Unpacking racial socialization: Considering female African American primary caregivers' racial identity

Krista Maywalt Scottham and
Bates College

Ciara P. Smalls
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Abstract

The relationship between female African American primary caregivers' racial identity and their racial socialization emphases was examined. Three components of racial identity were evaluated: (1) the importance of race to the self-concept (centrality); (2) affective feelings towards group membership (private regard); and, (3) perceptions of how group members are perceived by nonmembers (public regard). Latent class cluster analysis was used to identify racial identity profiles, or dominant combinations of racial centrality, private regard, and public regard among a sample of 208 female African American primary caregivers. Mean differences in the content of caregivers' socialization emphases by profile group were then assessed. Findings indicated that caregivers' with different identity profiles emphasized different messages. These findings and their implications are discussed.

Keywords

Cluster Analysis; Family Processes; Family Diversity; Parent-adolescent relations; U.S. Families/ African American

In a review of the race socialization literature, Hughes and colleagues call for a more nuanced look at the relationship between racial identity and race socialization emphases among caregivers (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006). The current study answers this call by examining the combined effects of previously unexamined facets of racial identity, illuminating how female caregivers' beliefs about race and intergroup relations (racial identity) influence the types of messages that they transmit to their children.

Racial socialization

Defined as verbal and behavioral messages transmitted to younger generations for the development of values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs regarding the meaning and significance of race and racial stratification, racial socialization represents the process by which caregivers teach children about the social meaning of race and racial group membership (Lesane-Brown, 2006; Lesane-Brown, Brown, Caldwell, & Sellers, 2005). Racial socialization is common among African Americans, who are faced with the daunting task of providing information that will allow their children to survive and prosper in a

Correspondence should be addressed to Krista Scottham, Department of Psychology, Pettingill Hall, Bates College, Lewiston, ME, 04240, (207) 786-6088, kscottha@bates.edu; or, Ciara Smalls, Department of Psychology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, (734) 647-3954, cpsmalls@email.unc.edu.

society that often devalues African American culture (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Caughy, O-Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002; Stevenson, Reed, & Bodison, 1996; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). Indeed, a growing body of literature indicates that racial socialization can protect African American youth from the negative effects of prejudice and discrimination (Fischer & Shaw, 1999), nurture the development of positive in group attitudes (Demo & Hughes, 1990; O'Connor, Brooks-Gunn, & Graber, 2000), and buttress youths' self-concept (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002), which has been associated with positive life outcomes such as academic achievement (Chavous, Bernat, Schmeelk-Cone, Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, & Zimmerman, 2003).

The majority of race socialization research has focused on determining the types of messages that caregivers communicate to their children; although experts have not reached consensus about the number and nature of these messages, several types have consistently emerged across the literature. Specifically, although researchers have used different terminologies to define them, themes related to the existence of *egalitarianism*, *racial group pride*, *racial barriers*, and engagement in activities or *behaviors* involving African American culture, are shared by many of the existing theoretical conceptualizations and empirical findings related to racial socialization among African Americans (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Stevenson, 1994; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990).

Egalitarian messages have been identified as the most frequently emphasized message among African American caregivers. When transmitting egalitarian messages, caregivers try to teach children that all racial groups are equal and that, although important, race is not a self-defining characteristic (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, & Stevenson, 2006). Research findings consistently highlight the emergence of racial group pride messages as another salient feature of racial socialization among African American caregivers (Coard et al., 2004; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Marshall, 1995; Thornton et al., 1990). Caregivers who emphasize racial group pride attempt to inculcate knowledge about heritage and feelings of group unity. When transmitting racial barrier messages caregivers try to teach children about the existence of racial discrimination and racism. For example, caregivers may tell their children that people will treat them badly because of their racial group membership. In addition to communicating verbally with their children, there is evidence that caregivers also transmit racial socialization messages by modeling behaviors (e.g., cooking traditional foods), structuring children's environments (e.g., displaying African American art or books in the home; Caughy, Randolph, & O'Campo, 2002; Parke, 2004), or selectively reinforcing children's behaviors (e.g., attending children's race related activities; Hughes & Chen, 1999).

Race socialization may be shaped by caregiver, child and situational characteristics. For instance, there is evidence that caregivers engage in racial socialization more frequently with their daughters than their sons (Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, & Ezell, 2007), and emphasize racial barrier and egalitarian messages to their sons, and racial pride messages to their daughters (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Thomas & Speight, 1999), although subsequent research has not replicated this (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002; Scott, 2003). Similarly, positive relationships between socioeconomic indicators and the frequency of racial socialization have also been reported (Brown et al., 2007), with higher SES caregivers reporting greater engagement in Behavioral type socialization and greater emphasis on racial pride (Caughy et al., 2002; Hill, 1997; Hughes & Chen, 1997).

