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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
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***What Does It Mean to Be Black and a Woman? An Investigation of Recollected
Racial Socialization Messages and Racial Identity Development on Subjective
Gender Role Stress***

BY

April T. Berry

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of South Alabama
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Clinical and Counseling Psychology

August 2022

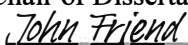
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April T. Berry

B.A., Fisk University, 2015

M.S., Alabama A&M University, 2017

August 2022

This dissertation is dedicated to the matriarch of my family, my grandmother, Bernice Robinson, and my deceased grandfather, Millard Robinson.

To my parents, Douglas and Mattie Berry; my family; and the City of Newton, Mississippi.

I did it. WE. DID. IT. To God be the Glory!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am honored and humbled to have achieved this milestone with the help of my ancestors and all those who have paved the way. I have persevered, sacrificed, remained ambitious, and dedicated much time, energy, and effort. Thus, this dissertation is not only mine, but all those who have been a part of my journey.

To all my Black brothers and sisters, this dissertation is for you.

To all the master and doctoral level graduate students who ever felt inferior, inadequate, and incompetent, this dissertation is for you.

To those who were first-generation college students, and those who wanted to be college students, this dissertation is for you.

To those who have prayed, marched, advocated, and cried for and wished for this life that I am living and who were not afforded the opportunity, this dissertation is for you.

To those who have had to face oppression, racism, sexism, and all the *isms* on the basis of any identity that they may hold, this dissertation is for you.

To my “Bigmama,” Bertiel Evans: I am who I am today because of your prayers and the wisdom you conveyed to me. This dissertation is for you.

To those who believe dreams are impossible, this dissertation is for you.

Forever, will we keep *climbing and maintaining*. Climbing means continuing to strive for nothing but the best. Climbing means continuing to find ways around obstacles. Climbing means continuing to remain persistent and ambitious — even when you don’t feel worthy of doing so. On the other hand, maintaining means continuing to stay grounded in your purpose. Maintaining means continuing to be motivated to accomplish your goals. Maintaining means continuing to engage in self-care and positive self-talk.

As a unified body, we must, and we will, meet all challenges with our heads lifted high and with open hearts. We must strive for excellence in every task, large or small. We may not have the power to inspire and motivate the entire world to *climb and maintain*, but we do have the power to achieve it for ourselves. We were destined for greatness. Embrace, accept, and believe!

I would like to offer special thanks to my dissertation chair and adviser, Dr. McDermott. His belief, motivation, and guidance enabled me to work diligently in completing this dissertation. I would also like to extend a thank you to the committee: Dr. Friend, thank

you for your expertise in clinical practice and helping me to amass so many opportunities at the University Counseling and Testing Center that led to the development of this topic.

Dr. Mehari, thank you for your support, consultation, and expertise and providing helpful insight and guidance around research design and strategies.

Dr. Stefurak, thank you for your continued motivation and support, as I hope to someday achieve an academic record as prestigious as your own.

I would also like to thank the Office of Research and Economic Development at the University of South Alabama for the grant awarded to fund this project.

Thank you to all those who supported me in this endeavor: my parents, Douglas and Mattie Berry; family, significant other, cohort, friends, and Dr. Linda J. M. Holloway, my role model and lifetime mentor.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GRESS-BW	=	Gendered Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale for Black Women
CRIS	=	Cross Racial Identity Scale
SFSS	=	Subjective Feminine Stress Scale
MLR	=	Maximum Likelihood Estimator with Robust Standard Errors
SEM	=	Structural Equation Modeling
FIML	=	Full Information Maximum Likelihood Estimation
CFI	=	Comparative Fit Index
TLI	=	Tucker Lewis Index
RMSEA	=	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SRMR	=	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
χ^2	=	Chi-Square Statistic
Df	=	Degrees of Freedom
B	=	Unstandardized Regression Coefficient
se	=	Standard Error
β	=	Standardized Regression Coefficient
CI	=	Confidence Interval

ABSTRACT

Berry, April T., M.S., University of South Alabama, August 2022. What Does It Mean to Be Black and A Woman? An Investigation of Recollected Racial Socialization Messages and Racial Identity Development on Subjective Gender Role Stress. Chair of Committee: Ryon C. McDermott, Ph.D.

Black American women face unique challenges in their identity development and gender role experiences. Research has explored the impact of racial socialization messages on racial identity development, but there are significant gaps in the literature on how *gendered racial socialization* messages (i.e., the intersectionality of messages regarding both racial and gender identities; Brown et al., 2017) are associated with Black racial identity and subjective gender role stress (i.e., experiences of stress associated with events related to the female gender role; Shea et al., 2014) in Black women. This current study addresses this gap. A sample of 564 self-identified Black American women, born and raised in the United States, were surveyed to understand recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress mediated through racial identity. Gendered racial socialization messages that may be deemed healthy in nature were positively and negatively related to the internalization-Afrocentricity and multiculturalist inclusive racial identity statuses but were unrelated to subjective gender role stress. In addition, such messages were positively and negatively related to the pre-encounter racial identity statuses. Unhealthy gendered racial socialization messages were positively and significantly correlated with all pre-encounter racial identity statuses (i.e., pre-encounter assimilation, pre-encounter miseducation, pre-encounter self-hatred) but were not

associated with subjective gender role stress. In addition, unhealthy messages were also negatively associated with the internalization racial identity statuses. The pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity statuses mediated the effects between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages (i.e., healthy messages), gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., healthy messages), and internalized generalized oppression messages (i.e., unhealthy messages) and subjective gender role stress. Such findings add significant value to the current body of literature by discussing implications for future research, clinical practice, and limitations.

Keywords: gendered racial socialization, racial identity, gender role stress, Black women

CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

The psychological literature focused on gender and race-related phenomena among Black Americans has shown that generating spaces that both appreciate and recognize these intersecting identities can be challenging (hooks, 1981; Hull et al., 1982; Jones et al., 2018). Since the 19th century, Black American women have expressed their struggles with unraveling their race and gender (Giddings, 1985). To acknowledge the salience of race *and* gender among Black American women, terms such as *womanist* (Walker, 1983) and *Black feminist* (Cleage, 1993) were advanced. Rooted in Black feminism and Critical Race Theory, Crenshaw (1989) coined the term “intersectionality theory,” positing the existence of different power structures that interact in the lives of minorities, specifically Black women. Her research sought to illuminate the influence of power on the intersections of race, gender, and class. Indeed, Black American women have not only been subjected to oppression from sexism but also from racism (Torrey, 1979). Racism and sexism can lead to various forms of prejudice and discrimination in the everyday lives of Black American women.

Numerous researchers have argued that racial socialization (e.g., “messages Black American families give their children regarding what it means to be a member of a minority group”) and racial identity (e.g., “significance and qualitative meaning that individuals ascribe to their racial group membership”) are critical to understanding the impact of oppression (Brown et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2006; Sellers, Chavous, et al.,

1998, p.23). Specifically, racial socialization messages communicated verbally, non-verbally, directly, or implicitly can prepare children to effectively negotiate personal and systemic oppression (Hughes et al., 2006, 2009; Peters, 1985; Stevenson, 1995; Stevenson et al., 2002). By receiving such racial messages, children can have a healthier racial identity status, which has shown to be a predictor of positive psychosocial functioning in the face of discrimination in adulthood (Anglin & Wade, 2007).

Despite the recognized importance of racial socialization messages, comparatively few researchers have examined how these related concepts intersect with gender role development. Specifically, researchers have failed to address the intersectionality of both race and gender in the context of Black American women's *gendered racial socialization experiences* (e.g., unique messages regarding Black women's intersecting identities). Moreover, given the lack of such intersectional research, little is known about how gendered racial socialization experiences may influence subjective perceptions of gender role norms (e.g., what it means to be a Black female). Addressing this gap is important, considering that gender roles are often learned in the context of race roles (McRae & Noumair, 1997). Additionally, gender role beliefs may impact identity development and influence the ways in which individuals engage with their environment (Noppe, 2009). Racial and gender identity development, in turn, are often associated with an individual's choices and judgments regarding family decision-making, personal and career decisions, expectations, and accomplishments (Abrams, 2012; Amaro et al., 2001; Rochlen et al., 2008).

Furthermore, by conforming to societal norms or attempting to behave "appropriately" based on racial socialization practices and gender role beliefs, Black

women may directly and indirectly experience adverse mental health outcomes, such as stress (Abrams, 2012; Meyer, 2003). For example, and key to this present dissertation, Black women may experience stress due to their double jeopardy status of being both Black *and* female (Perry et al., 2013). To date, however, little is known about how Black women experience their gender role as stressful and how this might be explained by gendered racial socialization practices. For example, given the well-documented pressures Black women receive to act and look White (Durkee & Williams, 2015; Robinson-Moore, 2008; Ogbu, 2004), it is possible that many may feel torn between in-group membership among their own culture and the need to assimilate and conform to Eurocentric norms, beliefs, and expectations (Littlefield, 2004). Understanding the gender racial socialization factors associated with such struggles could help inform therapeutic interventions for Black women.

The present dissertation sought to close these critical gaps in empirical literature by testing a theory-driven model of how recollected gendered racial socialization messages from childhood are associated with adult gender role stress. Specifically, this dissertation sought to explore how Black women's current racial identity status mediates the associations between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and current feminine gender role stress (see Figure 1). In the next chapter, evidence and theory supporting this model was further explored.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 “Black” versus “African-American”

Agyemang and colleagues (2005) discussed the use of terms that refer to people who are of African descent. The researchers explained that although race and ethnicity can be used interchangeably, they are two distinct entities. Race is a concept that has traditionally been referred to as having a biological basis defined by phenotypical features. However, the authors suggested that this definition is incorrect, because the majority of genetic differences that occur within a population and the genes responsible for characteristics (e.g., melanin) used to categorize race rarely relate to disease or behaviors. Thus, race is viewed as having little scientific merit but continues to be essential for political and psychosocial concerns. Moreover, ethnicity is considered to be more multidimensional than race, encompassing shared origins/backgrounds, culture and traditions, and a common language or religion.

In terms of classification, Agyemang et al. (2005) suggested that ethnic categories in the USA (e.g., Black, Black African, and African American) do not always address heterogeneity within these groups. Therefore, the term *Black* has been long associated with social, political, and everyday concerns and is used to denote African ancestry specifically. This term encompasses a vast range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, generalizes differences of cultures among different Black populations, and reinforces stereotypes. On the other hand, *African American* refers to an individual whose African ancestors were likely brought to the United States as slaves (Agyemang et al., 2005).

Smith (1992) stated that in the 1970s and 1980s, *Black* was the preferred term by most individuals until a meeting with the National Urban Coalition in 1988, where the Coalition proposed that *African American* replace *Black* as the label for Americans who were of Black descent. The Coalition suggested that *Black* was based solely on skin color, while *African American* connected individuals to their heritage and allowed for a sense of cultural integrity (Smith, 1992).

Thus, past research has used *Black* and *African American* interchangeably due to the overlap between the two terms. In light of the aforementioned literature, this dissertation utilized the term *Black American* to refer to individuals who, in prior research, were referred to as either Black or African American.

2.2 Black Americans and Race

In the United States, Black Americans' experiences differ significantly from all other racial groups (McIntosh, 2019). Specifically, Black Americans were defined legally as property by the United States government for nearly a century (Victoroff, 2005). Approximately 100 years after slavery ended, laws were enacted for the purpose of segregating White and Black Americans. Such laws successfully relegated Black Americans to the status of second-class citizens (Sonn & Fisher, 1998). Since they were brought to the United States against their free will and systematically deprived of access to their native culture, Black Americans were not given a choice of whether they wanted to integrate into the new culture or retain their heritage culture (Sellers et al., 1998). Thus, traditional Black American culture has had to merge with European American society's cultural practices to form a unique cultural expression.

As a result of Black Americans' experiences with oppression in society, the concept of race has often been associated with historical struggles (Clark & Clark, 1939; Horowitz, 1939; McIntosh, 2019; Sellers et al., 1998). Race is socially constructed but is one of the most defining characteristics for Black American group membership (Dutton et al., 2018; Gottfredson, 2010; Nyborg, 2003, 2019; Sellers et al., 1998). However, American society's often arbitrary categorization of individuals into this racial group has resulted in integrating many individuals who vary in their experiences of being Black. For example, some individuals see their racial group membership as the most salient characteristic of their identity, while others may place little to no personal significance on their race. Even when individuals may place similarly high levels of salience on their race, they can have different perceptions and beliefs regarding what it *means* to be Black (Sellers et al., 1998). One individual may view being Black as congregating among other Blacks, while another may believe that one should integrate with Whites (Nyborg, 2019; Tate & Audette, 2001). As will be discussed in the sections to follow, it is the significance and meaning that Black Americans place on race and defining themselves, along with how they are socialized within their race, that may be crucial to understanding gender role stress, particularly among Black American women.

