n=6$). STATA 9 performs a stringent test which controls for non-independence, and the results obtained from STATA 9 were equivalent to those obtained from SPSS 14. Therefore, all reported results are from SPSS 14.

Prior to testing the models, regression diagnostics were performed and the data were found to meet the assumptions of linear regression. Preliminary analyses were also conducted to determine which control variables were significant predictors of the outcome variables. The possible control variables were: wave (i.e., year of interview), quality of mother-adolescent relationship, quality of father-adolescent relationship, parent education level, and school racial composition. Control variables that were found to be significant predictors were entered as covariates in the MANCOVAs and in Step 1 of the regression equations. Additionally, regression equations were tested to investigate whether students recruited during Wave 1 significantly differed from students recruited during Wave 2 on the outcome and control variables. No significant differences were found.

Analyses were also performed to explore the relationships between children's reports of racial socialization, parents' reports of racial socialization, and the primary variables of interest. Correlational analyses showed children's reports of racial socialization were generally unrelated to parents' reports of racial socialization as well as the variables of

interest. In contrast, parents' reports of racial socialization were significantly related to variables of interest. Thus, all analyses discussed are with parents' reports of racial socialization.

Preliminary correlational analyses also showed that GPA was not significantly related to the study variables. Furthermore, Kuncel, Crede, and Thomas (2005) found that self-reported grades are more accurate predictors for high achieving students than low achieving students. Thus, EOG test scores were used as the measures of academic achievement for the current analyses.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

All qualitative interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed word for word. The qualitative data were analyzed by reading the transcribed interviews and coding them for themes. The transcripts were then read a second time with the coding in mind and quotes that clearly illustrated a theme or were related to the quantitative hypotheses were noted. While several common themes arose from the interviews, parents had diverse backgrounds and experiences, and chose to racially socialize their children in various ways.

Several goals were accomplished through the qualitative study. First, I was able to investigate the themes that emerged across interviews and thus were probably highly salient issues in regard to racial socialization. Second, I paid special attention to data gathered from the qualitative study that either supported or contradicted the findings in the quantitative study. Finally, the qualitative interviews provided information about ways in which the measurement of racial socialization may be improved. Key themes from the qualitative interviews follow the presentation of MANCOVA and regression results.

Descriptive Results

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for major study variables. The two dimensions of racial socialization were correlated with each other. For subsequent analyses the interaction term and main effects associated with them were centered around the sample mean to reduce multicollinearity with main effects (Aiken & West, 1991). Interestingly, neither cultural pride nor preparation for discrimination socialization varied by gender. Grade, on the other hand, was positively associated with both variables. Older youth received more racial socialization than younger youth. Additionally, preparation for discrimination was positively correlated with racial bias as perceived by the adolescent. Those youth who perceived more racial bias received more preparation for racial discrimination as reported by their parents. Parents' perception of their child's school racial climate was not associated with either dimension of racial socialization. Self-reliance was positively related to cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization. Further, EOG test scores were significantly and positively related to the two dimensions of racial socialization. Surprisingly, racial identity or youths' connection to African Americans was not related to the dimensions of racial socialization. Racial identity was significantly and positively related to self-esteem and self-reliance.

Tables 2 and 3 show the means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for major study variables for boys and girls, respectively. Cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization were correlated for both boys and girls. EOG test scores were also found to be positively related to both dimensions of racial socialization for boys. Grade was not significantly correlated with the dimensions of racial socialization for boys. Older girls, on the other hand, received more preparation for discrimination and cultural pride

socialization than younger girls. School racial climate was negatively related to boys' perceptions of discrimination. That is, parents who perceived their son's school racial climate as less fair to African Americans had sons who also perceived more discrimination in their environments. School racial climate was negatively related to EOG test scores for girls. Specifically, parents of daughters who perceived their child's school as unfair to African Americans had daughters who received lower EOG test scores. Also, boys who reported higher self-reliance received more preparation for discrimination socialization. Girls who reported higher self-reliance received more preparation for discrimination and cultural pride socialization. Racial identity was positively related to self-esteem for boys. Boys who reported higher self-esteem also reported feeling closer to other African Americans. Neither dimension of racial socialization was significantly related to racial identity for boys or girls.

Multiple Analysis of Covariance

Grade Differences in Racial Socialization. According to Hypothesis 1 racial socialization would vary as a function of grade. Specifically, parents of older children would engage in more preparation for discrimination socialization than parents of younger children. No grade differences were anticipated in parent reports of cultural pride messages.

In order to test whether there were grade differences in racial socialization a MANCOVA was conducted using the two dimensions of racial socialization as the dependent variables. Parent education level and wave were significant predictors of both dimensions of racial socialization and thus were included in the model as covariates. This MANCOVA approached significance for the main effect of Grade, $F(4, 220) = 2.12, p = .08$. The multivariate effect for grade was driven by preparation for discrimination socialization, $F(2, 116) = 3.70, p < .05$. In post hoc analyses, difference contrasts were used to investigate

which grades differed from each other in parents' reports of racial socialization. The contrast showed that parents of eighth graders reported more preparation for discrimination socialization than did parents of sixth and seventh graders, who did not differ from each other (see Table 4). A univariate analysis examining racial pride socialization was nonsignificant.

The qualitative interviews indicate that parents' conversations with their children about issues related to race occur more often and become more complex as children mature and are exposed to more information outside the home. When asked how the conversations with her 12 year old son had changed as he matured one mother said,

As he's gotten older, the questions have become more direct. More direct, whereas you see things on T.V. It was something on T.V. where the little boy, I want to say it was about a month or so ago, where the police actually killed a boy. Um, I shouldn't say boy he was a young man. And he, they stopped him for one thing and they thought he had something, but then when they started beating him he went unconscious...that's when they called for help and when he got to the hospital he died. And my son said there have been a couple of things like that that have happened to us [Black people]? Yeah, and most of the questions and things that he's asking now are things that are going on now. The situations have changed and he's getting older and he's seeing more in school...Yeah, they've become and I think they've become more aware of that because you see more on T.V. now...Then he wasn't really watching the news and listening to the radio and seeing the little headlines in the newspaper, he wasn't seeing all that kind of stuff. Not that it wasn't there, he just wasn't into it at that point.

Most of the parents said that as their children matured their conversations about race became more sophisticated as a result of their children's interactions outside of the home and exposure to the media. Furthermore, many parents indicated that older children began to ask questions about racial discrimination and social justice issues, which prompted preparation for discrimination socialization.

Gender Differences in Racial Socialization. Hypothesis 2 stated that the frequency and content of racial socialization would vary as a function of child gender. Specifically, boys were expected to receive higher levels of racial socialization with more messages

focused on preparation for discrimination, while girls were expected to receive racial socialization messages focused on cultural socialization and pride.