Racial Identity and Race Socialization

The racial socialization messages that caregivers choose to emphasize are also influenced by their racial identity, or attitudes and beliefs about their racial group membership (Hughes, 2003; Romero, Cuellar, & Roberts, 2000; Thomas & Speight, 1999). According to identity theory (Stryker, 1987), individuals may vary widely in both the extent to which they identify with their group and in their definitions of self with regard to their group. With respect to the former, each individual has a number of hierarchically ordered identities, and within this hierarchy one identity can be more important to an individual than another. Several models of identity have incorporated an emphasis on perceived importance of group membership (e.g. Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). Consistent with these theories, contemporary models of racial identity support group identification as a key component of African American racial identity, acknowledging wide heterogeneity in the importance that African Americans place on group membership (Cross, 1971; Cross, 1991; Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Phinney, 1992; Sellers et al., 1998). Although, early conceptualizations of African American racial identity asserted a positive connection between group identification and psychological functioning, more contemporary work asserts that individuals with both high and low identification can be psychologically healthy (Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991; Vandiver, Fhagen-Smith, Cokley, Cross, & Worrell, 2001).

The social or collective self, defined as the aspect of the self-concept that derives from knowledge of and feelings about membership in a social group, also plays an important role in individual identity (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990; Luhtanen & Crocker 1993; Stryker, 1987). Modern conceptualizations of racial identity among African Americans assert that the degree to which African Americans feel positively or negatively about their racial group membership *and* the degree to which they feel African Americans are viewed positively or negatively by others represent two distinct and equally important facets of racial identity among African Americans (Cross, 1991; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Demo, 1989).

In this study we utilized two dimensions of the multidimensional model of racial identity (MMRI) to capture the perceived importance of group membership and feelings towards group membership: (1) racial *centrality*; and, (2) *racial regard*. Racial centrality refers to the extent to which an individual normatively emphasizes racial group membership as part of their overall self-concept. Racial regard refers to positive or negative feelings about African American group membership, and is divided into two subdimensions: *public* and *private.* Public regard is defined as the extent to which an individual feels that others view the African American community in a positive or negative manner. Private regard is defined as the extent to which an individual feels positively or negatively toward the African American community as well as how she/he feels about being a member of this community. In addition to its grounding within traditional and contemporary identity theory, the MMRI was used within the current research because it considers the unique historical and cultural contexts associated with African American group membership and allows each individual to subjectively define what it means to be a member of the African American community, placing no value judgments regarding healthy or unhealthy identities (Sellers et al., 1998).

Linking racial identity with racial socialization, there is evidence that caregivers who report that race is an important part of their self-concept (higher levels of racial centrality) are more likely to emphasize racial pride when engaging in racial socialization (Hughes, 2003; Romero, Cuellar, & Roberts, 2000; Thomas & Speight, 1999). Like racial centrality, private and public regard likely influence the racial socialization process. For instance, caregivers who feel positively about being African American (e.g., high private regard) may be more likely to emphasize racial pride messages than those who do not. Similarly, caregivers who feel as though African Americans are viewed negatively by others (e.g., low public regard) may be more likely to emphasize the existence of racial barriers than caregivers with high

public regard. Surprisingly, however, the relationship between private regard, public regard, and parent racial socialization emphases has not yet been empirically explored. Given this, the current research explores racial centrality and regard dimensions within the context of racial socialization messages among female African American primary caregivers.

Study Significance

Racial centrality and regard do not exist in isolation within the psyche (Sellers et al., 1998); unique combinations of these factors may differentially influence the racial socialization process. For instance, the documented relationship between centrality and racial pride messages (Hughes, 2003; Romero et al., 2000; Thomas & Speight, 1999) may be accentuated among caregivers who also feel positively about being African American (high private regard) and muted among caregivers who feel negatively about being African American (low private regard; Hughes et al., 2006). Therefore, in addition to considering under explored facets of racial identity in relation to socialization emphases, the current project utilizes a profile approach to examine racial identity. This approach has been used in previous examinations of racial identity, mental health (Neville, 2000) and academic outcomes (Chavous, et al., 2003) and allows for an examination of the combined effects of centrality and regard on race socialization emphases, yielding more nuanced insight into psychological functioning than a single variable approach in which each facet of racial identity is used independently to predict an outcome.

Thus, the primary objective of the current study was to examine the influence of racial identity on socialization emphases among female African American caregivers by considering the tripartite influence of centrality, private and public regard. The lack of research examining racial regard within the context of racial socialization, and research examining centrality and regard in conjunction with one another warranted analyses that were exploratory in nature. As a result, no a priori hypotheses were made.