2.2.1 Black Identity

As a measure of self-concept, identities are, "meanings a person attributes to the self as an object in a social situation or social role" (Burke, 1980, p.18). Being *Black* in American society means occupying a racially defined status and is associated with specific roles in family, community, and society (Demo & Hughes, 1990). One potential

consequence of being Black is Black group identity, which is the intensity one places on their identity that will vary based on roles and life experiences. Black group identity is clearly multidimensional and includes in-group factors such as closeness, separatism, and racial group evaluation (Broman et al., 1988; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Gurin et al., 1980).

Racial identity is a particularly useful construct for understanding how Black Americans view themselves in relation to other Black Americans, as well as how they view themselves in relation to White Americans. In multicultural and counseling psychology, racial identity has been one of the most heavily researched areas and entails the importance of an individual's racial group and the degree to which individuals view themselves as a part of their specific racial group (Helms, 1990a; Sellers et al., 1998). One renowned racial identity model is William Cross's (1971, Cross et al., 1991) theory of Nigrescence. Cross's (1971) original Nigrescence model, described a stage model in which Blacks experience a negative to positive change in Black self-concept through five developmental stages — pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, internalization, and commitment.

In the pre-encounter stage, Black Americans are generally unaware of their race and deleterious effects of racism. They may exhibit a desire to be seen as White. However, in the encounter stage, individuals begin to re-examine the currently held one-sided worldview and gain awareness regarding what it means to be *Black*, often as a result of experiencing or noticing racism. This searching process leads to the immersion-emersion stage, where the individual begins to immerse themselves fully into Black culture while rejecting any and everything that is non-Black or White. It is not until individuals move into the internalization stage that they begin to become more flexible in

their identity (Cross et al., 1991). Cross and colleagues (1991) acknowledged that diversity can exist in the views expressed in the internalization stage. For example, some individuals may become very active in movements that promote Black pride, where the primary focus is on Black liberation (e.g., Afrocentricity), while others become more active in multicultural movements, where their concern for Blackness is just one domain of reference among many others (e.g., multiculturalist inclusive). Still, other individuals may place as much emphasis on their “Americanness” as on their “Blackness.”

Cross et al. (1991) revised the original Nigrescence model to allow more flexibility and variability in attitudes across the stages. The authors indicated that numerous attitudes exist within all the stages, except the encounter stage, and the strength of each type of racial identity attitude can indeed vary from person to person. For example, in the pre-encounter stage, individuals can have attitudes toward their race that range from a low Black salience to race neutrality and even anti-Black (self-hatred) perspectives.

To assess racial identity, many researchers have used the *Racial Identity Attitudes Scale* (RIAS; Parham & Helms, 1993); however, this scale’s psychometric properties have been criticized for poor reliability and validity (Ponterotto & Wise, 1987). Vandiver et al. (2000) developed a measure of Black racial identity, the *Cross Racial Identity Scale* (CRIS; Vandiver et al., 2000), that attempts to address the RIAS’s psychometric limitations and better represent Cross’s original theory. With the exception of the encounter stage, the CRIS is based on the same four stages of Cross et al. (1991) model; however, the authors specified the flexibility and variability within the stages more accurately and effectively. The CRIS measures six racial identity typologies instead of

stages. The pre-encounter typologies consist of: (1) assimilation, (2) miseducation, and (3) self-hatred. Individuals who adopt an assimilation typology de-emphasize their Blackness and emphasize their American identity. Individuals with a miseducated typology endorse the negative stereotypes regarding Black people and find ways to distance themselves from a Black identity. Individuals with a self-hatred typology have high esteem for Whites and devalue Blacks. The immersion-emersion typology still remains as one theme: anti-White. The CRIS's last two typologies represent specific internalization identities: (1) Afrocentricity and (2) multiculturalist inclusive. Individuals with an Afrocentric typology endorse adopting a more Afrocentric perspective and worldview, whereas those with a multiculturalist-inclusive typology believe other identities (e.g., gay, Muslim, lesbian — are just as important as being Black) (Vandiver et al., 2000).

This latest revision of Cross's racial identity model has some similarities with the Sellers et al. (1998), *Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity* (MMRI), another widely used assessment of racial identity. The MMRI is based on three stable dimensions, including racial centrality, racial regard, and racial ideology. Racial centrality refers to the significance one places on his or her race. Racial regard refers to individuals' affective attitudes toward Black Americans and is divided into public and private regard. Public regard refers to how an individual thinks the broad society views the Black American population either positively or negatively. Private regard refers to how an individual feels either positively or negatively about being a part of the Black American community (Sellers et al., 1998). Finally, the third dimension, racial ideology, refers to the philosophy of how Black Americans should conduct themselves and is divided into

four components: nationalist, minority, assimilationist, and humanist (Sellers et al., 1998). The nationalist ideology stresses the importance of being a Black American, supporting Black American organizations and community events, and showing a strong preference for social environments that are majority Black American. The minority ideology emphasizes how Black American experiences are closely related to other oppressed minority groups. An assimilationist ideology stresses the similarities between mainstream society and Black Americans. The humanist ideology emphasizes similarities among all people, regardless of ethnicity or race. Unlike Vandiver et al.'s new model, Sellers and colleagues' model note that the manifestation of any particular racial ideology can differ, depending on the other two dimensions indicated in the model.

Although the Cross model's latest revision does not necessarily entail a stage model of development, there seems to be an underlying assumption that having a more internalized racial identity is healthier and more adaptive than having a pre-encounter and immersion-emersion identity. Researchers studying Black American college students have found that greater internalized racial identity was related to more self-esteem (Lige et al., 2017; Phelps et al., 2001; Rowley et al., 1998), more unconditional positive regard (Hope et al., 2013), and fewer depressive symptoms (Austin et al., 2009). By contrast, greater pre-encounter attitudes have been associated with less self-acceptance (Parham & Helms, 1993); less unconditional positive self-regard (Willis & Neblett, 2019); greater depressive symptomatology (Brondolo et al., 2009; Bynum et al., 2008; Hurd et al., 2013; Lee & Ahn, 2013; Neblett et al., 2013); feelings of inferiority, personal inadequacy, and anxiety (Cokley et al., 2013; Kumar & Jagacinski, 2006; Peteet et al., 2015); and an immature psychological defensive style (Nghe & Mahalik, 2001). Given these findings, a

logical conclusion is that Black Americans who have more pre-encounter attitudes may struggle psychologically and socially, whereas individuals further along in the racial identity model may have some unique psychological and social advantages.

While racial identity may seem only to reflect differences in race, it also includes a shared history, values, and cultural bonds (Brondolo et al., 2009). Racial identity may influence individuals' perceptions of race-related stressors as well as the extent to which they may find those stressors psychologically damaging (Carter, 2007; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009). Thus, racial identity is often considered a "buffer" against mental health consequences such as discrimination and prejudice (Brondolo et al., 2009). Indeed, racial identity does modify the psychological consequences of racial discrimination, which suggests that it can be included as an essential part of health initiatives and the racial socialization process (Brondolo et al., 2009; Sellers et al., 1998; Woo et al., 2019).

Although a racial identity perspective may provide useful, theory-driven information about Black American experiences, no racial identity model explicitly incorporates a focus on intersecting identities, such as gender. Nevertheless, Black group identity may be important for understanding how a Black woman identifies as both Black and female. Moreover, although a feminist identity may be, in part, related to certain aspects of racial identity (White, 2006), some researchers have argued that Black women's feminist identity development differs from that of the dominant, White feminist identity development (Boisnier, 2003; Leaper & Arias, 2011; Settles et al., 2008). For example, research conducted by Helms (as cited in Ossana et al., 1992) revealed a womanist identity model that describes how Black women progress from societal definitions of womanhood to a personal and salient definition of womanhood. From this

perspective, Black women develop their identity in a way that allows them to find value and meaning in being family-oriented, with a focus on race, class, and gender. Thus, theorists have suggested that Black women are less likely than White women to identify as feminists, who have a female-oriented and strict focus on gender, but more as womanists (Boisnier, 2003; McLaughlin & Aikman, 2019). Additionally, White (2006) found that some Black feminists who detach from the feminist label often seek to decrease any uncertainty about their cultural loyalty, whereas others may confidently embrace the feminist label. Based on previous research regarding social identity theory, the more emphasis an individual places on a particular aspect of their identity, the more likely they are to engage in forms of activism as it relates to that identity group (Liss et al., 2004; Stryker et al., 2000). Thus, Black women who endorse feminist attitudes and prefer the feminist label, as opposed to the womanist or pro-feminist label, are more active in efforts promoting feminism (White, 2006).

Researchers have investigated the associations between Black women's feminist and racial identity attitudes and found that those who endorsed the immersion-emersion racial identity status were more likely to have traditional gender role attitudes (e.g., Eurocentric norms) and negative attitudes toward feminism. The other racial identity statuses (e.g., pre-encounter, encounter, and internalization) were not significantly correlated with feminist attitudes (White, 2006). Taken together, understanding how being Black is associated with socialization experiences and identity development that may lead to gender role stress is vital to conceptualizing the *Black* experience among Black American women.

2.3 Racial Socialization Among Black Americans

Racial socialization is a phenomenon that has been proposed as a process to encourage Black individuals' development of a healthy racial identity (Coard & Sellers, 2005; Tang et al., 2016; Stevenson, 1995). The most influential and primary socializing agent is considered to be the family (Greene, 1990; Tang et al., 2016). Specifically, Black children, growing up in the United States, will likely at some point in their lives experience discrimination and oppression because of their race (Brown & Lesane-Brown, 2005; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997). One way in which families protect their children's psychological functioning is by preparing them to handle racial encounters and educating them about the social and psychological consequences of being a Black American (Brown & Lesane-Brown, 2005). Socialization specific to race describes a process of transmitting messages to children to bolster their sense of racial identity, given the possibility of encountering life experiences related to racism and discrimination (Stevenson, 1995). Additionally, this process is proposed to serve as a "buffer" against racially hostile encounters, as discussed by several scholars (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Greene, 1990; Lee & Ahn, 2013; Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009; Thornton et al., 1990; Torres & Ong, 2010).

Early research conducted by Boykin and Toms (1985) found that racial socialization among Black American families encompassed: (1) socializing children in accordance with mainstream society's values, (2) socializing children within a Black context that is separate from mainstream culture, and (3) socializing children with an understanding that oppression does exist in American society with regard to minority status. Research has shown that Black American men and women who received

preparation as children regarding racism and oppression found this preparation beneficial for their development and sense of identity over time (Demo & Hughes, 1990; Edwards & Polite, 1992).

Moreover, additional emerging racial socialization research has found that Black American families were more likely to socialize children by using cultural socialization messages (e.g., discussing history or historical figures, cultural holidays, and culturally relevant books) (Aldoney et al., 2018; Brown & Tylka, 2011; Coard & Sellers, 2005; Hughes et al., 2006). In addition to socializing children in one or more of the above categories, Black American families are also ensuring that their children receive messages that promote cultural pride and awareness, as well as preparation for bias messages.

There is a small, but growing body of literature that is beginning to examine the context of racial socialization and how family systems and ecological frameworks play a role in parents' socialization practices (McHale et al., 2006). A family systems perspective draws attention to both similarities and differences in family members' experiences and reciprocal interactions among the subsystems in the family (McHale et al., 2006; Whitchurch and Constantine, 1993). Additionally, an ecological perspective emphasizes the contextual embeddedness of individuals' experiences (McHale et al., 2006). Thus, it is important to learn how racial socialization practices are a product of family dynamics. For example, a systems perspective sheds light on family members' relational experiences, while also understanding how children's attributes and qualities can affect parenting practices (McHale et al., 2006). Throughout childhood and adolescence, parents may begin to see how societal interactions can expose their children

to individuals from different ethnic backgrounds, as well as experiences of oppression and racism. Additionally, as adolescents move through the cognitive developmental stages, they are better able to understand their parents' racial socialization messages (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Finally, the importance of identity formation as a developmental achievement may lead to an increase in an adolescent's interest in cultural values, traditions, and accomplishments. As adolescents mature into adulthood, these developmental changes may prompt parents to engage in more in-depth racial socialization practices (McHale et al., 2006; Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

2.3.1 Parental Transmission of Racial Socialization Messages

Parents have reported transmitting racial socialization messages in various ways to children. It is vital to describe the mechanisms used to transmit messages from parents to children through two dimensions: *expression* versus *intent* of racial socialization messages. Expression describes how racial socialization messages can either be verbal or nonverbal (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Murray et al., 1999; Thornton et al., 1990). Intent of messages refers to the purpose of racial socialization messages and can either be deliberate (i.e., proactive or explicit; discussion of racial pride and oppression) or inadvertent (i.e., passive or implicit; displaying culturally relevant items within the home) (Lesane-Brown, 2006).