In order to test whether there were gender differences in racial socialization, a MANCOVA was conducted using cultural pride and preparation for discrimination as dependent variables. Parent education level and wave were significant predictors for both dimensions of racial socialization and thus were included in the model as covariates. This MANCOVA approached significance for the main effect of Gender, $F(2, 111) = 2.82, p = .06$ (see Table 5). However, an investigation of the univariate effects showed that neither cultural pride ($p = .17$) nor preparation for discrimination socialization ($p = .73$) was significantly predicted by gender. Thus, this hypothesis was not supported by the quantitative data.

Parents' opinions about the need for different socialization of boys versus girls differed as expressed in the qualitative interviews. Those who did not think racial socialization should differ as a function of gender often said that African American boys and girls were growing up in the same society and had similar job and family responsibilities. One mother said, "Well, I think girls and boys should be told the same thing about race because we live in a society now where boys and girls are getting the same kind of jobs. In other words, they'll be in the same situation."

Conversely, half of the parents who completed the qualitative interview believed that boys and girls should receive different racial socialization messages. Of these parents, three believed that boys should receive more preparation for discrimination socialization and one mother believed that girls should receive more cultural pride socialization. It appeared that parents with male and female children who were at least adolescent age were more likely to

report differences in the extent to which they prepared their sons versus their daughters for discrimination. These parents believed that boys were more at risk for being harassed by the police, being labeled as thugs, and/or assumed to be unintelligent. One mother indicated that while Black women face problems related to racism, the problems faced by Black men were more pervasive and systematic. When asked about whether boys and girls should receive different racial socialization messages, the mother of a 14 year-old daughter said,

For the Black guys, we see that if they drive a nice car they are going to get stopped and that is a fact...or just for the way they look. They might have the baggy pants or you might find other groups [non-Blacks] have baggy pants, but they won't get stopped on the street. So, you know, it's a problem when it comes to Black guys in America. But I tell my girl, you know, it's hard for a Black man to be a man in America. It's very hard, you have to be very strong because they knock you down, you know, job-wise and everything. And for the lady, I tell them, you can exceed [succeed] too somewhat, they'll allow you to go this far, but for the man, it's harder. Not only with getting jobs and stuff, but with the other race calling names and [Black men] going to jail.

African American men may face more discrimination because they are viewed as more threatening than are African American women (Oyserman, Gant, & Ager, 1995; Pettit & Western, 2004; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Historically, Black men were viewed as more dangerous to society because they were a greater threat to the virtues of White womanhood (Nelson & Smith, 2003). One mother expressed concern about her 14 year old son dating White girls because she felt it could cause significant problems for him. When asked what would be problematic about her son dating White girls, she replied

He might have trouble with their families. You know, as far as accepting him because he's Black. I don't want him to go through nothing that he doesn't have to go through. And sometimes they [White girlfriends] cause, they get 'em [Black boys] in trouble, unnecessary trouble...basically it starts because the family doesn't like you because he's Black. And, so she can say, well, he took me, he took my keepsakes from me [rape] or just tell different little lies on him. I just don't want him to go through bad experiences.

All of the parents of sons mentioned conversations they had with their sons about dating White girls. Further, the media were believed to play a large part in the negative portrayals of African Americans and especially African American men. Additional research on gender differences in racial socialization is needed in order to disentangle these complex relationships.

Regression Analysis

The Role of Perceived Racial Bias in Preparation for Discrimination Socialization.

According to Hypothesis 3, youth's perceptions of discrimination will predict preparation for discrimination socialization. Specifically, even for youth who were younger, those who perceived relatively more racial bias would receive more preparation for discrimination socialization than youth who perceived bias. It was anticipated that probing the interaction would show that among youth who perceived lower levels of discrimination, older youth would receive more preparation for discrimination socialization.

To examine the moderating effects of youths' perceptions of racism on the relationship between age and preparation for discrimination socialization, parents' reports of preparation for discrimination was regressed on adolescents' reports of perceived discrimination, grade, and the perceived discrimination by grade interaction. Parent education level and wave were included in Step 1 of the equation as control variables. The model was significant and explained approximately 16% of the variance, $F(5, 115) = 5.33, p < .001$ (see Table 6). The change in R^2 at Step 2 of the equation showed that the increment in explained variance upon entry of the set of predictor variables was significant. Perceived discrimination ($\beta = .24, p < .05$) was positively associated with preparation for discrimination socialization. That is, youth who perceived more discrimination received more preparation

for discrimination socialization. Contrary to my hypothesis, the interaction term was not significant.

The qualitative interview with one mother substantiates the findings that youth who perceive discrimination and raise these issues with their parents are likely to receive more preparation for discrimination socialization. The mother of a 14-year-old daughter stated that her daughter was not educated enough about issues related to race and that the daughter was too disappointed when she witnessed racial discrimination. Moreover, such experiences prompted discussions about racism. The mother said,

When she's with White friends and they are looking and shopping [at the mall] and everything, she doesn't get followed the same like she does if she's with a group of Black kids. And then she's like Mommy, I can't believe they were watching us like we were going to steal something. I still think that she's not as educated as she should be about race. I'm trying to tell her, but it's kind of hard.

Children's experiences with racial discrimination likely shape the conversations they initiate with their parents and subsequent race socialization that occurs in their families.

According to Hypothesis 4, perceptions of school racial climate were expected to moderate the relationship between grade and preparation for discrimination. It was anticipated that probing the interaction would show among parents who perceived their child's school as fair, more preparation for discrimination was expected to be reported among parents of older than younger adolescents. In contrast, preparation for discrimination would be relatively high for all three ages/grades within families where school climate was negative.

Preparation for discrimination socialization was regressed on parents' perceptions of the school racial climate, grade, and the school racial climate by grade interaction. Additionally, parent education level and wave were entered in Step 1 of the equation as

control variables. The model was significant and accounted for approximately 13% of the variance, $F(5, 114) = 4.32, p < .01$. However, only parent education level significantly predicted preparation for discrimination socialization. Youth with more educated parents received more preparation for discrimination socialization. The change in R^2 at Step 2 with the entry of the set of predictor variables was nonsignificant (see Table 7). Hypothesis 4 was not supported by the quantitative data.

Qualitative data suggest that parents' perceptions of their child's school do shape their racial socialization practices. Parents also mentioned that conversations about race were shaped by their awareness of stereotypes about African Americans being unintelligent. When asked what her child should do if he was called a racist name, the mother of a 14 year old son who attended a predominately White school said,

There is this new principal that he had at [school] and to me I think she's racist compared to [old principal]. The principal always take what the person who calling the name, they [the principal] on their side. And sometimes they don't even want to listen to our son. They probably think our son started [name calling] so that's why I was saying don't say anything, you just walk away. But he comes home, he knows to come home, he knows to come home to tell us and then we can handle it.