Method

Participants

A sample of 208 African American female caregivers drawn from the first wave of a longitudinal study on racial socialization was used in the present analyses. The caregivers were recruited across all middle and high schools in a Southeastern Michigan school district. School district records indicate that 17 percent of the 6,710 students in grades 7–11 in the district were African American. Sixty-six percent of caregivers (N=308) agreed to participate in the longitudinal study out of 465 who were eligible because their self-identified African American child participated in the project. This 66 percent response rate included 308 individuals of whom 210 met the inclusion criteria for this analysis. Even though male and female primary caregivers from a range of racial backgrounds participated in the study (N=308), only African American female caregivers of self-identified African American adolescents were included within the current data set in order to maximize statistical power (resulting in an n=210). Two cases (1%) were dropped due to missing data on the socialization messages (resulting in final n=208). Eighty-eight percent of the female sample were mothers (n = 183). Approximately 8% of the sample were grandmothers (n = 17). The remaining 5% of participants (n = 10) were related to the target child in other ways (e.g., stepmother, foster parent). Participants ages ranged from 23 to 74 ($M = 41.70$, $SD = 8.07$). The parents in the sample responded to racial emphases of the target child, who was on average 14 years old (age range: 11–17years) and was in the 7–11th grades ($M = 8^{th}$ grade, $SD = 1.04$). Child gender was nearly evenly divided, 43% male (n = 90) and 57% female (n = 118). Forty-one percent of the sample was married (n = 85), 32 percent were single (n = 66), 17 percent were divorced (n = 36) and the remaining caregivers (10%, n =

21) had another marital status (e.g., single living with partner, separated, widowed). When asked about their educational attainment, approximately half of female caregivers reported receiving at least "an Associates, trade, or technical degree" (52%, n=108).

Procedure

The sample was recruited through each of the eleven middle and high schools in a Southeastern Michigan school district. Parents were initially contacted through information provided by their child's school district. The school district provided the study team with contact information for parents of children identified as African American, Biracial, or other. Letters endorsed by the school district were sent to parents to invite them and their child to participate in a three-year longitudinal study on racial socialization, racial identity, and youth achievement (see Neblett, White, Ford, Philip, Nguyên, & Sellers, in press for a more detailed review of the longitudinal study procedure). Parent administrations were an hour in length and were held in local public areas such as the public libraries and community centers. Trained African American research assistants were on-site to conduct each administration and to address questions. Participants were compensated with forty dollars for their participation in the first wave of the study. All procedures were approved by an Institutional Review Board prior to data collection.

Measures

Racial identity—Three subscales from the Multidimensional Model of Black Identity were used to create the racial identity clusters (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). Responses were provided on a 7 point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). racial centrality examined the extent to which being Black was an important part of the person's overall self-concept (4 items, alpha = .78). A sample item includes "Being Black is an important reflection of who I am." Private regard assessed the positive evaluation of one's racial group (3 items, alpha = .73). A sample item includes "I feel good about Black people." Public regard examined the extent to which the individual believed that others held positive evaluations of the Black racial group. For example, "In general, other groups view Blacks in a positive manner" (4 items, alpha = .75).

Racial socialization—The Racial Socialization Questionnaire-Parent (RSQ-P) was used to assess the six parental socialization emphases (adapted from Lesane-Brown, Scottham, Nguyen, & Sellers, 2008). The items were adapted from a child-reported measure to assess parents' reports of racial messages they communicate to their children. Parents reported their frequency of providing messages on a 3 point scale (0 = *never*; 1 = *once or twice*; 2 = *more than twice*). egalitarian items (4 items, alpha = .66) assessed how frequently parents communicated that people of all races are equal in status. A sample item includes "[I have] told the target child that because of opportunities today, hardworking Blacks have the same chance to succeed as anyone else." Racial pride items assessed how frequently parents encouraged the child to take pride in their racial group and the norms, history, and customs associated with that group (6 items, alpha = .62). For example "[I have] told the target child never to be ashamed of his/her Black features (e. g., hair texture, skin color, lip shape, etc.)." Racial barrier items assess how frequently parents transmitted messages designed to prepare the child for racial adversity in the broader society (4 items, alpha = .76). A sample item includes "[I have] told the target child that Blacks have to work twice as hard as Whites to get ahead." Behavioral items assessed how frequently parents engaged in activities or behaviors related to Black culture with their child (5 items, alpha = .74). For example, "[I have] bought the target child books about Black people." Higher scores for each scale reflect more frequent socialization.

Analytic Plan

First, Latent profile analysis was performed to examine the profiles of maternal caregivers' racial identity. Latent Class Gold was used to perform the cluster analysis. Latent class analysis is a multivariate technique in which latent constructs are created from indicator variables and used to create clusters. Identifying the appropriate cluster solution using this method involves several steps. First, model fits and comparisons are assessed using the likelihood ratio chi-squared statistic (L^2). Typically L^2 is compared to the chi-squared distribution. However, L^2 is not well approximated when the number of indicators of the number of categories is large. Consequently, the alternative bootstrap *p*-value is recommended (Langeheine, Pannekoek, & Van de Pol, 1996). Lastly, the Bayes Information Criterion (BIC), which is a goodness of fit measure that accounts for the parsimony of the model, is examined; a lower BIC value indicates that the model is a more appropriate fit to the data. The Latent Gold program also provides the bivariate residual (BVR) as a diagnostic statistic that assesses the bivariate relationships among indicators (Magidson & Vermunt, 2004). Bivariate residuals were examined after a solution had been acquired.