Verbal messages are often transmitted through direct conversations between parents and their children — and through indirect parental conversations that the child may witness (Hughes et al., 2006; Lesane-Brown, 2006). Verbal messages are the

simplest expression method because those messages are often explicit and easily recalled later (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Neblett et al., 2009). In contrast, nonverbal messages are more difficult to decipher. These messages can take various forms, including demonstrating cultural or ethnic behaviors (i.e., “cooking traditional cultural foods, interacting in a culturally appropriate way”); shaping a child’s environment (i.e., “displaying culturally based art or books, raising a child in a predominantly Black neighborhood”); or selectively reinforcing a child’s behavior (i.e., “buying children culturally ethnic clothing, attending children’s race-related activities”) (Caughy & O’Campo, 2002; Coard et al., 2004; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Lesane-Brown, 2006, p. 404).

Parental racial socialization messages can also be deliberate or inadvertent (Grills et al., 2015; Tang et al., 2016). Some Black parents believe racism and discrimination are inevitable experiences for their children (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Hughes, 2003; Richardson, 1981). For preparation purposes, some Black parents provide their children with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to navigate such encounters. This process often consists of explicit messages related to the parents’ experiences and race-related agenda (Hughes & Chen, 1999). On the other hand, inadvertent messages are more subtle and may not be aimed at the child, but they relay information about the parents’ views, morals, and attitudes toward race (Brown & Tylka, 2011; Lesane-Brown, 2006). These messages are primarily transmitted by a child overhearing their parents’ conversations or observing their parents’ interactions with others (Hughes & Chen, 1999).

Most racial socialization studies have focused on verbal and deliberate messages (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Sanders-Thompson, 1994; Thornton et al., 1990). A small body of literature has investigated the prevalence of racial socialization messages. In a nationally representative sample of Black Americans, 63.6% of parents reported transmitting racial socialization messages to their children (Jackson, 1991; Thornton et al., 1990) and 62% of adolescents reported receiving racial socialization messages from their parents (Bowman & Howard, 1985). In another study, 79% of Black adults recalled discussing racial issues with their parents while growing up (Sanders-Thompson, 1994).

Several factors have been found to influence the prevalence of racial socialization messages (Lesane-Brown et al., 2005). Researchers have examined sociodemographic factors such as parents' age, gender, socioeconomic status, and region of residence (Phinney & Chivara, 1995; Thornton et al., 1990). Thornton et al. (1990) conducted the first study to explore how sociodemographic factors can often influence Black parents' desire to transmit racial socialization messages to their children. The variables of interest in this study included marital status, gender, geographic location, neighborhood, age, education, and family income. The authors concluded that married parents were more likely than non-married parents to socialize their children about race. Mothers were more likely than fathers to transmit racially socialized messages. Male adults living in the Northeast were more likely to socialize their children regarding race than adults living in the South. Adult women who lived in predominantly Black neighborhoods were less likely than those in predominantly White neighborhoods to discuss race. Older parents were more likely to teach their children about race than younger parents, especially if

higher levels of education were attained. While this study provided an understanding of the relationship between demographic factors and racial socialization messages, it did not provide data regarding the various types of messages that parents transmitted (i.e., verbal, nonverbal, deliberate, inadvertent messages). Previous research has shown that assessing the content of racial socialization messages is pertinent since different messages may vary in the impact on the individual (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Bynum et al., 2007; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Jones, 2018; Stevenson et al., 2002; Thornton, 1997).

Although the main goal of parents transmitting racial socialization messages is to prepare their child to successfully negotiate interpersonal, systemic, and intrapersonal oppression (Hughes et al., 2006, 2009; Peters, 1985; Stevenson, 1995; Stevenson et al., 2002), the content of these messages may be deemed “healthy” or “unhealthy.” Research has explored those messages promoting racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness are deemed more positive (i.e., healthy) and related to an increase in positive well-being (Frabutt et al., 2002; Stevenson et al., 2002), resilience (Brown and Tylka, 2001), and positive mental health (Fischer and Shaw, 1999) among Black Americans. However, those messages that may promote internalized racial oppression (e.g., endorsing negative stereotypical beliefs about the Black American culture) that can be experienced by Black Americans are deemed more negative (i.e., unhealthy) and related to poorer mental health outcomes (Jones and Shorter-Gooden, 2003). More specifically, these unhealthy messages have been associated with lower psychological well-being and higher depressive symptoms (Williams & Mohammed, 2013; Winchester et al., 2021). Furthermore, receiving such messages have been associated with both externalizing problems (e.g., violence; Bryant, 2011) and negative physical health outcomes (e.g.,

obesity; Chambers et al., 2004) specifically for Black women. Thus, the next section examined the empirical evidence related to how the content of such messages may impact racial and gender development among Black American women.

2.3.2 Empirical Evidence of Racial Socialization Literature

One of the first steps taken to understand racial socialization experiences among youth was when Stevenson and colleagues (1998) developed the *Teenager Experience of Racial Socialization* (TERS) scale, a measure of racial socialization that asks teenagers to rate the frequency at which they have heard their parents or caregivers communicate racial socialization messages. Stevenson and his colleagues identified two underlying dimensions in racial socialization messages: (1) proactive racial messages, which encourage cultural empowerment and pride, and (2) protective racial socialization messages, which promote awareness of oppression. Both of these dimensions combined defined respondents' overall racial socialization experiences. In addition to Stevenson and colleagues (1988), Hughes and Chen (1997) examined three racial socialization components. Their three components entailed: (1) cultural socialization (e.g., "teaching customs, traditions, and cultural values"); (2) preparation for bias (e.g., "strategies to effectively handle racial encounters"); and (3) promotion of mistrust (e.g., "non-trusting of other racial groups"). Using these three components, they discovered that parents were far more likely to report the transmission of cultural socialization messages compared to preparation for bias messages. Moreover, parents were significantly more likely to report preparation for bias messages than promotion of mistrust messages. Results from Stevenson et al. (1988) and Hughes and Chen (1997) indicate that parents are more likely to transmit racial pride and cultural socialization messages. Thus, parents seem more

determined to focus on the positive aspects of being Black than on the negative implications.

The largest set of earlier studies on racial socialization focuses on the content of the messages (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Coard et al., 2004; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Sanders-Thompson, 1994; Stevenson, 1994, 2002; Thornton, 1997; Thornton et al., 1990). For example, under at least one of the following three categories, the content of racial socialization messages may be captured: (a) cultural messages, (b) minority experience, and (c) mainstream experience (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Fatimilehin, 1999). Cultural messages emphasize racial pride and specific teachings regarding Black and African culture (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Stevenson et al., 2002). Minority experience entails messages that prepare children for — and make them aware of — environments that may be oppressive for Blacks (Lesane-Brown, 2006). Mainstream experience messages de-emphasize race and stress life skills, ambition, and confidence, while somewhat emphasizing Black's co-existence in mainstream society (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Stevenson et al., 2002).

Based on these findings from the aforementioned studies on racial socialization messages, these key themes emerged: (1) racial identity (e.g., overall racial pride, African heritage, and relaying culturally relevant history); racial barriers (e.g., awareness of racism in society); self-development (e.g., hard work, achievement); and egalitarianism (e.g., lack of emphasis on racial differences) (Moody, 2018). However, research interest in this area faded around the early 2000s and was possibly somewhat outdated until the

2010s. As a revitalization effort to understand whether previous research findings were still accurate, Bentley-Edwards and Stevenson (2014) conducted a study to examine more current racial socialization themes. The researchers found that racial socialization messages can be divided into five main categories: (a) Racial Protection (e.g., you are a minority living in a majority world); (b) Cultural Insight (e.g., Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. fought for civil rights); (c) Racial Stereotyping (e.g., dark-skinned Black girls aren't pretty); (d) Bicultural Coping (e.g., speaking in your vernacular when you are around those who look like you and not those who don't); and (e) Old School Basics (e.g., you are not Black if you don't know how to play spades). Racial Protection increases awareness of racism, uses affirmations to buffer racial experiences, and provides coping strategies. Cultural Insight entails traditional information related to one's heritage, spirituality, and family. Racial Stereotyping includes messages that express uncertainty in Black individuals' intentions based on gender, social class, and colorism stereotypes. Bicultural Coping provides strategies that can be beneficial for navigating within the dominant society (e.g., code-switching, conflict management). Old School Basics is a representation of cultural clichés (Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2016).

Similar to previous racial socialization research, Bentley-Edwards and Stevenson (2014) found that racial socialization messages have not changed drastically since the late 1990s and early 2000s. Therefore, racial socialization practices are often a product of Black values such as: "extended family kinship networks, adaptable family roles, a strong religious orientation, education and work ethic, and coping strategies" (Kane, 2000, p. 692; Moody, 2018). Moreover, further emerging research has found that Black American parents' perceptions of the shooting deaths of Black unarmed males, such as Trayvon

Martin, have influenced how Black parents socialize their children (Thomas & Blackmon, 2015). Particularly, the worry of physical safety for their children drives Black parents to socialize in ways that align more with protective messages that prepare children for bias and systemic oppression (Thompson & Cohen, 2013).

Engaging in racial socialization practices has been shown to buffer against the adverse psychological effects of discrimination (Neblett et al., 2008; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009). Earlier research conducted by Fischer and Shaw (1999) addressed this in a sample of college students and found that being racially socialized about the difficulties of racism served as a buffer against perceptions of discrimination, more than merely having high self-esteem. Students who reported having high self-esteem and low racial socialization were more likely to be negatively impacted by perceptions of discrimination. Recently, investigations have sought to explore how parents' experiences of discrimination and race-related stress can impact their racial socialization practices with their children by specifically relaying messages on promotion of mistrust and preparation for bias (Crouter et al., 2008; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Thomas & Blackmon, 2015). Mothers who experienced discrimination within their workplace environment were more likely to provide cultural messages emphasizing racial pride (Crouter et al., 2008). Moreover, Harris-Britt and colleagues (2007) found a buffering effect of greater racial pride messages in the relations between perceived racial discrimination and self-esteem. Fewer racial pride messages were correlated negatively with perceived racial discrimination and self-esteem (Harris-Britt et al., 2007). Similar to Harris-Britt and colleagues (2007), Reynolds and Gonzales-Backen (2017) found racial socialization was indeed protective; more specifically, they found that emphasizing

culture and racial pride was more consistently associated with positive mental health outcomes for Black Americans than emphasizing preparation for bias among the 21 studies reviewed in their meta-analysis.

Racial pride messages may be especially important, because one of the most pressing challenges facing Black Americans is how to develop both a positive sense of self and an in-group identity. Black children can often find it challenging to develop a positive racial identity. Moreover, Black children often grow up in mainstream society and are subjected to marginalization and discrimination, which results in structural barriers that limit their academic and occupational potential and success (Lesane-Brown, 2006). Thus, general or specific racial socialization messages regarding group membership and group pride have been theorized to facilitate a positive racial identity and to reduce the internalization of negative racial stereotypes (Lee & Ahn, 2013; Marshall, 1995; Parham & Williams, 1993; Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Sanders-Thompson, 1994; Scott, 2003; Tang et al., 2016).

Demo and Hughes (1990) examined the relationship between receiving racial socialization messages and developing a Black adult racial identity. Racial identity was assessed by analyzing feelings of closeness to other Blacks (i.e., “degree to which Blacks should limit their social relationships only to other Blacks”) and positive Black group evaluation (i.e., “belief that most Black people possess positive characteristics rather than negative”). The participants’ responses to racial socialization messages received in childhood were categorized into four dimensions: individualistic and/or universalistic attitudes (i.e., “no specific racial reference, work hard, and all people are equal”); integrative/assertive attitudes (i.e., “racial pride messages”); cautious/defensive attitudes

(i.e., “beware of and keep social distances from Whites”); and not being exposed or taught anything regarding race. After analyzing the results, Demo and Hughes (1990) found that individualistic and/or universalistic messages received during childhood were positively associated with positive group evaluation. Cautious/defensive attitudes were positively associated with Black separatism (i.e., commitment to Black culture and the degree to which Blacks should limit their social connections to other Blacks), while integrative/assertive attitudes were positively associated with feelings of closeness to Blacks.

Consistent with the findings of Demo and Hughes (1990), Sanders-Thompson (1994) also found that racial socialization methods and racial identity were associated with one another. Racial identity was measured with the 30-item *Multidimensional Racial Identification Questionnaire* (Sanders-Thompson, 1994). Higher scores on the four dimensions — physical, cultural, sociopolitical, and psychological — were indicative of positive racial identification. Results concluded that adult family members’ messages had the strongest impact on their racial identity development compared to messages received from parents. Additionally, the frequency with which other adult members transmitted racial socialization messages was a positive indicator and significant predictor of two racial identity dimensions (i.e., psychological and sociopolitical).

Additionally, racial socialization has been examined among Black families in relation to ethnic group attachment (Demo & Hughes, 1990) and aspects of racial identity (Sanders-Thompson, 1994). Indeed, this research suggests being racially socialized by parents and caregivers in childhood increases overall ethnic group attachment and racial identification later in adulthood. Further, the literature suggests that racial socialization is

related to better self-esteem and psychological adjustment in adolescent populations. For example, Stevenson et al. (1997) posited that girls who endorsed both proactive and protective elements of racial socialization displayed better self-esteem and decreased levels of sadness and overall feelings of helplessness. For adolescent boys, racial socialization focused more on cultural empowerment and pride and was strongly related to positive anger expression. Thus, these results suggest that racial socialization is important for overall psychological adjustment.