This mother adjusted her racial socialization practices based on how she viewed the principal at her son's school. When asked about issues and situations that had brought up conversations related to race the same mother also said, "I have told him that we always have one strike against us when we step in school. One reason because we are Black and most teachers, what you find racial [sic] teachers, most of them think all Blacks are dumb."

Another mother with a 14 year old son said "either they [schools] gone try to make them [Black children] slow or make them bad, whatever. So I try to tell him he has to work even harder at what he wants." While the majority of parents did not believe school faculty had Black children's best interest in mind, other parents believed that teachers and principals

genuinely cared about all children. Findings from the quantitative study showed that parents' perceptions of their child's school racial climate were not related to their preparation for discrimination socialization; however, the qualitative interviews suggest parents' perceptions of their child's school do influence their conversations about racial issues.

Racial Socialization as a Factor in Racial Identity Development. According to Hypothesis 5, youth receiving greater levels of cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization would report a greater sense of belonging and positive feelings toward their racial group than youth receiving less race socialization. A multivariate regression equation was tested with racial identity as the dependent variable and a composite variable of cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization was entered as the predictor variable. The composite variable was created by averaging the cultural/pride socialization and preparation for discrimination subscales. A composite score for racial socialization was used because of the high correlation between cultural pride and preparation for discrimination messages. Conflict between the mother and adolescent and wave were entered as control variables in Step 1. The model was significant, $F(3, 118) = 3.57, p < .05$ and accounted for 6% of the variance. However, the main effect of racial socialization was nonsignificant (see Table 8). Conflict between the child and mother significantly predicted racial identity, with youth who reported less conflict with their mothers indicating that they had a stronger connection to the Black racial group. The change in R^2 was not significant with the addition of racial socialization as a predictor variable. For the current sample, racial socialization did not predict youth's racial identity. Although this result was inconsistent with the study hypothesis, it was consistent with the bivariate correlations which showed no relationship between racial identity and either type of racial socialization.

In the qualitative interviews, many parents said that their goal in using racial socialization was to teach their children to be proud of who they were as African Americans and to prepare them for racial discrimination. In this way, racial socialization was clearly integrated with identity as African Americans. For example, the mother of a 14 year old who attended a predominantly White middle school said,

We are strongly aware of ourselves and who we are, Black and everything... She's always on the honor roll and stuff like that so in classrooms they kinda like try to put her in with the smart White girls, you know White kids [tracking]....Look here, you can have friends from a different race, but don't try to be them...be who you are and let them accept you for that...I do try to tell my children, you know you are Black and you don't have to separate or segregate yourself, but just be proud of who you are. You can have friends from other, different races, but don't lose yourself. Just always know who you are.

This mother's quote suggests that she teaches her children about who they are as Black people; therefore, when her daughter is in a racially/ethnically diverse environment the daughter will maintain her Black identity and take pride in herself as a Black person.

The theme of African American children being able to detect racism (covert and overt) and effectively deal with it, while holding a positive view of themselves and their African American culture was present throughout the narratives. The mother of a 14-year-old daughter who attended a predominantly Black middle school said her ultimate goal in racially socializing her daughter was, "To teach my children the truth, that racism still exists and that they need to learn to cope and to get along even though it exists. They need to be aware and to embrace and love their own Black culture."

The qualitative interviews suggest that cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization are equally important to parents in teaching their children about what it means to be African American. Parents' responses suggest that African American youth need to have a strong sense of themselves as Black people, and they should be aware

of discrimination and have effective coping mechanisms at their disposal. In the quantitative study cultural pride and preparation for discrimination messages did not predict racial identity. However, the racial socialization messages transmitted by these mothers may provide their children with a sense of belonging and positive feelings toward other African Americans and be positively related to their children's racial identity development.

The Relationship between Achievement and Racial Socialization. Hypothesis 6 stated that cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization would significantly predict achievement. Specifically, cultural pride messages and moderate preparation for discrimination socialization would be positively related to EOG test scores. Because of the collinearity between the two racial socialization variables, two regression equations were used to test this hypothesis.

In the first equation the variable EOG test scores was regressed on cultural pride and the control variable parent education level. The model was significant, $F(4,63) = 5.00, p < .05$ and accounted for approximately 11% of the variance (see Table 9). However, the predictor variable was not significant; rather parent education level was driving significance because higher EOG scores were associated with greater parental education. In Step 2, the addition of cultural pride did not result in a significant change in R^2 . The bivariate correlation between pride socialization and EOG scores reported in Table 1 was significant; thus, pride socialization was positively associated with achievement. However, much of the variance in this relationship was shared with parental education.

The second model examined the relationship between preparation for discrimination socialization and EOG test scores. It was hypothesized that parents who reported moderate amounts of preparation for discrimination would have children who received higher EOG

scores than parents who reported very high or very low levels of preparation for discrimination socialization. The control variable parent education was entered in Step 1. Because a quadratic term was being tested it was necessary to control for the linear main effect of preparation for discrimination. Thus, the linear preparation for discrimination term was entered as a control variable at Step 2. The quadratic preparation for discrimination term was entered as a predictor variable for EOG test scores at Step 3. The model was significant $F(3, 63) = 3.83, p < .05$ and accounted for approximately 12% of the variance. However, the quadratic preparation for discrimination term was non-significant, $p = .53$. Rather, parent education level was driving the significant effect because more educated parents had children who received higher EOG test scores. In Step 3, the addition of the quadratic preparation for discrimination term did not result in a significant change in R^2 (see Table 10). Therefore, this hypothesis was not supported by the quantitative data.

Most of the parents who participated in the qualitative interview did not hold bachelor's degrees ($n = 6$). However, all parents except one explicitly discussed their child attending college and how both dimensions of racial socialization were preparing the youth for future academic success and their role as college students. One mother believed that teaching her daughter about race, particularly racial discrimination, would be positively related to her daughter's later academic outcomes. When asked about the race socialization practices in her family of origin, the mother replied,

My parents really did not even talk to me about race...When I went to community college I started learning more and more when I had an African American history class. I just thought it was such a disadvantage to me because I feel had I been talked to more about race I believe I probably would have went a lot farther educationally-wise [sic]...I see how important it is and as much as I want to believe...racism still exists and I don't think it will ever end.

This mother believed that if she had learned more about African American history and racism during her childhood, she would have been more successful in school. Cultural pride and preparation for discrimination socialization were expected to significantly predict achievement in the quantitative study but this hypothesis was not supported. However, both types of socialization were positively related to EOG scores in correlational analyses (see Table 1), but much of the variance in this relationship was shared with parental education. The qualitative data suggest that parents believed children's knowledge of African American history and culture as well as racism were important for children's academic success.

Achievement and Discrimination: Racial Identity as a Psychological Buffer.