Once an appropriate cluster solution had been obtained, Analyses of Covariance were conducted to investigate the roles of the control variables (child gender and household income), and racial identity profiles, on the four socialization messages. A Bonferroni correction was used to control for the four tests (.05/4 = .01).

Results

The associations among racial identity, racial socialization, and the demographic characteristics were examined using Pearson's product-moment correlations (Table 1). Overall, parent racial identity was correlated with several of the racial socialization messages. Racial centrality was positively correlated with parent messages around racial adversity (barrier messages), racial pride, and socialization behaviors. Similarly, parents' regard for their racial group (private regard) was positively associated with barrier messages, pride messages, and socialization behaviors. Public regard however, was not associated with the socialization messages.

Racial Identity Clusters

Five latent class models (ranging from 1–5 clusters) were estimated using the subscales of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI). Summary statistics for these models are displayed in Table 2. Of the five models estimated, the four-cluster solution appeared to be the most appropriate fit to the data. The four-cluster model had a low BIC (1821.97), a non-significant bootstrap *p*-value (.23), and a substantial reduction in L^2 (42.77%) over the baseline. Although the three-cluster solution had a lower BIC (1808.27), it also had a higher L^2. Likewise, the five-cluster models showed a slight further reduction in L^2 but also had a larger BIC, suggesting that the solution with parsimony and the greatest explanatory power was the four-cluster model. The four-cluster model had acceptable bivariate residuals and was adopted as the final cluster solution used in the study analyses.

Raw and standardized means of each racial identity variable can be found in Table 3. Because the emergent patterning of centrality, private and public regard represented in the emergent profiles bears some similarity to those identified by Chavous and colleagues (2003), similar labels have been used to identify two of the current profiles.

The first cluster was labeled *buffering defensive* (n = 40). This cluster, which comprised 19% of the sample, was characterized by high scores on the racial identity variables pertaining to self-perceptions around being African American (centrality and private regard); however, public regard was far below the sample mean (1 SD). Thus, parents in this

cluster felt very connected to their Black identity, felt very positively about Blacks, and believed that others viewed Blacks in a less positive manner. The next cluster was labeled *idealized* (n = 65) and comprised 31% of the sample. This cluster was characterized by high scores relative to the rest of the sample on public regard (1 SD above the mean) and was similar to the buffering defensive cluster on the private regard and centrality scores, all of which were above the standardized means. In general, parents in this cluster felt their Black identity was very important, felt very positively about Blacks, and believed that others generally viewed Blacks positively. The third cluster (the low affiliation cluster), comprised 20 percent of the sample (n = 42) and was characterized by scores at least one standard deviation below the means on centrality and private regard. However the scores for public regard were less than half a standard deviation above the mean. The final cluster was labeled *moderate* (n = 61). This cluster, which comprised 30% of the sample, was characterized by scores near the mean on all three racial identity variables. Public regard scores were the lowest, at about one half a standard deviation below the mean. The sample size for this cluster was originally 63 however, 2 participants were dropped from the analyses due to missing data.

Racial Identity, Covariates, and Racial Identity Profiles

The clusters differed by mean levels of centrality, public and private regard (Table 3). The clusters were significantly different with respect to mean levels of public regard, F (3, 201) = 102.32, $p < .001$. Specifically, parents in each cluster reported significantly different levels of public regard relative to parents in the remaining clusters (with parents in the idealized cluster reporting the highest averages). The clusters also differed by private regard, F (3, 205) = 54.73, $p < .001$. Mean scores for private regard in the idealized and buffering defensive clusters were significantly higher than those for the moderate and low affiliation clusters. Finally, the clusters differed by racial centrality, F (3, 205) = 104.01, $p < .001$. Parents in each cluster reported significantly different levels of centrality relative to parents in the remaining clusters (with the low affiliation cluster reporting the lowest means). Pairwise comparisons of the identity cluster differences by racial socialization were also examined (table 3). There were no cluster differences by household income or by child gender.

Racial Identity Profiles and Racial Socialization Messages

To explore whether parents located in different clusters transmitted different messages to their children Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVA) were estimated with each of the racial socialization emphases where child gender and household income were entered as covariates (Tables 4). A Bonferroni correction was used to control for the four tests, one for each socialization message ($p = .01$).

A significant main effect was found for cluster group membership in the ANCOVA examining racial pride, F (3, 208) = 4.28, $p < .01$. In general, the covariates were not significantly associated with Pride socialization. The post-hoc comparisons revealed that caregivers in the buffering defensive ($M = 1.94$, $SD = .17$) cluster provided higher frequencies of racial pride messages relative to caregivers in the low affiliation ($M = 1.70$, $SD = .43$) and moderate ($M = 1.71$, $SD = .47$) clusters.