Although the aforementioned studies laid the foundation for understanding racial socialization and racial identity processes, more recent research has examined the links between racial socialization and identity processes, such as exploration or commitment (Joseph & Hunter, 2011; Seaton et al., 2012); but the majority of research has focused on specific dimensions of racial identity and racial socialization messages. Neblett et al. (2009) conducted a study with 358 Black American adolescents and found that those adolescents who received high levels of racial pride and racial barrier messages and engaged in race-related activities or socialization behaviors were more likely to report their race as more central to their identity one year later. Additionally, Rivas-Drake et al., (2009) found that parental cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages were not only associated with higher levels of ethnic centrality, but also more positive feelings about one's racial group. Similarly, Hughes and colleagues (2009) found that youth who reported cultural socialization felt a sense of connectedness to their racial group and exhibited positive feelings about their race.

Lesane-Brown and colleagues (2005) reviewed the literature regarding racial socialization and its relative importance but found that few inventories existed to

conceptualize this process in college students and adults. Given the lack of interest in the topic, these authors developed an inventory to more comprehensively consider the race conceptualization process — the *Comprehensive Racial Socialization Inventory* (CRSI). The CRSI considers onset and recency, the most useful racial socialization message, multiple sources of racial socialization messages, and anticipatory socialization messages (Lesane-Brown et al., 2005). Results suggested that 225 Black college students and 18 adolescents located in the United States reported receiving racial socialization messages from multiple sources. This was consistent with earlier research conducted by Sanders-Thompson (1994), who suggested that other family members besides than parents are additional influential socializing agents. Additionally, Lesane-Brown and colleagues (2005) found that college students reported receiving more racially socialized messages than adolescents. Consistent with previous studies (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Brown & Tylka, 2011; Bynum et al., 2007; Grills et al., 2015; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Thornton et al., 1990), both Black adolescents and college students were likely to receive racial socialization messages regarding achievement and self-development, racial pride, and racial discrimination. Also consistent with previous studies, Lesane-Brown and colleagues (2005) found that Black adolescents and college students were less likely to receive messages about mistrust of other racial groups. One explanation the authors proposed for this finding is that some messages may be appropriate for certain contexts. For instance, a Black college student in the western United States, compared to a student living in the Southwest or Midwest, may have more contact with Latinos and Asians. Consequently, they may be more likely to receive messages about these groups compared to others. One of the most interesting findings of

these researchers' study was that many adolescent and college student respondents reported receiving the message "You must act White to get ahead." Empirical evidence (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Brown & Lesane-Brown, 2005; Parham & Williams, 1993) has shown that such thoughts do exist as part of a repertoire of messages transmitted, although racial socialization is conceptualized as a more protective process.

Although this measure was developed to comprehensively assess racial socialization experiences, it failed to account for gendered racial messages. Specifically, the CRSI does not seek to understand how gender can impact the varying messages that individuals receive based on previous research that suggests socialization is different regarding gender (Brown et al., 2010; Priest et al., 2014; Davis Tribble et al., 2019; Varner & Mandara, 2013). In addition, the CRSI and stand-alone measures such as the RIAS and MMRI (Parham & Helms, 1981; Sellers et al., 1998) also fail to consider how racial socialization processes can impact racial identity development. Findings have suggested that parents who engage in racial socialization practices often place a strong emphasis on their race or endorse higher racial identity attitudes (Crouter et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 2010). Moreover, previously developed instruments and studies have not focused on the intersection of gendered racial socialization processes and racial identity development on gender role stress. For example, research has examined the interrelationships between racial and gender identity of Black American women but has concluded that developing one's racial identity may be a process that occurs before the development of a womanist identity (Carter & Parks, 1996; Hoffman, 2006; Parks et al., 1996; Thomas et al., 2011). Therefore, understanding both racial identity and racial socialization processes, specifically gendered racial socialization experiences can

potentially provide insight related to how one experiences their gender role as a Black American woman.

2.4 Gendered Racial Socialization Among Black American Women

Black American girls and women socialization processes and identity development are indeed distinctive because of two intersecting identities (e.g., race and sex), and thus may be better understood as gendered racial socialization (Thomas & King, 2007). Gendered racial socialization messages bring awareness to girls regarding their “double jeopardy” status — being *Black* and *female* (Thomas et al., 2013). Black American women have had to navigate the historical representations of slavery — from the all-giving nurturer (Mammy), to the furious, aggressive girl who rolls her head and curses people out (Sapphire), to the skimpily dressed girls in music videos who use their body to their advantage to gain recognition, material assets, or exploit men (Jezebel) (West, 1995). In contrast, the image of strength is displayed among some mothers and grandmothers by teaching their children how to work toward keeping the family together while also maintaining employment (Shorter-Gooden & Washington, 1996).

Moreover, Thomas and Speight (1999) found that Black American girls and boys are often socialized differently. Boys are more likely to receive messages regarding racial barriers and how to overcome them, while girls receive more messages on cultural pride, education, premarital sex, male relationships, financial independence, and physical beauty (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Burt & Simmons, 2015; McHale et al., 2006; McNeil Smith et al., 2016; Thomas & King 2007). One study found that among Black American mothers and their adolescent children, mothers of daughters were more likely to provide

tips on responding to racial dilemmas compared to mothers of sons (Smith-Bynum et al., 2016). Such results suggest that gender plays an important role in racial socialization practices and that further investigation is necessary to strengthen the understanding of gendered racial socialization experiences within Black families.

In addition, Wilder and Cain (2005) conducted the only published study examining how Black women learn about their skin color. In their study, they developed five focus groups for 26 Black women between the ages of 18 and 40 and concluded that Black women continue to experience adverse effects of colorism within their Black families. The authors described what they call the “race paradox” within Black families: “Although many participants’ families engaged in racial socialization practices to celebrate Blackness and protect themselves from the realities of racism, families also engage in practices of color socialization that simultaneously denigrate darkness.” (Wilder & Cain, 2011, p. 597).

Moreover, not only is color socialization within Black families creating a “race paradox,” but Black American women also experience “gendered racism” (Essed, 1991). Essed described how the oppression Black American women experience is structured by racist perceptions of gender roles. More recently, psychology researchers have begun to theorize and conduct empirical research on the intersections of race and gender (Cole, 2009; Thomas et al., 2008). The majority of empirical studies focused on Black American women’s experiences regarding racism and sexism have found that those intersecting forms of oppression are related to poor mental health outcomes (Szymanski & Lewis, 2016). Previous studies have found that Black American women who report gendered racism experiences also report higher levels of psychological distress (King, 2003; Lewis

& Neville, 2015; Thomas et al., 2008), greater depressive symptoms (Carr et al., 2014), an increase in post-traumatic stress symptoms (Woods et al., 2009), and lower self-esteem (King, 2003).

To understand how gendered racial socialization influences the lives of Black American women, Brown and colleagues (2017) developed the *Gendered Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale for Black Women* (GRESS-BW). The GRESS-BW was developed and validated on Black American college women and includes the following nine subscales: (1) gendered racial pride and empowerment (e.g., “encouraging Black women and girls to feel empowered about their appearance such as their hair and skin”); (2) family expectations and responsibilities (e.g., “conveying that Black women should care for the family and cater to men’s needs”); (3) internalized gendered racial oppression (e.g., “negative perceptions about Black women pertaining to their natural hair, attitudes, and skin color”); (4) independence, career, and educational success (e.g., “having autonomy and not depending on men”); (5) sexual behavior (e.g., “messages pertaining to appropriate behavior regarding premarital sex, pregnancy, cohabitation, religious values”); (6) oppression awareness (e.g., “messages pertaining to the existence of racism and sexism, not tolerating disrespect, and having a respectful partner”); (7) sisterhood (e.g., “messages related to strength and survival, importance of the mother-daughter relationship, and positive interpersonal behavior that also includes supporting Black men”); (8) religious faith and spirituality (e.g., “messages related to believing in God”); and (9) gendered racial hardship (e.g., “difficulties finding partners, being a double minority, and not having the same opportunities as White women”) (Brown et al., 2017).

From the constructs captured by the GRESS-BW, it is apparent that gendered racial messages are similar to those identified within the racial socialization literature (Boykin and Toms, 1985; Hughes and Chen, 1997; Hughes et al., 2009; Stevenson et al., 2002; Thomas and King, 2007). Specifically, (1) gendered racial pride and empowerment messages are similar to cultural pride and socialization messages; (2) oppression awareness and gendered racial hardship messages are similar to preparation for bias messages; and (3) messages about religious faith and spirituality are similar to messages surrounding coping strategies for the experiences of racism and discrimination. The other five subscales of the GRESS-BW (e.g., independence, career, and educational success, family expectations and responsibilities, internalized gendered racial oppression, sexual behavior, and sisterhood) do not map onto themes that are found in the existing racial socialization literature (Moody, 2018). Instead, these areas align with research specifically on gendered racial socialization among Black women and girls (Edmondson Bell et al., 1998; Moody, 2018; Thomas et al., 2011; Thomas & Speight, 1999).

Black women are often confronted with distinct challenges that develop their resilience when faced with difficulties. Moreover, Black women will experience poor mental health outcomes due to their marginalized status as both Black *and* female (Brown et al., 2017). Considering this aspect, it is important to understand how gendered racial socialization experiences among Black American women can impact overall gender role stress.

2.5 Eurocentric and Afrocentric Gender Role Norms and Black American Women

Traditionally, gender has been restricted to two categories — man and woman — and thus defined as behaviors, attitudes, and attributes associated with either male or female sex (Buque et al., 2017). Gender identity is characterized as the extent to which one identifies as either masculine or feminine (Stets & Burke, 2000). Gender roles are defined as the behaviors endorsed that align with socially constructed ideas regarding gender (Mahalik et al., 1998), often assessed by using instruments such as the *Conformity to Masculine and Feminine Role Inventories* (CMNI, CFNI; Mahalik et al., 2003) and the *Femininity Ideology Scale* (FIS; Levant et al., 2007). The majority of the constructs above have been primarily examined within European-American populations, with little to no research specifically focused on men and women of color (Thompson & Bennett, 2015).

Researchers have also pointed out that the predominant archetype of masculinity and femininity in American society is that of White, Western European descent (Levant & Richmond, 2016; McDermott et al., 2017). Thus, Eurocentric norms, beliefs, assessment instruments, and related theories have likely been used to understand gender roles among Black Americans without understanding cultural and systemic barriers that could influence adherence to such gender roles (Jones et al., 2018). Additionally, most studies have used outdated measures that do not capture actual gender role norms, such as the *Personal Attributes Questionnaire* (PAQ; Spence et al., 1973) and the *Bem Sex Role Inventory* (Bem, 1974). Rather than addressing true gender role norms or ideologies, these instruments focus on attributes or characteristics that are traditionally deemed masculine or feminine and thus are a better measure of personality than gender role

ideology. Moreover, these instruments may be basing these qualities on Eurocentric standards, thus overlooking Black Americans' beliefs regarding gender role pressures and conflicts that may stem from having to navigate both Afrocentric and Eurocentric ways of performing gender roles.

It is vital to assess Black women's gender role ideologies in a way that allows for these women to provide their subjective experiences, rather than indicate how they relate to primarily Eurocentric gendered behaviors. Indeed, Black American women may conceptualize gender in ways unique to their cultural heritage. Nobles (1974) described this as "Africanity," acknowledging Black Americans' endorsement and connection with a Black worldview. In the context of Black American families, "this particular worldview emphasizes survival of the tribe (family)" (Nobles, 1974, p. 14). From this view, gender roles are understood to be fluid and flexible. Additionally, there is a tradition of egalitarianism, characterized by delegating tasks equally among the family to promote the livelihood of the family (Jones et al., 2018). These core values contrast with European-American values of autonomy, freedom, and personal survival that inform Eurocentric gender relations (Bell et al., 1990).

Researchers have hypothesized that Black Americans are challenged with negotiating their ideas about gender within a society heavily influenced by Eurocentric values (e.g., power, competition, and individualism) (Hunn, 2004) and, in turn, may adopt such values for survival (Bell et al., 1990). However, due to Black Americans being in the United States for centuries, they may have begun to adopt these Eurocentric values to belong and avoid racial stress. In any case, it is important to understand as some Black Americans may exert efforts to endorse Eurocentric gender roles (Abrams, 2012)

but are faced with structures and systems of oppression that do not allow them to do so. For example, Black American women are expected to be subservient to their husbands, yet systematic oppression, including reduced employment opportunities and Black men's mass incarceration rates, severely impact their ability to live out that particular role (Jardine & Dallafar, 2012).