According to Hypothesis 7, racial identity would buffer negative effects of discrimination in predicting achievement. Specifically, youth who perceived their environment as highly discriminatory, but who also reported a strong connection to their racial group were expected to receive higher EOG scores than youth who experienced high levels of discrimination and less affirmation and belonging to their racial group. In contrast, perceived discrimination and racial identity would be unrelated for youth who perceived their environments as fair to African Americans. Perceived discrimination, racial identity, the perceived discrimination by racial identity interaction, and parent education level (control variable) were entered as predictor variables of EOG test scores. I anticipated that the racial identity by perceived discrimination interaction would be significant, and that follow-up analyses would show that racial identity predicted EOG scores for youth who perceived high, but not low levels of discrimination. The model was significant, $F(4, 63) = 3.65, p < .05$ and accounted for 14% of the variance (see Table 11). Parental education ($\beta = .31, p < .05$) and racial identity ($\beta = .31, p < .05$) were positively related to EOG test scores. Those youth who felt more positive

about their racial group and were more connected to African Americans received higher EOG test scores. Contrary to Hypothesis 7, the interaction term was nonsignificant.

While the quantitative data did not support Hypothesis 7, the qualitative data indicate that positive feelings toward one's race and a sense of belonging would be especially important when the adolescents experienced racial barriers in education.

All parents indicated that education was important to their children's success and life outcomes. Several parents stated that it was especially important for African American children to obtain a good education in order to overcome racist institutions and policies. A number of parents reported that an important environment for their child was one that stressed academic achievement among African American youth. When asked about what environments were important for her son, one mother replied, "I have him in [a program at school] which is an enhancement for minority kids...it keeps them mentally challenged at all times. I want him to be a part of it so that he can see, um, know how important education is, especially being Black." This mother also said she wanted her son to be exposed to positive African American role models who were successful in school. When asked about what was his ultimate goal in racially socializing his son, the father of a 14 year old boy said,

Always be proud to be Black, don't never feel like you are beneath anybody because you are Black. I always think, God is, in the sight of God we are even. I tell him, we tell him that, it's not God that say that people are not equal, it's man that say that people are not equal. Never think that you are less than anybody you compete with or anybody that you go to school with or anything. You just important as anybody and always be proud.

The qualitative interviews suggested that parents wanted their children to view themselves as intelligent African Americans and that this sense of pride in self and their racial group would be related to more adaptive functioning (e.g., academic success, athletic success), consistent

with the relationship found in the quantitative data between racial identity/belongingness and higher EOG scores.

Exploratory Analysis

In addition to exploring the study hypotheses in parents' qualitative reports, an attempt was made to identify themes parents emphasized. Two additional themes emerged in the qualitative data: 1) Youth's intellectual curiosity or self-reliance would be positively related to preparation for discrimination socialization and 2) Current measures of racial socialization may be improved by examining implicit racial socialization.

Predicting Preparation for Discrimination Socialization from Self Reliance.

Children who are intellectually curious and sociable likely have different experiences than youth who are less engaged in the classroom and more reserved. The experience of one mother and her 14 year old daughter who attended a predominantly White school illustrated how children's individual distinctiveness might influence preparation for discrimination socialization. When asked about specific situations that had prompted discussions about race, the mother talked about the following incident.

Parent: We had a situation, back to the school thing, um, in the 6th grade, she's a very advanced student and in society today most teachers can't deal with the fact that African American kids can come in school and be A students. And, she was one of the kids, she's an A student, and I had you know, I was at a parent-teacher conference one time...the teacher was saying something about asking so many questions and about her [daughter] wanting to be perfect with her work and that kind of stuff...it was kind of annoying to her [teacher].

Interviewer: So what did you say to your daughter after you heard this at the parent-teacher conference?

Parent: I just asked her, you know, just asked her what went on in class and you know, what caused her to ask so many questions and she just explained that she wasn't understanding the teacher and she wanted to make sure it was clear to her what she was saying...we went further into a discussion about the other kids in the classroom and they could ask questions and it was okay, but when she did it, then it became a problem. You know, that Black and White issue again.

This quote suggests that because this African American student was very engaged in the classroom, the mother adjusted her preparation for discrimination messages accordingly. Interestingly, this student had the highest EOG scores of all participating youth. Children's individual distinctiveness likely prompts parents to provide them with differing racial socialization messages.

The current body of literature on racial socialization has understudied how psychological variables may be related to racial socialization practices. Developmental contextualism suggests that socialization is a dynamic process with children influencing parents' racial socialization practices. How might children who are intellectually curious or report higher self-reliance be socialized about racial discrimination?

To explore the relationship between self-reliance and preparation for discrimination socialization, an OLS multiple regression equation was tested. Self-reliance, grade, and the interaction of self-reliance by grade were entered as predictor variables for preparation for discrimination. Parent education was entered as a control variable. The regression equation was significant and accounted for approximately 16% of the variance, $F(4,115) = 6.36, p < .001$ (see Table 12). The change in R^2 at Step 2 of the equation showed a significant increment in explained variance upon entry of the set of predictor variables. Parent's education level ($\beta = .24, p < .05$) and self-reliance ($\beta = .28, p < .05$) were both positively related to preparation for discrimination socialization. Those youth who had more educated parents and felt more personal agency received more preparation for discrimination messages.

Measurement Issues and Racial Socialization. The qualitative data can also be used to inform the development of tools used to measure racial socialization. Interviews with

parents suggested that both implicit and explicit racial socialization are essential to teaching children about what it means to be African American. Most of the parents interviewed said that they did not have a well defined plan for racially socializing their children; rather they dealt with situations and issues as they arose. Common issues that prompted parents to engage in racial socialization were experiences of discrimination in sports and school, inter-racial dating, and negative images of African Americans in the media. More parents of sons mentioned sports and inter-racial dating as prompting conversations on racial socialization than parents of daughters. Parents of sons and daughters talked about the influence that the media had on their racial socialization practices. While most parents reported that they did not have a plan, they all said racial socialization practices should begin by at least first grade and one mother said as young as birth.

The fact that parents did not have a predetermined plan, but believe racial socialization should begin at an early age may seem contradictory. However, African American parents likely engage in *tacit* cultural styles, which implicitly teach children about Black cultural beliefs. Tacit cultural styles are based on the child's proximal socialization experiences (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985). For example, when the mother of an 11 year old son was asked about her most memorable racial socialization conversation, she replied, "It's not a whole lot to say...I mean, it's not just, today we're going to sit down and talk about being Black, our lesson is being Black. Everything is about race issues, so you know." This mother suggested that her son learns about Black culture through his proximal environment. For example, the mother also talked about conversations that take place between her son and his great grandmother. In talking to the great grandmother the son learns about the family's history and himself, which is also Black history.

Before parents begin talking about cultural pride or racial barriers, children are exposed to certain environments and parental behaviors which likely serve to teach children about race. When asked about what environments were important for her son to be a part of, the mother of an 11 year old son said,

You know, he went to an all Black Catholic school, that was one of the most important things that I wanted for him, is to be around children that were like him...Once we got, once we had that foundation built about who he was, then I let him know it was okay to be friends with this person [of a different race/ethnicity], it's okay to want to know about this person.