A significant main effect emerged for cluster group membership in the model predicting Behavioral socialization, F (3, 208) = 7.33, $p < .001$. There was also a main effect for household income such that higher income was marginally associated with more behavioral socialization, F (1, 208) = 5.70, $p=.018$. Post-hoc analyses revealed that parents in the buffering defensive ($M = 1.62$, $S D = .41$) and idealized ($M = 1.54$, $SD = .47$) clusters

provided significantly more behavioral socialization than parents in the *low affiliation* ($M = 1.24$, $SD = .45$) and moderate clusters ($M = 1.31$, $SD = .50$).

In the model examining racial barrier messages, a main effect for cluster group membership approached significance, F (3, 208) = 3.24, $p = .02$, though the covariates were not associated with barrier socialization. More specifically, caregivers in low affiliation cluster ($M = 1.12$, $SD = .68$) provided fewer barrier messages than any other cluster, though the comparison approached significance only for the idealized cluster ($M = 1.46$, $SD = .53$).

The ANCOVA predicting egalitarian socialization was not significant, F (3, 208) = .33, *n.s.* None of the covariates or the racial identity clusters were related to egalitarian messages. Post-hoc analyses did not reveal differences between the clusters. On average, parents in the low affiliation cluster reported a slightly lower frequency of egalitarian scores ($M = 1.52$, $SD = .51$) though it was not significantly different from the other clusters.

Discussion

The current research was designed to explore the ways in which racial identity influences the racial socialization process among female African American primary caregivers. Findings indicate that caregivers' racial identity does influence the messages that they emphasize to their children. Primary results and the practical implications of this are discussed in more detail below.

Prior to investigating the relationship between caregivers' racial identity and racial socialization emphases, cluster analysis was used to identify racial identity profiles, or dominant combinations of racial centrality, private and public regard within the sample. Findings supported the emergence of four racial identity profiles: buffering defensive, idealized, low affiliation, and moderate. The emergent patterning of centrality, private and public regard scores within the buffering defensive and idealized clusters for the current data is consistent with two of the four emergent clusters reported by Chavous and colleagues (2003); because of their similarity they were given the same names. The similarities between the current profiles of African American caregivers' racial identity and previous research with teens suggests some stability in the presence and patterning of centrality, private and public regard during adolescence and adulthood. However, further longitudinal research is needed before any definitive conclusions can be made.

According to the results, overall, caregivers located in the buffering defensive and idealized clusters engage in racial socialization more frequently than caregivers located in the low affiliation and moderate clusters. Specifically, caregivers in the buffering defensive and idealized clusters reported transmitting racial pride, behavioral and racial barrier messages at higher rates than caregivers located in the low affiliation and moderate clusters. These relationships reached significance for buffering defensive caregivers who reported transmitting racial pride messages at significantly higher rates than their low affiliation and moderate peers; for buffering defensive and idealized caregivers, who reported engaging in behavioral socialization at significantly higher rates than their low affiliation and moderate peers; and for idealized caregivers, who reported transmitting racial barrier messages at significantly higher rates than their low affiliation peers. These findings suggest that caregivers with similar racial identity profiles may be more naturally inclined and potentially more open to emphasizing pride, barrier and behavioral messages when discussing race with their children.

Despite the fact that caregivers in the buffering defensive and idealized clusters reported opposing views on how African Americans are viewed by others, with idealized caregivers reporting high public regard and buffering defensive caregivers reporting low public regard,

they reported transmitting racial barrier messages at nearly equivalent rates. Although we did not have any a priori hypotheses about the nature of the relationship between the clusters and socialization emphases, one might think that caregivers who endorse racial barrier socialization may do so out of the belief that others view their group negatively (low public regard). However, the current findings may indicate that buffering defensive and idealized caregivers may emphasize racial barriers awareness for different reasons. For instance, a buffering defensive caregiver may provide racial barrier messages to prepare their child for discrimination, where as an idealized caregiver may do so in response to discrimination. The latter assertion is consistent with previous research suggesting that racial socialization messages are provided, in part, in response to a child's experience (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006). Even though a caregiver with an internalized self-concept matching the idealized profile may believe that others view African Americans positively, they may choose to emphasize racial barriers in response to their perception that their child has experienced racial discrimination. Thus, although racial socialization messages may originate, in part, from caregivers' racial identities, they may also be influenced by parental perceptions of social experiences.

No significant differences were found for egalitarian messages, which suggests that this was a universally emphasized dimension of racial socialization for the current participants. This is not surprising as egalitarian messages have been identified as the most frequently emphasized messages by previous research (Hughes et al., 2006). In addition to supporting the extant literature, the current findings indicate that this emphasis persists across a variety of racial identity profiles. It is important to note that African Americans were a numerical minority in the school district that the data were collected. Research suggests that in such contexts, egalitarian messages may be particularly beneficial in helping youth to relate to others across racial groups (Hughes et al., 2006). Thus, the context may influence the frequency of messages that emphasize equality above caregivers' personal beliefs about race. Future research should examine the relationship between caregivers' racial identity and race socialization emphases within more heterogeneous environments in order to shed greater light on community composition influences on the race socialization process.