An increasing amount of literature focused on Black Americans endorsement of “traditional” gender roles has also emphasized Eurocentric values and beliefs as “normal,” while devaluing Black Americans’ values and beliefs as “deviant” — without acknowledging the impact of oppression and the concept of “Africanity” (Jones et al., 2018). Specifically, Black American women tend to score higher on measures that assess “traditional” gender roles (Abrams, 2012; Abreu et al., 2000). One reason for such findings relates to the pressure of “hegemonic femininity” — the idea that because Black women do not have the dominant qualities that are afforded to White women, they strive to obtain them (Collins, 1990, 2004; Hamilton et al., 2019). In general, Black American women are expected to endorse traditionally feminine traits such as nurturance; however, they also endorse masculine traits such as dominance and emotional control in their identity (Abrams, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2010). One explanation for such findings includes Black American fathers’ absenteeism within the homes, thus encouraging Black American women to have dual roles within family households (Jardine & Dallafar, 2012; Jones et al., 2018).

In addition, research has sought to examine the context of gender role beliefs in Black Americans from an Afrocentric *versus* Eurocentric perspective. Previous research has found that Afrocentric gender norms encompass: (1) “having multiple roles”; (2)

“dedication of care to others”; (3) “perceived social inferiority”; (4) “strength and self-determination”; and (5) “achievement and a sense of independence/autonomy” (Abrams, 2012, p.45). On the other hand, Eurocentric gender norms tend to be more “traditional” in nature and encompass passivity, submissiveness, and nurturance (Buckley & Carter, 2005). For Black women, this can often result in stress when trying to negotiate one’s gender role in society from either an Afrocentric or Eurocentric perspective (Perry et al., 2013). Specifically, Black American cultural values, attitudes, and characteristics are often undervalued or even at odds with mainstream society, leading to ongoing challenges related to Black women’s self-concept and identity as a woman (Johnson & Carter, 2019).

Black American women may also be subjected to gendered racial stereotypes (Bell et al., 1990; Jones & Day, 2018; Lewis & Neville, 2015). Gendered-racial stereotypes are generalizations that stem from historical and gender-specific experiences of oppression made about both Black American men and women. For women, societal images that have been largely historical, include Mammy, Sapphire, Jezebel, and the Strong Black Woman (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2009; Thomas et al., 2013; West, 1995). These stereotypes paint the Black American woman as a caretaker and nurturing, argumentative and harsh, seductive, or emotionally strong and independent, respectively. Of the aforementioned stereotypes, the “Strong Black Woman” is a common cultural ideal for Black women (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2009; Nelson et al., 2016). Research, however, has indicated that depicting a Black American woman as “strong” has negative consequences in terms of Black American women’s help-seeking intentions and overall

psychological well-being (Abrams et al., 2014; Watson & Hunter, 2015; Watson-
Singleton, 2017).

Although some Black American women may identify with gendered racial stereotypes, there is a need for Black Americans in general to create a healthier and adaptive gender identity that is distinct from the typical gendered racial stereotypes. In addition, these ideals should also be distinct from Eurocentric gender roles and perceptions. However, not much is known about Black American women's culturally distinct and adaptive understanding of their gendered experiences (Jones et al., 2018).

More recently, a growing body of research has explored gender identity development by addressing the question "What does it mean to be a woman?" Gender and womanist identity models are comparable to racial identity models in that they suggest individuals progress from naïve assumptions regarding expectations and perceptions of their gender to a more complete and holistic understanding of what their gender means (Downing & Roush, 1985; Helms, 1990b). Research has indicated that a womanist identity is correlated with self-worth and gender role expectations (Carter & Parks, 1996; Ossana et al., 1992). Additionally, research has concluded that the construct of femininity and gender role expectations and perceptions is typically based on Eurocentric feminine attributes that include passivity, submissiveness, and nurturance (Thomas et al., 2011).

In summary, neither the aforementioned gender models nor racial identity models fully account for intragroup differences. Thus, they cannot fully explain cultural identity development among individuals, specifically Black women. Therefore, it is important to understand how culturally specific processes of gendered racial socialization can

influence both racial identity development and gender role ideology among Black women to better understand the multidimensional and various social identities that exist in this population. More importantly, given that most Black women navigate between gender roles based on Eurocentric *and* Afrocentric perspectives, it is important to understand the impact of stress experienced from such navigation, as there are some differences that may exist between these perspectives.

2.6 Feminine Gender Role Stress in Black American Women

Researchers have suggested that women are often at higher risk, compared to men, for developing psychological problems, including depression (Hilt & Nolen-Hoeskema, 2009; Shea et al., 2014) and physical and emotional stress (American Psychological Association [APA], 2012). There have been many theoretical perspectives advanced to understand women's differential exposure to stressful events and vulnerability to developing psychological problems; however, no one theory can fully explain the gender disparities in mental health outcomes (Chonody & Siebert, 2008). However, an underlying factor in most of these theories is related to understanding the salient experiences associated with being a woman (Shea et al., 2014).

Thus, femininity theories — attributes, characteristics, expectations, and behaviors associated with being female — are concerned with how the meanings associated with being female affect the lives of women and girls (Cole & Zucker, 2007). Previous research has suggested that femininity-related constructs have been linked to psychological problems such as depression (Hilt & Nolen-Hoeskema, 2009), eating disorders (Stroegal-Moore & Bulik, 2007), and anxiety disorders (U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services, Office of Women's Health, 2001). Although there are common approaches to understanding and assessing femininity, such as the trait approach (e.g., conceptualizes femininity as gender role-related attributes) and the gender role norms approach (e.g., emphasizes the influence of social and cultural norms on women's lives), there are few tools that allow for understanding women's subjective femininity experiences (Shea et al., 2014). Indeed, this is critical, given that the majority of femininity research has primarily focused on White, European-American, middle-class or upper-middle class, heterosexual women and girls, thus limiting the understanding of such experiences for other racial groups (Cortina et al., 2012).

Although feminine norms from mainstream culture are ideal, pervasive, and likely to influence women living in American society, regardless of racial/ethnic background, evidence suggests that current studies on femininity (e.g., gender role stress, gender norms) often do not capture the experiences of women from diverse backgrounds (Cole & Zucker, 2007). For example, Settles et al. (2008) found that characteristics such as "inner strength," "independence," and "perseverance" are essential components of Black women's and girls' sense of femininity. Indeed, Black girls and women have unique racial and gender experiences, resulting in multiple stressors that expose them to higher rates of disease and lower levels of well-being (Wallace & Wilchins, 2013). For example, it is expected that Black women navigate social hostilities based on race as well as pressure to conform to traditional feminine ideals of Eurocentric standards and norms specific to Black communities (Cole & Zucker, 2007). Specifically, feminine norms in the Black community may expect that Black women put children and family first. Therefore, there is pressure to prioritize caretaking and multiple roles (Sekayi, 2003).

Thus, the high value placed on self-sacrifice may lead Black women to disregard their own health, ignore signals of pain or illness, and delay medical treatment until they experience negative health outcomes (Littlefield, 2004). In addition, Black women must also cope with the impact of gendered racial socialization messages promoting racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness (e.g., healthy messages) and internalized racial oppression (e.g., unhealthy messages) in order to navigate within society (Durkee & Williams, 2015; Robinson-Moore, 2008; Ogbu, 2004). As stated earlier, unhealthy messages such as internalized gendered racial oppression are associated with higher depressive symptoms, traumatic stress, externalizing problems, and negative physical health outcomes such as obesity for Black women (Bryant, 2011; Chambers et al., 2004; Winchester et al., 2021). The additive impact of these stressors can result in what is known as the “weathering effect,” in which Black women’s bodies become physically and biologically vulnerable (Wallace & Wilchins, 2013). Such effect has been suggested by the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC) to impact the disproportionately high rates of chronic disorders and reproductive health problems in Black women. Said another way, being a black woman is stressful, likely due to a variety of contradictory and inconsistent expectations and demands.

To better understand the stressful experiences associated with being a woman in general, researchers created the *Feminine Gender Role Stress Scale* (FGRSS; Gillespie & Eisler, 1992). The FGRSS is a 39-item measure of situations that contribute to feminine gender stress (i.e., the self-appraisal of certain gendered situations or behaviors as stressful). FGRSS scores have been found to be correlated with depression as well as anxiety. However, this scale was normed on college students and based on Eurocentric

norms and ideals. Thus, Shea et al. (2014) developed the *Subjective Femininity Stress Scale* (SFSS) based on the Subjective Gender Experiences Model. This model is (1) rooted in a conceptual framework that suggests gender is a social construction and individuals are able to make their own meanings related to their gender (Addis & Mahalik, 2003); (2) individuals perform gender roles, resulting in new meanings of femininity; (3) conceptions of femininity are entwined with race, ethnicity, social class, religion, and other social factors (Pyke & Johnson, 2003); and (4) femininity experiences have been associated with various psychological consequences. Therefore, the SFSS complements and distinguishes itself from existing femininity measures. The SFSS does not contain predetermined items, but rather allows women to define what it means to be a woman, thus allowing nondominant and cultural experiences to be captured. It allows women to describe both positive and negative attributes of their gender experiences. The SFSS also directly measures stress as a function of women's subjective gender experiences rather than attitudes towards social norms, beliefs, and ideologies. Finally, it assesses the frequency of stress rather than the magnitude of stress — as can be seen in the FGRSS (Shea et al., 2014).

Allowing women to write about their subjective experiences allows for more diverse information to be obtained. Specifically, given that research has shown Black women to experience stress from conforming to Eurocentric norms, as well as upheld Black community norms, allowing Black women to write about such experiences provides an opportunity to capture those experiences in a powerful way.

2.7 Statement of Purpose

Intersectionality theory, a term rooted in Black feminist thought and coined by Crenshaw (1989), re-conceptualizes classic feminist theory to incorporate Black women's experiences (Davis Tribble et al., 2019). Intersectionality scholars emphasize the significance of having multiple social identities as well as the oppression that exists in each of them (Collins, 2000; Settles, 2006). This is important because racial socialization theory usually focuses on racial oppression and not both racial *and* gender oppression. Integrating gender with existing racial socialization experiences can increase understanding of how both race and gender development can impact outcomes such as stress (May, 2014; McCall, 2005; Shields, 2008). Indeed, at the level of theory, intersectionality has influenced how race and gender have been discussed together within the literature. Several authors have examined the theoretical links between racial socialization messages and racial identity; however, the research is relatively scarce when it comes to understanding the intersectionality of racial and gender development, specifically among Black American women. In general, gender has often been ignored as a variable in the literature regarding racial identity. Similarly, race has been largely ignored as a variable in the literature regarding gender role stress.

Indeed, the terms *Black* and *woman* have a few similarities. Both are typically assumed to be relatively obvious and fixed but are essentially social constructs that are frequently challenged and redefined (Gillborn, 2015). Historically, both have been marginalized, segregated, discriminated against, and oppressed, resulting in experiences of inequality (Annamma et al., 2013; Beratan, 2008; Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). Therefore, research specifically examining gendered racial socialization experiences and

the impact on subjective experiences of gender role ideology is important to better understand Black women's beliefs, values, and worldviews. In addition, Black women can often suffer from negative psychological consequences, such as stress due to their identity as Black females. Thus, understanding Black women's gendered racial socialization experiences can provide insight for clinicians and researchers, regarding mental health and social outcomes (Brown et al., 2017). This can allow for more targeted interventions in specific areas to support Black women's racial and gender well-being.

Accordingly, this dissertation sought to examine how Black American women's recollected gendered racial socialization messages are associated with their subjective gender role stress. Specifically, messages that promote racial and cultural pride, oppression awareness, and racial hardship were explored as healthy messages to determine the influence of such messages on racial identity development (i.e., endorsement of being in the internalization stage) and less overall subjective gender role stress. In addition, messages that promote internalized racial oppression were explored as unhealthy messages to determine the influence of such messages on racial identity development (i.e., endorsement of being in the pre-encounter stage) and more overall subjective gender role stress. This was important to examine given that much of the racial socialization literature has explored the content and transmission of messages being important for racial identity development; however, there has been a gap in the literature exploring the impact of gendered racial socialization messages influence on subjective gender role stress. Moreover, a central focus of this study was to determine how racial identity statuses explain (i.e., mediate) the relationship between recollected gender racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress. Much of the research has been

mostly correlational in nature only examining racial socialization messages in relation to racial identity development, mental health outcomes, and positive psychology variables (Coard et al., 2004; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Moody, 2018; Neblett et al., 2008; Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2002; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009). Although previous research has found racial socialization and racial identity development to be positively correlated, there has been a gap in the literature to understand how such racial influences can also impact gender role stress. Thus, this dissertation sought to close some gaps in the literature and add an additional level of rigor to fully examine the impact of recollected racial socialization messages on subjective gender role stress as a result of Black women identifying in different stages of their racial identity development.

2.8 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity for Black women (see Figure 1)?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): How do the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity predict stress from Black women's embodiment of gender role norms (see Figure 1)?