This mother believed that learning about African American culture by closely interacting with other African Americans was important for her son's development. This child probably learns about what it means to be African American by participating in cultural traditions and interaction with African American peers. Thus, assessment of behavioral choices such as school-related decisions and church membership may provide better measures of racial socialization. In addition to self-report questionnaires, observational techniques may shed light on why and how children are socialized about race.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

This study had two overarching purposes: 1) to examine child and contextual factors that shape the racial socialization practices of African American parents, and 2) to investigate the influence of race-related variables (i.e., identity and socialization) on children's psychological functioning and achievement. Overall, the quantitative findings from the present study suggest that older youth, youth who perceive higher levels of discrimination, and those who are more self-reliant receive more preparation for discrimination socialization. The current study also found racial identity as defined by positive feelings and a stronger connection to one's racial group to be positively related to achievement. The qualitative findings from this study expand upon the quantitative findings and also provide information about implicit racial socialization. In the following sections I will discuss implications of the findings, limitations of the current study, and conclude with a discussion of directions for future research.

Child Factors that Shape Racial Socialization

Age and gender may be viewed as two important components of the individual's identity and as such parents likely take these factors into consideration in their child-rearing goals. The gender of a child may shape what parents teach him/her about what it means to be African American because this factor may influence how others respond to the child (Nelson & Smith, 2003). In the current study, quantitative data suggest that adolescents' gender was not associated with the types of racial socialization messages they received. This result is

contradictory to the findings of Bowman and Howard (1985) and Thomas and Speight (1999), who showed that boys received more messages about racial discrimination, while girls received more messages on cultural pride. One explanation for the current finding is that parents of African American sons and daughters believe their children should be prepared to deal with discrimination regardless of gender. For example, African American boys face the most discrimination in school disciplinary practices and African American girls face more discrimination in disciplinary practices than White girls (Gregory, 1995). Parents in the qualitative study said both boys and girls are targets of discrimination, but the consequences for African American males are likely to be more severe and are more likely to affect their life outcomes.

The qualitative results suggest gender does play a role in parental racial socialization. Additionally, age of the child likely plays a major role in how parents and others respond to the child. As children grow older they begin to view their environments differently and interact with others according to their newfound perspectives (Quintana, Castaneda-English, & Ybarra, 1999). These developmental changes likely shape racial socialization. Quantitative results in the present study tentatively supported the hypothesis that older youth received more preparation for discrimination socialization than younger youth, whereas cultural pride did not differ across grades. This finding is consistent with previous work. Hughes and Chen (1997) found that preparation for discrimination messages increased with child age, but no significant differences were found in cultural pride socialization between parents of younger (4 to 8 years) and parents of older children (9 to 14 years) in their sample.

Parents probably provide older adolescents with more messages about racial discrimination because older youth have broader experiences and understand the nature and

consequences of racism more than younger adolescents. As children age they develop the ability to think more abstractly and have the tools that are necessary for more sophisticated representations of the self (Piaget, 1960). Older youth are likely asking parents direct questions about situations related to race that occur as they enter more diverse environments such as middle and high school. Additionally, older adolescents are more aware than younger youth of current events, and this awareness probably prompts questions about race and what it means to be Black in America.

While child gender and age may play a role in parents' racial socialization practices, results of this study indicate that child psychological variables also shape how parents talk with their children about race. Very little research has examined how child psychological variables might influence what parents teach their children about what it means to be African American. Children's personalities and behavior influence how others respond to them and the kinds of socialization experiences they have (Lerner et al., 1995). Findings from the present study indicate that children who feel more personal agency receive more messages preparing them for discrimination.

Some awareness of racism is probably adaptive for all African American middle school students. Further, students who are intellectually curious might be more likely to get into situations that prompt parents to talk about racial discrimination. Youth with higher self-reliance may also be more assertive in bringing up topics related to racism. By providing children who are self-directed with messages about racism, parents may be preparing these youth to deal with negative feedback from teachers who hold stereotypic views about African American intelligence.

Contextual Factors and Preparation for Discrimination Socialization

Children do not develop in a vacuum, and thus contextual as well as individual factors likely influence what parents teach their children about race. The present study examined how contextual factors such as perceived discrimination might be related to parents' racial socialization practices. Racial discrimination is a risk factor for negative psychological outcomes and lowered academic achievement in African American youth (Simons et al., 2002; Wong et al., 2003). The findings of the present study suggest that youth who perceive racial bias are more likely to receive preparation for discrimination socialization than youth who perceive less bias. Although I hypothesized that experiencing racism would drive socialization practices, the opposite relationship is also plausible. On the one hand, youth who are in environments that are hostile toward African Americans probably ask their parents how to effectively cope with discrimination. Thus, the interactions of African American adolescents with individuals from other racial/ethnic groups probably play a role in the questions youth raise with parents and subsequent racial socialization. Alternatively, youth's heightened awareness of racism may be the result of receiving frequent teachings about racism. For example, adolescents who are taught to be prepared for racial discrimination may be more sensitive to racial cues and more likely to perceive discrimination than youth who are not taught to be prepared for racism. However, some research suggests that African Americans' perceptions of racial discrimination are quite accurate (Sellers et al., in press). Future studies utilizing longitudinal designs are necessary to examine the direction of the effect between youth's perceptions of racial bias and parents' preparation for discrimination socialization practices.

While children's perceptions of racial discrimination were related in the current study to quantity of racial socialization received, it is also likely that parents' perceptions of their child's school racial climate influences parental racial socialization. Hughes (2003) found that parents' reports of discrimination were positively related to preparation for bias socialization for children ages 10 to 17-years-old. Findings from the quantitative study showed that school racial climate was not predictive of preparation for discrimination messages. In contrast, the qualitative data suggest that when parents' view their child's teachers and school administrators as racist, they transmit messages about overt and covert racial barriers to their children. One explanation for the discrepancy between the quantitative and qualitative data is that parents wanted to minimize the discrimination at their children's school in order to maintain some sense of personal control. In a study conducted by Ruggiero and Taylor (1997), women and African and Asian Americans who downplayed discrimination reported feeling more in control of their life outcomes. An alternative explanation is that the measure of school climate used in the current study, which only included two race-specific items, was not adequately sensitive.

Racial Socialization: The Building Blocks for Racial Identity

Racial socialization practices were found to be related to individual child characteristics as well as contextual factors. Racial socialization, in turn, was believed to play a role in the racial identity development of African American youth. Surprisingly, quantitative results indicated that racial socialization was not related to racial identity. This finding is consistent with the work of Smetana (2006), who conducted a five year longitudinal study examining African American racial socialization and racial identity beginning when youth were approximately 13-years-old. Because negative findings are

usually not published it is difficult to know if this finding has been replicated in additional studies.