Several limitations should be taken into consideration when evaluating the findings from the present study. First, the cluster analytic strategies were used to place participants in the four identity statuses are sample dependent; further research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn regarding the generalizability of the current findings. Additionally, future research is needed to determine whether the results would generalize to male primary caregivers and children as previous research suggests that female and male primary caregivers may emphasize different messages when talking about race with their children (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Sanders Thompson, 1994), and that caregivers of younger children emphasize different types of socialization messages than caregivers of older children (Hughes & Chen, 1997). Next, the median family income for African American caregivers in the city from which participants were drawn surpasses the national average ($30,000 – $40,000). Even though the variation in household income in the present study suggests that the sample includes a distribution that is fairly similar to national averages, future research should further examine the relationship between caregivers' racial identity and race socialization emphases within a wider sociodemographic slice of the African American community.

Although the current paper does not focus on adolescent perspectives, it is important to note that the transmission of race related information is not a one way street. Caregivers may transmit a particular message, which is, in turn, interpreted by their child. The child may then return to the caregiver after thought and reengage in a conversation sharing her/his interpretation and ideas, giving the parent another opportunity to reflect on their previously

communicated message, potentially revising previously held beliefs as they re-engage in the race socialization process (Coard & Sellers, 2005). Thus, race socialization is a multifaceted process. Contemporary theorists have called for greater consideration of the dyadic nature of this complex process and researchers are working to address this call. Future research should examine adolescent perspectives in order to better understand how they experience the socialization process, how this experience informs their own understanding of race, and the recursive nature of racial socialization. However, such an exploration was beyond the scope of the current research.

In conclusion, the present findings represent an important contribution to the racial socialization literature. In addition to supporting previous findings, which indicate a connection between higher centrality and the endorsement of racial pride messages (Hughes, 2003; Romero, Cuellar, & Roberts, 2000; Thomas & Speight, 1999), the current findings illuminate the important role of racial regard and offer more nuanced insight into relationship between racial identity and racial socialization emphases among female African American caregivers.

Acknowledgments

References

Bowman PJ, Howard C. Race-related socialization, motivation, and academic achievement: A study of black youths in three-generation families. Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry. 1985; 24:134–141. [PubMed: 3989153]

Brown T, Tanner-Smith E, Lesane-Brown C, Ezell M. Child, Parent, and Situational Correlates of Familial Ethnic/Race Socialization. Journal of Marriage and Family. 2007; 69(1):14–25.

Caughy MO, O'Campo PJ, Randlof SM, Nickerson K. The influence of racial socialization practices on the cognitive and behavioral competence of African American preschoolers. Child Development. 2002; 73:1611–1625. [PubMed: 12361322]

Caughy MO, Randolph SM, O'Campo PJ. The Africentric home environment inventory: An observational measure of the racial socialization features of the home environment for African American preschool children. Journal of Black Psychology. 2002; 28:37–52.

Chavous TM, Bernat DH, Schmeelk-Cone K, Caldwell CH, Kohn-Wood L, Zimmerman MA. Racial identity and academic attainment among African American adolescents. Child Development. 2003; 74:1076–1090. [PubMed: 12938705]

Constantine M, Blackmon S. Black adolescents' racial socialization experiences: Their relations to home, school, and peer self-esteem. Journal of Black Studies. 2002; 32(3):322–335.

Crocker J, Luhtanen R. Collective self-esteem and ingroup bias. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 1990; 58(1):60–67.

Cross WE. The Negro-to-Black conversion experience. Black World. 1971 July.:13–27.

Cross, WE, Jr. Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American identity. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press; 1991.

Cross, WE., Jr; Fhagen-Smith, P. Patterns of African American identity development: A life span perspective. In: Jackson, B.; Wijeyesinghe, C., editors. New Perspectives on Racial Identity Development: A Theoretical and Practical Anthology. New York, NY: New York University Press; 2001. p. 243-270.

Cross, W.; Parham, T.; Helms, J. Black psychology. 3. Berkeley, CA US: Cobb & Henry Publishers; 1991. The stages of Black identity development: Nigrescence models; p. 319-338.

Demo DH, Hughes M. Socialization and racial identity among Black Americans. Social Psychology Quarterly. 1990; 53:364–374.

Fischer A, Shaw C. African Americans' mental health and perceptions of racist discrimination: The moderating effects of racial socialization experiences and self-esteem. Journal of Counseling Psychology. 1999; 46(3):395–407.