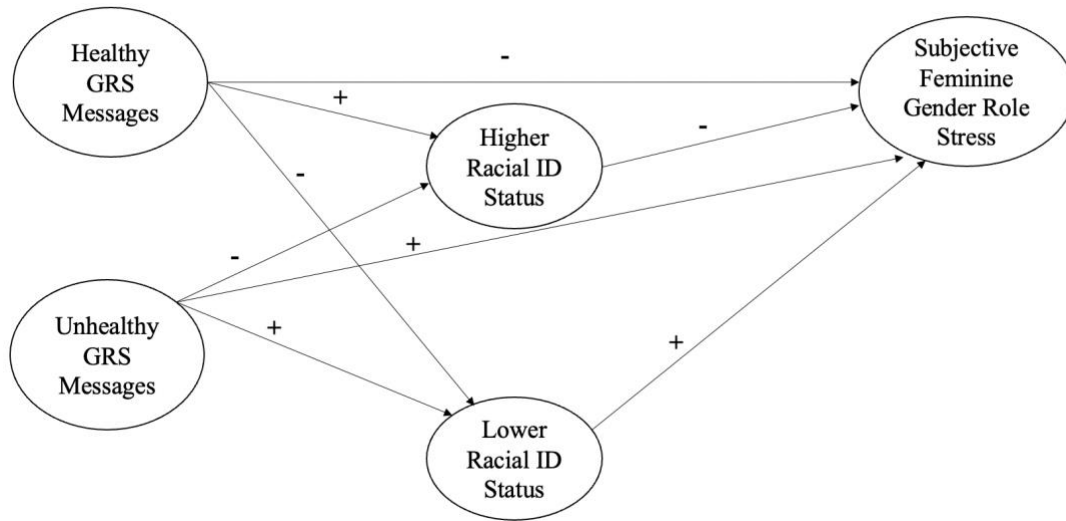


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Note. This is a conceptual model capturing the general theme of the actual model, which is not displayed here for readability. Healthy messages will be measured via the Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment, Oppression Awareness, and Gendered Racial Hardship subscales of the GRESS-BW. Unhealthy messages will be measured through the Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression subscale of the GRESS-BW. Higher racial ID statuses are measured by the Internalization subscales of the CRIS. Lower racial ID statuses are measured by Pre-Encounter subscales of the CRIS. All subscales will represent unique latent variables but are presented here based on their theoretical grouping for readability. Thus, not displayed here are the manifest variables comprising each latent variable, disturbance terms among endogenous latent variables, correlations among disturbance terms at the same stage, and item-level residual error terms.

2.8.1 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1a (H1): Endorsement of gendered racial pride and empowerment messages and oppression awareness messages (i.e., cultural pride socialization messages and preparation for bias messages; “healthy messages”) will be positively associated with an internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and will be negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 1b (H1): Endorsement of gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., preparation for bias messages; “healthy messages”) will be positively associated with an internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and will be negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Endorsement of gendered racial socialization messages that promote internalized gendered racial oppression (i.e., negative racial and gender messages; “unhealthy messages”) will be positively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status (pre-encounter), negatively associated with an internalization racial identity status, and will be positively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Endorsement of an internalization racial identity status will be negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Endorsement of a pre-encounter racial identity status will be positively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Racial identity status will mediate the associations between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participants

The present study used participants electronically recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). MTurk is an online survey engine that allows for participation in research based on pre-determined inclusion criteria set forth by the researcher. Criteria for participation in this study included identifying as a Black American female living in the United States. Additionally, participants had to be at least 18 years of age at the time of the study.

An *a priori* power analysis was performed to determine how many participants should be obtained for this study. Power is defined as the likelihood that the null hypothesis will be rejected for a statistical test or the ability for the statistical test to detect an effect (Kline, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Research has suggested that the larger the sample size, the greater the power (Schumacker & Lomax, 2015). Thus, for this dissertation, a power analysis suggested that for a large-effect size (0.5) — with a desired statistical power level of 0.8, 9 latent variables, and 30 observed variables, the recommended sample size should be a minimum of 156 participants. For a medium-effect size (0.3) — with a desired statistical power of 0.8, 9 latent variables, and 30 observed variables — the recommended sample size should be a minimum of 184 participants. For a small-effect size (0.1) — with a desired statistical power of 0.8, 9 latent variables, and 30 observed variables — the recommended sample size should be a minimum 1,960 participants. Therefore, this a priori power analysis suggested that a minimum of 184

participants were needed to achieve a medium-to-large effect size. This dissertation was powered adequately for a medium-large effect size.

A total of 564 participants participated in this study. All participants identified as Black and female, primarily identifying Black as their ethnic background (64.9%) followed by African American (34.2%). Ages ranged from 18 years of age to 70 years of age ($M = 32.89$, $SD = 9.39$). Those that were students in the sample identified as graduate students (44.1%) and undergraduate students (33.9%). For those that were not students, the highest level of education obtained was a bachelor's or four-year degree (36.3%), followed by a graduate/professional degree (11.5%), some college (11.2%), and a high school diploma (7.3%).

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Demographic Information

Demographic information was assessed by using the Cross Racial Social Attitudes Scale (Vandiver, 2000). This scale is supplementary to the Cross Racial Identity Scale. Specifically, it assesses general information on individual and family characteristics such as gender, classification (if in school), highest level of education obtained, religious affiliation and importance, family income, family socioeconomic status, and an overall rating of both physical and mental health. (See Appendix A for Demographic Questionnaire.)

For those that identified as students in the study, the racial composition of the school they currently attend was primarily mixed (32.4%), followed by mostly Black (23.8%), and mostly White (20.9%). Most of the sample endorsed growing up in a mostly Black community (49.3%). When examining attendance for religious services, 29.3% endorsed attending sometimes, 27.5% often, 20.6% seldomly, and 22% never. Most participants reported an income over \$60,000 (30%). Finally, most participants rated their current physical health as good (50.7%) and their current mental health as good (45.4%).

3.2.2 The Gendered Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale for Black Women (GRESS-BW)

The GRESS-BW is a 63-item instrument that measures the socialization messages Black women received, while growing up, from their parents and/or guardians about their identity as Black women. The GRESS-BW was developed on roughly 174 female college students who mostly identified as freshman (29.9%), heterosexual (89.7%), and reported an annual family income of \$35,000 to \$49,999. The GRESS-BW was created by using an initial pool of items based on the qualitative study conducted by Thomas and King (2007) involving African American mother-daughter dyads. In their study, mothers were asked which messages they provide their daughters, regarding race and gender, and what messages the daughters reported receiving from their mothers. The qualitative responses provided were then used in the initial development of the GRESS-BW to produce an initial pool of 50 items. More items were then created based on the qualitative study conducted by Thomas and colleagues (2011), which involved focus groups with young African American women. The women were asked what it meant to be an African American woman. Responses provided from this study prompted the GRESS-BW team

of researchers to add an additional 35 items to the scale. Further, they reviewed additional literature (Edmondson-Bell & Nkomo, 1998; Greene, 1994; Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003; Thomas & King, 2007; Thomas et al., 2011), regarding intersecting racial and gender identities among African American women and the influence of those intersecting identities on their personal experiences, resulting in 15 additional items. The final 10 items were generated based on literature indicating that African American parents may often provide specific racial-ethnic socialization messages more to their daughters than to their sons (e.g., “physical beauty and educational success”) (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Thomas & Speight, 1999).

A final pool of 110 items was then reviewed by four psychologists who had a background in research related to African American women’s well-being and racial socialization practices among African American families. Five items were deleted due to overlapping similarity, followed by two items being deleted for clarity issues. The final pool was comprised of 103 items. However, after an exploratory factor analysis, the final measure resulted in a 9-factor solution containing 63 items.

The GRESS-BW asks participants to endorse the frequency of receiving various messages, each of which falls under one of the nine subscales: Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that I should be proud to be a Black woman”); Family Expectations and Responsibilities (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that Black women are responsible for maintaining the family”); Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that lighter skin is more attractive than dark skin”); Independence, Career, and Educational Success (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that I should never depend on a man for anything”);

Sexual Behavior (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that Black women should not be promiscuous or “fast”); Oppression Awareness (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that Black women must work hard for a good education”), Sisterhood (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that a mother’s love and support is important for Black women”); Religious Faith and Spirituality (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that God will not give you more than you can handle”); and Gendered Racial Hardship (e.g., “My parent or caregiver taught me that there are more opportunities for White women, so as a Black woman, I have to work twice as hard”) (Brown et al., 2017). Items are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (always). This is a multidimensional measure; therefore, no total score is calculated. For the purposes of this dissertation, only the Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment, Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression, Oppression Awareness, and Gendered Racial Hardship subscales were utilized.

Internal consistency reliabilities for each of subscales ranged from .72 to .96, with an overall reliability of .94 in the initial validation study. The calculated internal consistencies were .96 for Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment and accounted for 26.34% of the variance; .89 for Family Expectations and Responsibilities and accounted for 7.27% of the variance; .94 for Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression and accounted for 5.15% of the variance; .84 for Independence, Career, and Educational Success and accounted for 4.28% of the variance; .83 for Sexual Behavior and accounted for 4% of the variance; .72 for Oppression Awareness and accounted for 2.93% of the variance; .75 for Sisterhood and accounted for 2.72%; .77 for Religious Faith and Spirituality and accounted for 2.55%; and .72 for Gendered Racial Hardship and accounted for 2.39% (Brown et al., 2017).

Significant positive and inverse correlations support convergent validity with the Gender Role Socialization Scale (GRSS; Toner et al., 2012) and the Adolescent Racial and Ethnic Socialization Scale (ARESS; Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). Results indicated eight of the nine factors were positively correlated with both measures. However, Factor 3 (Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression) was not associated with either measure. On the other hand, gender socialization was inversely associated with Factor 1 (Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment) and positively associated with Factor 2 (Family Expectations and Responsibilities) (Brown et al., 2017). (See Appendix B for the GRESS-BW factor loadings from the initial validation study.

3.2.3 Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS)

The CRIS is a 40-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess Black racial identity attitudes based on Cross and colleagues revised Nigrescence model (1991). The CRIS was developed on roughly 1,000 students from two different universities over a span of five years. Sample sizes ranged from 119 to 334 across five samples. The majority of the participants across all samples were undergraduates from middle class backgrounds. Additionally, females were represented more than males. During the first phase of item development, CRIS team researchers wrote 250 items to reflect six Nigrescence identities that were to be measured. These identities included two Pre-Encounter identities (Assimilation, Self-Hatred), two Immersion-Emersion identities (Intense Black Involvement, Anti-White), and two Internalization identities (Black Nationalist, Multiculturalist). The 250 items were then narrowed down to 126 items and sent to 45 experts in the field who were asked to evaluate the items and their related constructs. From the experts' review, 75% of them classified the items as measuring the

constructs. Thus, the first version of the CRIS had 57 items across six subscales, but further underwent refinement to produce the now current 40-item measure.

The CRIS asks respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree with item statements on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Total scores are produced for each of the racial identity typologies with a range of 5-35, with higher scores indicating attitudes that are consistent with that particular racial typology. The CRIS has 6 subscales that represent six racial identities. There are three types of Pre-Encounter racial identities (Assimilation, Miseducation, and Self-Hatred), one type of Immersion-Emersion racial identity (Anti-White), and two types of Internalization racial identities (Afrocentricity and Multiculturalist Inclusive). Each of the six subscales contains five items, and there are 10 additional items considered fillers. Sample items and their respective domains include: “I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American” (Pre-Encounter-Assimilation); “Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work” (Pre-Encounter, Miseducation); “I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black” (Pre-Encounter, Self-Hatred); “I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people” (Immersion-Emersion, Anti-White); “I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective” (Internalization, Afrocentricity); “As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, etc.)” (Internalization, Multiculturalist Inclusive). For the purposes of this dissertation, only the Pre-Encounter and Internalization racial identity subscales were used to specifically measure low and high salience of one’s racial identity status.

Internal consistency reliabilities for each of the subscales ranged from .78 to .90 in the initial validation study of the expanded Nigrescence model (Vandiver et al., 2002). In a subsequent study, (Cokely, 2002) calculated internal consistencies of .74 for Pre-Encounter Assimilation, .81 for Pre-Encounter Miseducation, .80 for Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, .81 for Immersion-Emersion Anti-White, .83 for Internalization Afrocentricity, and .83 for Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive.

In an analysis of the CRIS's factor structure using a sample of 279 students (Vandiver et al., 2002), exploratory factor analysis indicated six independent factors, with a median correlation of $|.08|$, reflecting the CRIS subscales with no cross-loadings above $|.33|$. Subscale intercorrelations from the final sample based on five items ranged from $|.04|$ to $|.42|$. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis for the CRIS consisted of 30 items. The factor loadings represented a six-factor model, which resulted in the best fit of the data across a number of alternative models. Factor intercorrelations ranged from $|.06|$ to $|.46|$, with only two of the 15 correlations above $|.30|$.

Vandiver et al. (2002) supported the convergent validity by linking the CRIS to the *Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity* (MIBI; Sellers et al., 1998). Similar to the CRIS, the MIBI is a measure of Black racial identity. In the same study, the CRIS exhibited discriminant validity with social desirability. Bivariate correlations indicated that none of the CRIS subscales had correlations above $|.23|$ with either of the *Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding* (BIDR) subscales, indicating that CRIS scores are not strongly influenced by social desirability concerns. (See Appendix C for CRIS).