Conversely, findings from the current qualitative study suggest that parents provide both types of racial socialization to their children to promote positive feelings about the African American racial group and to create a sense of interconnectedness. Perhaps racial socialization and racial identity as they are measured in the present study are not related to each other due to measurement issues. Much of the socialization that took place in the families was implicit. For example, many of the families interviewed socialized children about race through the environments they choose for children to be involved in (i.e., all Black schools, extracurricular activities specifically for Black youth) and through cultural, social, and religious activities at predominantly Black churches. Currently, no measurement tool(s) for implicit racial socialization are available for researchers studying racial socialization. Thus, it is important that new methodologies be considered. Diary studies that focus on the everyday experiences and perceptions of African American youth as well as observational techniques are two possible methods for assessing implicit racial socialization.

In addition to obtaining information about implicit racial socialization, the inclusion of additional items on self-report questionnaires would be beneficial. Specifically, items about families' participation in church as a form of cultural pride socialization, items that tap discussions aimed at teaching children about the consequences of racism as part of preparation for discrimination socialization, and items aimed at obtaining information about the importance of education in order for African Americans to achieve equality would improve the current measurement of racial socialization.

Finally, a measure of racial identity designed specifically for African American youth that taps multiple dimensions of racial identity would be useful to this area of research. The Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity Teen Version (MIBI-T) which was designed by Robert Sellers and colleagues may provide a more nuanced understanding of African American youth racial identity (Sellers, 2006). With an improved measure of racial socialization and a measure of racial identity specifically designed for use with African American adolescents, a significant relationship between these two constructs may be observed.

Racial Socialization and Achievement

Knowledge about the cultural traditions, accomplishments, and hardships of the African American racial group was expected promote achievement in African American youth. Results of regression analyses in the present study suggest that racial socialization does not predict achievement outcomes. Neither cultural pride socialization nor moderate amounts of preparation for discrimination socialization predicted achievement scores with parent education controlled. However, both types of socialization were positively correlated with achievement. Youth who receive little or no preparation for discrimination socialization may be unprepared to deal with racism when they encounter it. Equally, youth who receive very high levels of preparation for discrimination may become paranoid, cynical, and show poorer adjustment. In a study conducted by Harris-Britt, Valrie, Kurtz Costes and Rowley (2006) moderate amounts of preparation for discrimination were found to be optimal for the healthy development of Black youth.

Findings from the qualitative study support the hypothesis that moderate amounts of preparation for discrimination will be positively related to school achievement. Specifically,

the qualitative findings suggest that parents believe that children who are aware of African American history and culture as well as racial barriers will receive better grades than children who are less informed. A possible reason for the inconsistency between the qualitative and quantitative findings in the present study is that many factors influence academic achievement, and it is possible that only a small amount of variance in achievement is accounted for by racial socialization practices. Given the relatively small sample it may be difficult to detect significant effects.

Academic Achievement: The Role of Racial Identity

Results of the quantitative study suggest that African American youth who have a positive view of African Americans and feel connected to their racial group have better academic outcomes. Perhaps positive feelings about the African American racial group and a strong connection to one's racial group are especially important to Black students, who otherwise may feel as if they do not fit with mainstream American institutions such as school. Findings from the qualitative study were consistent with the quantitative results. In the interviews parents reported that a central component of African American identity is doing well in school and getting a good education. For many parents education and school provided the backdrop for teachings on African American identity. These findings have implications for educational interventions designed for African American students. Specifically, programs that are designed to teach youth about the contributions of African Americans (beyond Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement), and that provide historical information about and celebrate Black cultural traditions may serve to improve achievement outcomes.

Future Directions and Limitations

A limitation of the current study is the cross-sectional nature of the data, which makes it impossible to examine causality. Thus, longitudinal research is needed to examine the relationships among variables. For example, does perceived discrimination precede preparation for discrimination socialization or the reverse? Additionally, I am unaware of any published longitudinal research examining the relationship between early racial socialization and later racial identity. These phenomena may be related if we examine the relationships across time; however, longitudinal data are needed for these relationships to be fully examined.

Longitudinal data would also allow researchers to examine racial identity development across time. In the present study racial identity is believed to become more integrated with youth's other identities (e.g., gender) as they mature. The African American racial identity development theory of Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001) suggests that African American youth's racial identities are built upon previous experiences and parents' racial socialization practices. Specifically, the authors contend that Black identity development begins at infancy, and during infancy and childhood the individual is shaped by his environment, such as family traditions and histories, kinship networks, local institutions (e.g., school, church), macroinfluences, and overarching historical trends (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). Thus, for older adolescents who probably have broader experiences and receive more sophisticated racial socialization messages than younger youth, differing relationships may be observed among racial identity, racial socialization, and achievement. Cross-sectional data are informative; however, longitudinal data will allow developmental scientists to truly

examine how children change across time—an area of research that has not been discussed in the published literature on African American racial identity and racial socialization.

In addition to longitudinal designs, the current study also raises questions about how child psychological variables are related to racial socialization. Very little research has examined how children's personalities might influence the way parents teach them about race. However, children's individual distinctness greatly influences the ways in which they interact with others (Lerner et al., 1995). Taken together, the qualitative and quantitative data suggest that children's self-reliance plays an important role in the way teachers and parents interact with students. This is an important area of research that has yet to be fully explored.

Another topic that should be investigated is the measurement of implicit racial socialization. Often measurement design is neglected because it is not seen as exciting, and it can often be difficult to obtain funding for this type of work (McLoyd, 2006). Deliberate and explicit verbalizations are the most commonly studied socialization practices (Hughes & Chen, 1999). Hughes (2003) notes a need for more extensive measures of racial socialization if we are to capture true variation in the types of things parents do to socialize their children. The qualitative data suggest that from the time children are infants, parents are engaged in racial socialization by means of placing their children in certain environments. Additionally, parents' and other family members' values, judgments, and preferences may socialize children about race. Therefore, observational techniques may be one way to obtain information on non-verbal types of racial socialization. For example, observational techniques may provide information about how parents' values, beliefs, and preferences teach children about what it means to be African American and how to interact with non-

Blacks. Moreover, observational techniques would allow researchers to study racial socialization messages that parents may or may not even realize they are transmitting to their children.

Extended family often plays an important role in African American family life (McAdoo, 2002; Sanders-Thompson, 1994). Thus, examining racial socialization in extended family members is also an area of research that should be investigated. Sanders-Thomas (1994) found that extended family members socialized children more frequently about race than parents. In the qualitative interviews in the current study, many parents said they learned about race from siblings, extended family members, and fictive kin. It would be interesting to examine how siblings and peers socialize each other about race.