Hill NE. Does parenting differ based on social class?: African American women's perceived socialization for achievement. American Journal of Community Psychology. 1997; 25:675–697. [PubMed: 9485579]

Hughes D. Correlates of African American and Latino caregivers' messages to children about ethnicity and race: A comparative study of racial socialization. American Journal of Community Psychology. 2003; 31:15–33. [PubMed: 12741687]

Hughes D, Chen L. When and what caregivers tell children about race: An examination of race-related socialization among African American families. Applied Developmental Science. 1997; 1:200–214.

Hughes, D.; Chen, L. The nature of caregivers' race-related communications to children: A developmental perspective. In: Balter, L.; Tamis-LeMonda, CS., editors. Child psychology: A handbook of contemporary issues. New York: Psychology Press; 1999. p. 467-490.

Hughes D, Johnson D. Correlates in children's experiences of caregivers' racial socialization behaviors. Journal of Marriage and Family. 2001; 63:981–995.

Hughes D, Rodriguez J, Smith EP, Johnson DJ, Stevenson HC. Caregivers' ethnic-racial socialization practices: A review of research and directions for future study. Developmental Psychology. 2006; 42:747–770. [PubMed: 16953684]

Hughes M, Demo DH. Self-perceptions of Black Americans: Self-esteem and personal efficacy. American Journal of Sociology. 1989; 95(1):132–159.

Langeheine R, Pannekoek J, Van de Pol F. Bootstrapping goodness-of-fit measures in categorical data analysis. Sociological Methods & Research. 1996; 24:492–516.

Lesane-Brown CL. A review of racial socialization within Black families. Developmental Review. 2006; 26:400–426.

Lesane-Brown CL, Brown TN, Caldwell CH, Sellers RM. The comprehensive racial socialization inventory. Journal of Black Studies. 2005; 36:163–190.

Lesane-Brown CL, Scottham KM, Nguyên HX, Sellers RM. Parent-child racial socialization: A new measure for use with African American adolescents. 2008 Manuscript in preparation.

Luhtanen R, Crocker J. A collective self-esteem scale: Self-evaluation of one's social identity. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. 1992; 18(3):302–318.

Magidson, J.; Vermunt, J. Latent Class Models. In: Kaplan, DW., editor. The Sage Handbook of Quantitative Methodology for the Social Sciences. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 2004. p. 175-198.

Marshall S. Ethnic socialization of African American children: Implications for parenting, identity development, and academic achievement. Journal of Youth and Adolescence. 1995; 24:377–396.

Neblett EW, Philip CL, Cogburn CD, Sellers RM. African American adolescents' discrimination experiences and academic achievement: Racial socialization as a cultural protective factor. Journal of Black Psychology. 2006; 32:199–218.

Neblett EW, White RL, Ford KR, Philip CL, Nguyên HX, Sellers RM. Patterns of racial socialization and psychological adjustment: Can parental communications about race reduce the impact of racial discrimination? Journal of Research on Adolescence. in press.

Neville HA, Lily RL. The relationship between racial identity cluster profiles and psychological distress among African American college students. Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development. 2000; 28:194–207.

O'Connor L, Brooks-Gunn J, Graber J. Black and White girls' racial preferences in media and peer choices and the role of socialization for Black girls. Journal of Family Psychology. 2000; 14(3):510–521. [PubMed: 11025938]

Parke RD. Development in the family. Annual Review of Psychology. 2004; 55:365–399.

Phinney JS. The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. A new scale for use with diverse groups. Journal of Adolescent Research. 1992; 7(2):156–172.

Phinney JS, Chavira V. Parental ethnic socialization and adolescent coping with problems related to ethnicity. Journal of Research on Adolescence. 1995; 1:31–53.

Romero AJ, Cuellar I, Roberts RE. Ethnocultural variables and attitudes toward cultural socialization of children. Journal of Community Psychology. 2000; 28:79–89.

Sanders JL. My face holds the history of my people and the feelings in my heart: Racial socialization and evaluations of facial attractiveness of preadolescent African-American girls. Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering. 1997; 57:7760.

Sanders Thompson VL. Socialization to race and its relationship to racialidentification among African Americans. Journal of Black Psychology. 1994; 20:175–188.

Sellers, RM.; Shelton, JN.; Cooke, DY.; Chavous, TM.; Rowley, SA.; Smith, MA. A multidimensional model of racial identity: Assumptions, findings, and future directions. In: Jones, RL., editor. African American identity development: Theory, research, and intervention. Hampton, VA: Cobb & Henry; 1998. p. 275-302.

Sellers RM, Smith MA, Shelton JN, Rowley SA, Chavous TM. Multidimensional model of racial identity: A reconceptualization of African American racial identity. Personality and Social Psychology Review. 1998; 2:18–39. [PubMed: 15647149]

Stevenson HC. Validation of the scale of racial socialization for African American adolescents: Steps toward multidimensionality. Journal of Black Psychology. 1994; 20:445–468.

Stevenson HC, Reed J, Bodison P. Kinship social support and adolescent racial socialization beliefs: Extending the self to family. Journal of Black Psychology. 1996; 22:498–508.