3.2.4 Subjective Feminine Stress Scale

The *Subjective Feminine Stress Scale* (SFSS) assesses women's stress associated with their subjective experiences of being female (Shea et al., 2014). The SFSS was developed on roughly 232 college women from two public universities in the United States. A plurality of the participants identified as White (48.3%), and the majority identified as heterosexual (85.8%). The SFSS is intended to provide a global assessment of women's subjective femininity stress and does not focus on specific dimensions in women's lives (Shea et al., 2014). Thus, the SFSS is an ideal measure to identify the subjective stress associated with the actual gender role ideologies of Black American women. Due to the lack of instruments assessing Black women's subjective experiences of femininity, this scale was slightly adapted to incorporate this component.

Following an adaptation of the original item prompts for the purpose of this study, participants were instructed to describe their personal experiences of what it means to be a Black woman by completing the sentence "As a Black woman I..." 10 times. They were then asked to rate their 10 "As a Black woman..." responses on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Never/Almost never*; 5 = *Always/Almost Always*) according to how often each experience is perceived as stressful. Thus, participants were encouraged to write their subjective experiences of being a Black woman as related to gender role ideology and how stressful those experiences are for them. This was analyzed and coded to determine positive or negative gender-role responses. The coding team sorted out inattentive or dishonest responses.

Factor analysis is a commonly used procedure to examine the dimensionality of newly developed measures based on the relationships among the items on the scale

(Kahn, 2006). However, this initial validation study did not implement this procedure due to the unique nature of the SFSS; that is, the meaning of the items in the SFSS differs based on each participant's individualized, qualitative responses to the prompt, "As a woman."

Based on the results from the initial validation study, the SFSS's internal consistency was not calculated due to the researchers not assuming that there were inherent structures or interitem correlations among the SFSS items (Shea et al., 2014). However, test-retest reliability was .80 after 2 weeks based on 25 women college students from the original sample providing follow-up data, thus evidencing the short-term temporal stability for the SFSS. In addition, the SFSS was found to be positively and significantly related to the *Feminine Gender Role Stress Scale* (FGRSS; Gillespie & Eisler, 1992) with a modest correlation, providing evidence for convergent validity. It was not significantly related to the *Relational Interdependent Self-Constraint Scale* (RISCS; Cross et al., 2000) or the *Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory* (CFNI; Mahalik et al., 2005), as predicted, providing evidence for the SFSS's discriminant validity. The RISCS assesses how individuals define themselves in terms of their close interpersonal relationships, and the CFNI assesses feminine norms. Thus, neither measure focuses on stress that relates to adherence to gender norms. Moreover, results from the preliminary analysis suggested that there were no significant differences in SFSS scores across racial groups and sexual orientations, although the sample sizes for some groups were too small to provide confidence in this conclusion. (See Appendix D for the Subjective Feminine Stress Scale Un-adapted and Adapted).

3.3 Procedures

Before the present study was conducted, approval was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of University of South Alabama. Once IRB approval was granted, the Qualtrics link was then administered through MTurk. All participants who were eligible for the study first completed a CAPTCHA code. This was to ensure that computer bots could not gain access to any information contained in the surveys. Once the CAPTCHA code was completed, participants were then able to see the consent form and general information explaining the purpose of the study, with possible risks and benefits. In addition, there was a clause informing the participants that they will be removed if they are underage and/or fail a validity check. At the bottom of the informed consent, the participant is provided with the option of “I Agree” Or “I Disagree” to the presented conditions of the study. If “Agree” was selected, the participant moved forward with completing the measures given in the study; however, if “Disagree” was selected, the survey was discontinued. If the participant gave consent and met the inclusion criteria, they were directed to complete the measures given. For every measure in the study, there were validity checks that participants were to complete (e.g., Please select strongly agree/disagree for this item). Data gathered through MTurk has been shown to be methodologically sound through the use of proper attention checks (Casler et al., 2013; Peer et al., 2014). If participants failed one validity check, they received the following notification:

“Thank you for taking the survey. As stated in the consent form, there are certain requirements that must be met in order to participate and receive compensation. You are seeing this message because you are not eligible to complete this study

and receive compensation. This may be due to failing to answer a question to check and see if you understood the instructions. This follows Amazon Mechanical Turk policy, which states that a requestor may reject your work if the HIT was not completed correctly or the instructions were not followed.’ You may close this window or use your navigation bar to get back the Amazon MTurk website.”

The study was designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete, and thus, \$1.00 was given in monetary value for completion of the survey for MTurk participants. This dissertation was funded by the University of South Alabama’s Office of Research and Development.

3.4 Data Analytic Approach

Preliminary Analysis. Before analyzing data from the quantitative surveys, the data was screened on the univariate and multivariate levels (Kline, 1998; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2000). Additionally, descriptive statistics were calculated for the dataset. This included age, education obtained, religious services attended, racial composition of community, and current mental health status.

Data were screened for individuals who failed to complete the requirements of the study (e.g., identifying as Black and female) as well as for incorrect attention checks for each measure administered. Participants missing any one of the three attention checks were removed from the analyses. Only participants who completed at least 80% of each measure were examined. Missing data was accounted for using full information likelihood estimation (FIML). Normality issues (skewness and kurtosis) and outliers were

assessed. Univariate outliers with z scores above 2.5 and 3 were assessed. Bivariate correlations were then assessed across the measures.

Primary Analysis. The primary analysis consisted of structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the associations of gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress mediated by racial identity. Full information maximum-likelihood estimation with a robust estimator was used in order to address missing values and skewed distributions that could impact model fit. All procedures were conducted using MPlus (Muthén & Muthén, 2008).

The primary analysis consisted of three steps: (1) estimating a measurement model and comparing it to a structural model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988); (2) determining the mediated structural regression model to test indirect effects (i.e., fully or partially mediated); (3) using bootstrapping procedures to estimate the significance of the indirect effects (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). To evaluate model-fit across the measurement and structural models, the following fit indices and cutoffs were employed (Kline, 2016): Comparative fit index (CFI) and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; values above .90 indicate acceptable fit for both the CFI and TLI, with values above .95 indicating a good fit); the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) with 90% confidence intervals (CIs; low values of .06 or less and high values less than .10 indicate a good fit); and the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR); values of .08 or less indicate a good fit. The scaled chi-square test statistic is reported (a non-significant value indicates excellent fit); however, it should be interpreted with caution, given sample size sensitivities.

Measurement Model. In order to estimate the measurement model, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the latent variables' structure without

indicating particular directional paths between each latent construct. The Gendered Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale for Black Women (GRESS-BW) was used to form gendered racial socialization latent variables and the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) was used to form racial identity latent variables. Due to the GRESS-BW containing 63 items and the CRIS containing 40 items, item parcels instead of individual items was used as indicators of the latent factors in SEM. Parceling is a method used to aggregate sums or average scores across multiple items for each latent construct being observed (Bandalos, 2002, 2008; Yang et al., 2010). Once the item parcels were created, they were then adequately measured to determine whether they represented their respective latent variables.

Specifically, item parcels were created to examine healthy messages (i.e., messages promoting racial and cultural pride, oppression awareness, and racial hardship) and unhealthy messages (i.e., messages promoting internalized gendered racial oppression). Previous research and theory suggest that gender racial socialization is multidimensional (Brown et al., 2017), and that analyzing specific domains of gender racial socialization may provide a clearer perspective of which gender racial socialization messages, when endorsed more frequently, are related to higher stress levels (Thomas et al., 2013). In addition, racial identity is also multidimensional, and research supports examining each racial identity status separately rather than combining sub-domains together (Worrell et al., 2004). Therefore, the GP/OppA (i.e., gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness; “healthy messages”) latent variable used two three-item parcels and GRH (i.e., gendered racial hardship; “healthy messages”) latent variable used a two-item parcel. IGRO (i.e., internalized gendered racial oppression;

“unhealthy messages”) were measured by the four observed items of the GRESS-BW internalized gendered racial oppression subscale. High racial identity status (IA and IMCI) was measured by separating the internalization statuses (Afrocentricity and multiculturalist inclusive) into two manifest indicators using two-three item parcels of the CRIS. Low racial identity status (PA, PM, PSH) was measured by separating the pre-encounter status into three manifest indicators using three three-item parcels.

Mediated Structural Model. Once the measurement model had been determined, scaled chi-square difference tests were then used to examine changes in the model fit between a fully mediated and a partially mediated model (see Figure 2 for the partially mediated model). The fully mediated model specified that the path from gendered racial socialization messages to subjective gender role stress be constrained to zero to determine whether this more parsimonious model provided an equal or better fit to a model in which this direct effect path would be freely estimated. The fully mediated model was retained for testing the significance of the indirect effects, because it was a more parsimonious representation.

Significance Testing for Indirect Effects. As recommended by Shrout and Bolger (2002), a bootstrapping procedure was used to test the significance of the indirect effects of the model supported from the mediated structural model. The bootstrapping procedure consists of creating 1,000 bootstrap samples through random sampling with replacement and then running the hypothesized model 1,000 times with the 1,000 boot samples to obtain confidence intervals and standard errors for determining the significance of the indirect effects. If the 95% confidence interval does not contain zero, then the indirect effect is significant at the .05 level (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). The results

from testing the indirect effects revealed the percent of variance in the latent constructs measured.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Preliminary Analyses

The overall data set had a total of 3,039 participants. In an effort to clean the data set, participants were first deleted due to failed identity checks. Participants were asked, “What is your gender?” As a result, 1,691 participants were removed due to no responses to this question, followed by 339 participants removed for not identifying as female, resulting in a total of 1,009 participants. Participants were then asked, “What is your race?” There was only one participant deleted due to no response, followed by 197 participants removed for not identifying as Black/African American, resulting in a total of 811 participants. Finally, participants had three validity checks to complete and were removed if they failed at least one, resulting in 227 failed responses, leaving a total of 584 participants.

When assessing for missing values, qualitative responses on the SFSS were examined and participants who did not provide *any* responses or responses that appeared to be “bot” or illogical responses were excluded ($N = 20$). Such “bot” or illogical responses included repeating the question that was being asked of the participant as an answer (e.g., As a Black woman...), repeating one word for every question that was asked (e.g., woman, bold, Black), or providing a response not relevant to the question multiple times (e.g., It is sunny; Say hello). After such responses were removed, the final sample included 564 participants for the analysis process.

Further, only participants who completed at least 80% of each measure were included for the analysis. Some normality issues were present in the descriptive statistics — notably, the SFSS evidenced negative kurtosis values. However, upon closer inspection, this did not appear to be problematic. There were no univariate or multivariate outliers. Maximum likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) was used in the primary analyses to control for the potential normality problems. Since missing data was extremely rare (less than 2% of the sample), it was addressed by using full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation. Descriptive statistics are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Characteristics and Variables in Sample*

Variable	Mean	SD	α
Age	32.89	9.39	
Education Obtained	6.47	1.77	
Attend Religious Services	2.62	1.11	
Current Mental Health	3.92	.93	
Racial Composition of Community	1.84	.90	
Gendered Racial Pride & Empowerment	3.14	.70	.96
Oppression Awareness	3.00	.66	.76
Gendered Racial Hardship	2.57	.68	.59
Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression	1.80	.87	.88
Internalization (Afrocentricity)	3.94	1.36	.87
Internalization- (Multicultural Inclusive)	5.20	1.15	.83
Pre-Encounter (Assimilation)	4.13	1.56	.88
Pre-Encounter (Miseducation)	3.68	1.59	.88
Pre-Encounter (Self-Hatred)	3.31	1.66	.91
Subjective Feminine Stress	2.97	1.19	.92

Bivariate correlations between GP, OppA, GRH, IGRO, IA, IMCI, PA, PM, PSH and SFS are shown in Table 2. Notably, most variables were significantly correlated with one another.

Table 2. *Bivariate Correlations Among Raw (Non-Latent) Variables in Sample*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. GP	— —	.78**	.37**	-.18**	.07	.21**	.08	-.05	-.24**	-.12**
2. OppA		— —	.46**	-.11*	.10*	.28**	.07	-.04	-.12**	-.03
3. GRH			— —	.38**	.38**	.10*	.06	.18**	.26**	.15**
4. IGRO				— —	.44**	-.10*	.24**	.45**	.52**	.17**
5. IA					— —	.02	.10*	.38**	.51**	.25**
6. IMCI						— —	.06	-.17**	-.01	.04
7. PA							— —	.58**	.30**	-.06
8. PM								— —	.49**	.05
9. PSH									— —	.36**
10. SFS										— —

Note. GP = Gendered Racial Pride & Empowerment subscale; OppA = Oppression Awareness subscale; GRH = Gendered Racial Hardship; IGRO = Internalized Gendered Racial Hardship subscale; IA = Afrocentricity subscale; IMCI = Multiculturalist Inclusive subscale; PA = Assimilation subscale; PM = Miseducation subscale; PSH = Self-Hatred subscale; SFS = SFSS scale.