Conclusions

The current study sheds light on several important areas of African American child development. First, this study provides information about how younger adolescents who are transitioning to later adolescence are being socialized about race and what it means to be African American. Specifically, this study shows children's individual distinctiveness, maturity level, and the way in which they perceive the world shapes parents' preparation for discrimination socialization. The current study also provides evidence which suggest positive feelings about one's racial group and sense of connectedness to the group promote achievement.

Understanding how child and contextual factors shape racial socialization, and how race-related variables such as identity and socialization are related to children's achievement are important topics because they have theoretical significance as well as implications for educational policy. For example, findings from this study can be used to improve the Triple

Quandary theory, which provides the framework for many studies on racial socialization. Specifically, revisions to the theory that make more explicit how child psychological variables may shape racial socialization would be useful to the field of racial socialization. In addition to theoretical improvements, a curriculum that teaches children about the contributions of African Americans to our society may promote achievement in Black youth. Educational programming of this nature would probably be beneficial to children from diverse ethnic/racial groups. African American youth are developing in an increasingly diverse society and as such they must navigate new and changing relationships. Thus, understanding what factors prompt parents to engage in racial socialization and what factors are related to achievement will hopefully lead to healthier psychological development for African American youth.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for Variables of Interest

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Grade	7.07	.83	1	.60	-.09	.10	.03	-.02	.12	.05	.21	.22*	.20*	.09	-.02	-.01
2. Gender	.54	.50		1	.05	.04	.22*	.06	-.03	-.19*	-.05	-.13	.01	-.07	.12	.13
3. Perceived Discrimination	4.03	3.19			1	-.12	.06	.35**	-.06	-.03	.10	.17	.23*	-.13	-.01	-.07
4. Racial Identity	4.34	.80				1	-.27**	-.05	.28**	.22*	.21	.08	.02	-.03	.04	.08
5. Conflict Mom	2.61	3.21					1	.20*	-.17	-.43**	-.05	-.15	-.20*	.04	-.12	-.11
6. Conflict Dad	3.45	4.91						1	-.04	-.14	-.07	.03	.03	.02	-.06	.16
7. Self-esteem	7.22	1.34							1	.33**	.07	.11	-.01	-.16	.20*	-.03
8. Self-reliance	6.20	1.14								1	.12	.19*	.32**	.02	.20*	.05
9. EOG Score	258	7.65									1	.29*	.29*	.08	.34**	.02
10. Cultural Pride	3.67	.94										1	.74**	.03	.32**	.06
11. Preparation for Discrimination	3.27	1.07											1	.02	.28**	.12
12. School Race Climate	3.46	.90												1	-.02	-.03
13. Parent Education Level	5.34	1.53													1	.18
14. Percentage of Black Students	41.58	25.81														1

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

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for Boys

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Grade	7.12	.84	1	-.24	.11	.11	-.11	.17	.08	-.03	.18	.11	.23	.05	-.09
2. Perceived Discrimination	4.19	3.13		1	-.10	-.01	.44**	-.09	-.14	.23	.23	.25	-.26*	-.02	-.02
3. Racial Identity	4.37	.89			1	-.33**	.11	.35**	.24	.22	.05	.03	-.01	.05	-.01
4. Conflict Mom	3.25	3.92				1	.28*	-.20	-.47**	.03	-.20	-.27*	.08	-.16	-.20
5. Conflict Dad	3.72	4.98					1	-.14	-.29*	-.03	.06	-.14	-.16	-.10	.02
6. Self-esteem	7.19	1.30						1	.25*	.02	-.06	-.01	-.15	.12	-.11
7. Self-reliance	6.00	1.28							1	.10	.09	.34**	-.02	.24	.03
8. EOG Score	258	7.45								1	.26	.36*	.47**	.44*	-.01
9. Cultural Pride	3.56	.93									1	.76**	.02	.23	-.06
10. Preparation for Discrimination	3.29	1.15										1	.04	.31*	.04
11. School Race Climate	3.40	.93											1	.01	.04
12. Parent Education Level	5.51	1.58												1	.19
13. Percentage of Black Students	44.78	25.10													1

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

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for Girls

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Grade	7.02	.83	1	.07	.07	-.23	.08	.06	.04	.47**	.28*	.31*	-.10	-.10	.05
2. Perceived Discrimination	3.84	3.29		1	-.16	.20	.24	-.03	.17	-.01	.13	.22	.03	-.02	-.15
3. Racial Identity	4.31	.70			1	-.17	-.30*	.20	.21	.22	.12	.02	-.04	.01	.21
4. Conflict Mom	1.86	1.87				1	.02	-.13	-.20	-.17	.01	-.05	.001	-.18	-.04
5. Conflict Dad	3.14	4.87					1	.07	.14	-.03	.13	.23	.28	-.02	.29*
6. Self-esteem	7.26	1.41						1	.46**	.11	.26	-.001	-.19	.31*	.05
7. Self-reliance	6.43	.90							1	.13	.34*	.31*	.08	.21	.14
8. EOG Score	259	7.93								1	.31	.23	-.34*	.25	.06
9. Cultural Pride	3.79	.94									1	.75**	.02	.47**	.21
10. Preparation for Discrimination	3.26	.99										1	-.01	.23	.22
11. School Race Climate	3.52	.76											1	-.05	-.09
12. Parent Education Level	5.15	1.47												1	.14
13. Percentage of Black Students	38.16	26.34													1

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

Table 4

Mean Differences for Dimensions of Racial Socialization as a Function of Grade

	<u>Grade</u>		
	6	7	8
1. Cultural Pride ^{ns}	3.51 (1.00)	3.41 (0.94)	4.00 (0.82)
2. Preparation for Discrimination	3.16 ^a (1.08)	2.91 ^a (1.00)	3.63 ^b (1.01)
	<i>n</i> = 38	<i>n</i> = 38	<i>n</i> = 43

Means did not differ, ns

Note. Standard deviations are listed in parenthesis. Superscript letters indicate which means differed significantly at $p < .05$.

Table 5

Mean Differences in Dimensions of Racial Socialization as a Function of Gender

	<u>Gender</u>	
	Girls	Boys
1. Cultural Pride ^{ns}	3.78 (1.00)	3.56 (.93)
2. Preparation for Discrimination ^{ns}	3.23 (.96)	3.29 (1.15)
	<i>n</i> = 56	<i>n</i> = 63

Means do not significantly differ, ns

Note. Standard deviations are listed in parenthesis.