Stevenson HC, Reed J, Bodison P, Bishop A. Racism stress management: Racial social beliefs and the experience of depression and anger in African American youth. Youth & Society. 1997; 29:197–222.

Stryker, S. Self and identity: Psychosocial perspectives. Oxford England: John Wiley & Sons; 1987. Identity theory: Developments and extensions; p. 89-103.

Thomas A, Speight SL. Racial identity and racial socialization attitudes of African American caregivers. Journal of Black Psychology. 1999; 25:152–170.

Thornton MC, Chatters LM, Taylor RJ, Allen WR. Sociodemographic and environmental correlates of racial socialization by Black caregivers. Child Development. 1990; 61:401–409. [PubMed: 2344778]

Vandiver BJ, Fhagen-Smith PE, Cokley KO, Cross WE, Worrell FC. Cross's Nigrescence model: From theory to scale to theory. Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development. 2001; 29(3): 174–200.
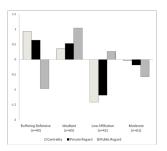
Figure 1.
Standardized racial identity means by cluster

Table 1

Racial Identity, Racial Socialization, and Background Variables: Correlations and Descriptive Statistics (N= 208)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Income[a]	--							
2. Centrality	.08	--						
3. Private Regard	.11	.56***	--					
4. Public Regard	.03	−.10	.07	--				
5. Pride	.07	.26***	.26***	−.09	--			
6. Soc. Behaviors	.14*	.40***	.27***	−.03	.50***	--		
7. Barrier	.07	.21**	.21**	−.10	.30***	.43***	--	
8. Egalitarian	−.06	.10	.11	.08	.31***	.28***	.33***	--
M	5.16	5.69	6.38	3.66	1.79	1.28	1.36	1.55
SD	3.81	1.16	.89	1.28	.39	.40	.59	.52
Range	1–14	1.75–7.00	1–7	1–7	0–2	0–2	0–2	0–2
α		.78	.73	.75	.62	.74	.76	.66

[a]Household Income: 1=*less than $10,000*; 14=*more than $130,000.*

*
  $p<.05$;

**
  $p<.01$;

***
  $p<.001$

Table 2

Model Fit Statistics of Parent Racial Identity Clusters in Latent Class Analysis (N=208)

Model	BIC(LL)	L^2	df	Bootstrap p-value	% Reduction in L^2	Maximum BVR
One-class	1826.05	161.51	105	0.00	0.00	50.26
Two-class	1796.35	110.14	101	.05	31.81	2.05
Three-class	1808.27	100.39	97	.16	37.84	2.08
Four-class	1821.97	92.43	93	.23	42.77	.32
Five-class	1834.95	83.75	89	.37	48.15	.16

Note. BIC(LL) = Log-likelihood based Bayesian information criterion, L^2 = Likelihood ratio chi-square, BVR = Bivariate residuals.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Demographic Variables and Racial Identity by Racial Identity Cluster Group (N=208)

Variable	Buffering Defensive (n=40)	Idealized (n=65)	Low Affiliation (n=42)	Moderate (n=61)
Child Gender (n)				
Male (91)	17	29	17	28
Female (119)	23	36	25	35
Means (Std Dev)				
Family Income	5.43 (3.76)	5.06 (3.84)	4.67 (3.41)	5.44 (4.10)
Racial Centrality	6.78_a (.28)	6.12_b (.70)	4.05_d (1.0)	5.64_c (.77)
Private Regard	6.96_a (.11)	6.86_a (.27)	5.33_c (1.16)	6.22_b (.73)
Public Regard	2.44_d (.75)	4.99_a (.85)	4.01_b (.72)	2.95_c (.85)

Note: Subscript letters denote significant mean differences among the variables. Post hoc comparisons are based on Tukey's honestly significant difference test (p<.05). Chi Square analyses are reported for child gender (χ^2=.23, *n.s.*).

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of Racial Socialization by Racial Identity Profiles (N=208)

Socialization	Parent Racial Identity Profiles					
	Buffering Defensive $n = 40$	Idealized $n = 65$	Low Affiliation $n = 42$	Moderate $n = 61$	F	η^2
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Pride	1.94$_a$ (.17)	1.85 (.36)	1.70$_b$ (.43)	1.71$_b$ (.47)	4.28**	.06
Soc. Behaviors	1.62$_a$ (.41)	1.54$_a$ (.47)	1.24$_b$ (.45)	1.31$_b$ (.50)	7.33**	.10
Egalitarian	1.53 (.62)	1.61 (.49)	1.52 (.51)	1.54 (.50)	.53	.01
Barrier	1.43 (.54)	1.46c (.53)	1.12d (.68)	1.37 (.58)	3.24*	.05

Note: Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ based on Tukey's honestly significant difference test at $p < .01$ (a, b) or $p < .05$ (c, d). Analyses adjusted for child gender and household income.

*
p<.01

**
p<.001