Table 6

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Adolescent Perceived Discrimination, Grade, and the Interaction Term as Predictors of Preparation for Discrimination Socialization

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.10**	.12			
Parent Education			.21	.06	.30**
Wave			.44	.20	.20*
Step 2: Variables	.16***	.08			
Parent Education			.21	.06	.30*
Wave			.36	.20	.16
Perceived Discrimination			.08	.03	.24*
Grade			.22	.11	.17
Perceived Discrimination x Grade			.01	.04	.03

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 7

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Parents' Perceptions of School Racial Climate, Grade, and the Interaction Term as Predictors of Preparation for Discrimination Socialization

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>ΔR²</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	<i>β</i>
	.10 ^{**}	.12			
Parent Education			.21	.06	.30 ^{**}
Wave			.45	.20	.20 [*]
Step 2: Variables	.13 ^{**}	.05			
Parent Education			.21	.06	.31 ^{**}
Wave			.43	.21	.19
School Climate			.001	.12	.001
Grade			.19	.12	.15
School Climate x Grade			.24	.13	.16

^{**} $p < .01$, ^{*} $p < .05$

Table 8

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Racial Socialization Composite Variable as Predictor of Racial Identity

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.07**	.09			
Conflict- Mom			-.07	.02	-.26**
Wave			.19	.15	.11
Step 2: Variables	.06*	.0004			
Conflict- Mom			-.07	.02	-.27**
Wave			.20	.16	.11
Composite Racial Socialization Variable			-.02	.08	-.02

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 9

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Cultural Pride as a Predictor of EOG Test Scores

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.10*	.12			
Parent Education			1.59	.56	.34*
Step 2: Variables	.11*	.03			
Parent Education			1.24	.61	.26*
Cultural Pride			1.44	1.06	.18

**
 $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 10

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Quadratic Preparation for Discrimination as a Predictor of EOG Test Scores

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.10*	.12			
Parent Education			1.59	.56	.34*
Step 2: Variables	.13*	.04			
Parent Education			1.35	.57	.29*
Preparation for Discrimination			1.47	.86	.21
Step 3: Variables	.12*	.01			
Parent Education			1.36	.58	.29*
Preparation for Discrimination			-1.89	5.37	-.27
Moderate Prep. for Discrimination			.53	.83	.48

**
 $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Table 11

Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Perceived Discrimination, Preparation for Discrimination, and the Interaction Term as Predictors of EOG Test Scores

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.10 [*]	.12			
Parent Education			1.59	.56	.34 [*]
Step 2: Variables	.14 [*]	.08			
Parent Education			1.47	.55	.31 [*]
Perceived Discrimination			2.11	.29	.09
Racial Identity			3.01	1.28	.31 [*]
Perceived Discrimination x Racial Identity			-.60	.36	-.21

**
^{*}
 $p < .01$, $p < .05$

Table 12

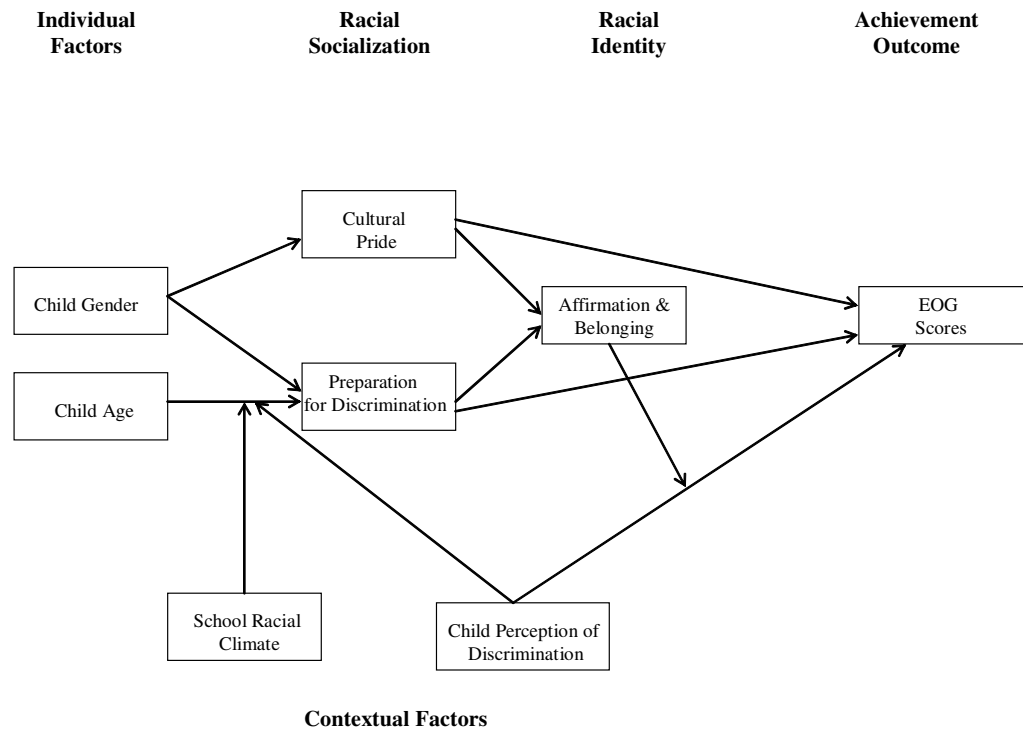
Results of Multiple Regression Analyses of Grade, Self-Reliance, and the Interaction Term as Predictors of Preparation for Discrimination Socialization

Step 1: Variables	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	ΔR^2	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
	.07**	.10			
Parent Education			.19	.06	.28*
Step 2: Variables	.16***	.08			
Parent Education			.16	.06	.24*
Grade			.21	.11	.16
Self-Reliance			.26	.09	.28*
Grade x Self-Reliance.			.10	.10	.08

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Figure 1

Illustration of Proposed Relationships among Variables Tested in the Major Hypotheses



Appendix 1

Qualitative Interview Protocol

1. What is the age and gender of your child who participated in the interview?
2. Have you thought about how you will talk to your child about issues and situations surrounding race?
3. What is your plan for socializing your child about issues concerning race?
4. At what age do you think it's appropriate to start socializing a child about what it means to be Black in U.S. society? How would you or did you do that with your child?
5. How have your interactions with your child about race changed as s/he got older?
6. Thinking in terms of race socialization, what types of environments do you think are important for your child to be a part of?
7. What are specific examples of some of the things that would prompt you to use race socialization with your child?
8. As a parent do you help your child interpret the racial implications or meanings of the different experiences he/she has?
9. Do you think being Black influences the interactions and the way that other people react to your child?
10. What is your most memorable conversation with your child about issues concerning race?
11. What do you tell your child to do if another person calls him/her racially insulting names? Why?

12. Do you think Black boys and girls should receive different information from their parents about what it means to be Black in the U.S.? If so, please give me examples.
13. How do members of your extended family teach your child about issues surrounding race?
14. How does the media, for example, television and music, influence your race socialization practices?
15. How does your own upbringing, for example the way your parents talked to you about what it means to be Black influence the race socialization practices that you use with your child?
16. How does your spirituality or religion influence the way in which you socialize your child about race?
17. How do your interactions with your co-workers influence the ways in which you racially socialize your child?
18. What do you want to achieve with your child in terms of your race socialization practices?
19. When you think about the influences your race socialization practices have on your child, what kind of outcomes do you hope to see in your child because of them?

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