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

4.2 Primary Analyses

4.2.1 Measurement Model

A measurement model was formed by using a combination of observed items and item parcels. Specifically, a factorial parceling procedure (c.f., Matsunaga, 2008) was

employed by conducting an exploratory factor analysis for the unidimensional stress items, gender racial socialization items, and racial identity items, forcing a one-factor solution. In order to balance out the magnitude of the loadings for each parcel, high and low loading items were assigned iteratively across the three parcels. After this process, then the measurement model was estimated. Estimating the measurement model consisted of conducting a confirmatory factor analysis to test the latent variable structure without indicating any directional paths between the latent constructs. The initial measurement model evidenced acceptable fit across the indices of global fit, χ^2 (360, $N = 564$) = 807.30, $p < .001$; CFI = .95; SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .05, 90% confidence interval (CI) [.04, .05]. However, the gendered racial pride and empowerment latent variable correlated with the oppression awareness latent variable at .92, which is evidence of multicollinearity between the variables. Therefore, the measurement model was respecified to combine gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness together (i.e., GP/OppA). The measurement model evidenced model fit consistent with an acceptable global fit to the data, χ^2 (369, $N = 564$) = 874.47, $p < .001$; CFI = .95; SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .05, 90% confidence interval (CI) [.05, .06]. As shown in Table 3, all of the factor loadings of the measured variables on the latent variables were statistically significant. Therefore, all of the latent variables appear to have been adequately measured by their respective indicators in the respecified model.

Table 3. *Factor Loadings for the Measurement Model Among Variables in Sample*

Latent Variable & Manifest indicators	Unstandardized factor loadings	SE	Standardized factor loadings
GP/OppA			
GP Parcel 1	0.69	0.02	0.95***
GP Parcel 2	0.70	0.02	0.95***
GP Parcel 3	0.67	0.03	0.92***
OppA Parcel 1	0.55	0.03	0.67***
OppA Parcel 2	0.55	0.03	0.75***
OppA Parcel 3	0.51	0.04	0.54***
GRH			
GRH Parcel 1	0.55	0.04	0.66***
GRH Parcel 2	0.53	0.04	0.69***
IGRO			
IGRO1	0.86	0.03	0.81***
IGRO2	0.85	0.04	0.82***
IGRO3	0.80	0.04	0.80***
IGRO4	0.77	0.04	0.78***
IA			
IA Parcel 1	1.13	0.05	0.82***
IA Parcel 2	1.35	0.05	0.86***
IA Parcel 3	1.33	0.06	0.79***
IMCI			
IMCI Parcel 1	0.96	0.07	0.73***
IMCI Parcel 2	1.12	0.07	0.83***
IMCI Parcel 3	0.99	0.07	0.70***
PA			
PA Parcel 1	1.38	0.06	0.83***
PA Parcel 2	1.57	0.05	0.89***
PA Parcel 3	1.45	0.06	0.78***
PM			
PM Parcel 1	1.40	0.05	0.83***
PM Parcel 2	1.50	0.05	0.86***
PM Parcel 3	1.58	0.06	0.80***
PSH			
PSH Parcel 1	1.63	0.04	0.93***
PSH Parcel 2	1.56	0.04	0.91***
PSH Parcel 3	1.60	0.05	0.83***
SFS			
SS Parcel 1	1.04	0.03	0.89***
SS Parcel 2	1.06	0.03	0.93***
SS Parcel 3	1.02	0.04	0.81***

Note. GP/OppA = Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment and Oppression Awareness; GRH = Gendered Racial Hardship; IGRO = Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression; IA= Internalization Afrocentricity; IMCI= Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive; PA

= Pre-Encounter Assimilation; PM = Pre-Encounter Miseducation; PSH = Pre-Encounter Self Hatred; SS = Subjective Gender Role Stress.

*** $p < .001$.

4.2.2 Direct Effects

4.2.2.1 Hypothesis 1a.

Table 4 displays the unstandardized and standardized direct effects in the structural model, and Figure 2 displays the final structural model. Direct effects were calculated to test **Hypothesis 1a** that the endorsement of gendered racial pride and empowerment messages and oppression awareness messages (GP/OppA in Figure 2) would be positively associated with an internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and negatively associated with subjective gender role stress. Contrary to the stated hypothesis, the positive relationship between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages and the internalization-Afrocentricity racial identity status was non-significant ($\beta = -.05$, $p = .66$). The relationship between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages and the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity was also non-significant ($\beta = .10$, $p = .41$). Interestingly, the hypothesized negative relationship between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages and the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status was instead positive and significant ($\beta = .31$, $p = .00$), suggesting that Black women are likely to attempt to assimilate into Eurocentric, White culture. In addition, the negative relationship between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages and the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status was also positive, but it was non-significant ($\beta = .13$, $p = .20$). Supporting hypothesis 1a, the expected negative

relationship between gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages and the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status was significant ($\beta = -.36$, $p = .00$). Thus, Black women who received messages emphasizing racial pride, empowerment, and awareness of oppression may be less likely to identify with negative stereotypical beliefs about oneself. However, greater self-reported gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages, contrary to expectations, were not significantly associated with less gender role stress ($\beta = -.15$, $p = .14$).

4.2.2.2 Hypothesis 1b.

Table 4 displays the unstandardized and standardized direct effects in the structural model, and Figure 2 displays the final structural model. To test **Hypothesis 1b**, direct effects were examined to determine if gendered racial hardship messages (denoted as GRH in Figure 2) would be positively associated with an internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and negatively associated with subjective gender role stress. In support of this hypothesis, gendered racial hardship messages were significant and positive predictors of the internalization-Afrocentricity racial identity status ($\beta = .37$, $p = .01$). This suggests that the more gendered racial hardship messages Black women receive, the more they are likely to endorse an Afrocentric viewpoint. By contrast, gendered racial hardship messages were not significantly related to the internalization-multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status ($\beta = .20$, $p = .19$). As predicted, gendered racial hardship messages were negatively and significantly associated with pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status ($\beta = -.32$, $p = .02$), suggesting that Black women who receive messages about potential racial-gender hardships were less likely to want to assimilate into mainstream White society.

There was no support for a negative relationship between gendered racial hardship messages and the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status ($\beta = -.14, p = .29$). Moreover, contrary to expectations, gendered racial hardship messages evidenced a significant and positive relationship with pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status ($\beta = .37, p = .00$). These results suggest that Black women who receive messages related to Black women's hardships in society are likely to endorse negative stereotypical beliefs about themselves and Black culture in general. In addition, the negative relationship between gendered racial hardship messages and subjective gender role stress was also (contrary to expectations) positive, but it was non-significant ($\beta = .17, p = .22$).

4.2.2.3 Hypothesis 2.

Table 4 displays the unstandardized and standardized direct effects in the structural model, and Figure 2 displays the final structural model. **Hypothesis 2** stated that the endorsement of messages that promote internalized gendered racial oppression (IGRO in Figure 2) would be positively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, negatively associated with an internalization racial identity status, and positively associated with subjective gender role stress. The direct effects partially supported this hypothesis. Specifically, internalized racial oppression messages were significantly and positively associated with pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status ($\beta = .51, p = .00$). Thus, Black women's endorsements of negative stereotypical beliefs about being Black were related to more assimilation with White culture. The relationship between internalized gendered racial oppression messages and the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status was also significant and positive ($\beta = .63, p = .00$), suggesting such messages were associated with being miseducated about one's racial group's values,

beliefs, and expectations. The relationship between internalized gendered racial oppression messages and the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status was, again, significant and positive ($\beta = .34, p = .00$). Supporting Hypothesis 2, such unhealthy messages may result in a Black woman hating herself and internalizing oppressive experiences as though they are a cause of being Black. Contrary to expectation, however, internalized gendered racial oppression messages and the internalization-Afrocentricity racial identity status was positive and significant ($\beta = .32, p = .00$), suggesting that such negative messages increase the likelihood that a Black woman may endorse adopting more Afrocentric norms and ideals in society. By contrast, internalized gendered racial oppression messages were, as expected, negatively associated with the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status, though the effect was barely statistically significant ($\beta = -.21, p = .05$). These results suggest that Black women who internalize negative gendered racial stereotypes are less likely to identify as being open and inclusive of other racial and cultural groups and their experiences. There was no support for a significant relationship between internalized racial oppression messages and subjective gender role stress ($\beta = -.08, p = .41$).

4.2.2.4 Hypothesis 3.

Table 4 displays the unstandardized and standardized direct effects in the structural model, and Figure 2 displays the final structural model. **Hypothesis 3** stated that the endorsement of an internalization racial identity status would be negatively associated with subjective gender role stress. This hypothesis was not supported. The relationship between the internalization-Afrocentricity racial identity status and subjective gender role stress was positive and non-significant ($\beta = .04, p = .60$.) Likewise,

the relationship between the internalization-multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status and subjective gender role stress was positive and non-significant ($\beta = .07, p = .22$).

4.2.2.5 Hypothesis 4.

Table 4 displays the unstandardized and standardized direct effects in the structural model, and Figure 2 displays the final structural model. **Hypothesis 4** stated that the endorsement of a pre-encounter racial identity status would be positively associated with subjective gender role stress. This hypothesis was partially supported. The relationship between the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status and subjective gender role stress was negative but was non-significant ($\beta = -.13, p = .11$). Likewise, the relationship between the pre-encounter miseducation and racial identity status and subjective gender role stress was negative but was non-significant ($\beta = -.06, p = .52$). However, the relationship between the pre-encounter self-hatred and low racial identity status was positive and significant ($\beta = .40, p = .00$), suggesting that if a Black woman endorses negative stereotypes about her “Blackness,” the more stress she may experience.

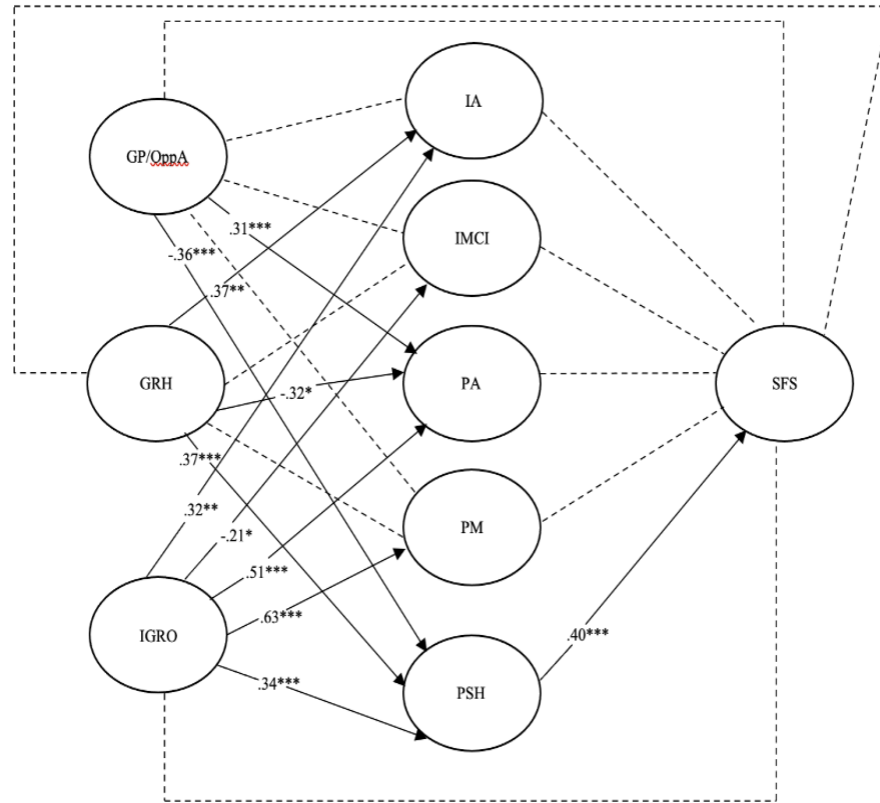


Figure 2. Final Structural Model

Note. For readability, manifest indicators, error terms, disturbance terms, and correlations between racial identity disturbance terms are not displayed. Dashed lines represent non-significant effects. GP/OppA = Gendered Racial Pride & Empowerment and Oppression Awareness, GRH = Gendered Racial Hardship, IGRO = Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression, IA = Internalization Afrocentricity, IMCI = Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, PA = Pre-Encounter Assimilation, PM = Pre-Encounter Miseducation, PSH = Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, SFS = Subjective Feminine Stress.

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

4.2.3 Mediated Structural Model

The structural model was further probed for mediation by using a nested chi-square difference tests to examine changes in the model fit between a fully mediated and a partially mediated model. The fully mediated model specified that the path from the

healthy and unhealthy gendered racial socialization messages to subjective gender role stress be constrained to zero to determine if this more parsimonious model provides an equal or better fit to the partially mediated model in which these direct effects were freely estimated. When the fully mediated model was constrained to zero, the paths between healthy and unhealthy messages to subjective gender role stress produced acceptable fit to the data, $\chi^2 (372, N = 564) = 876.95, p < .001$; CFI = .95; SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .05, 90% confidence interval (CI) [.05, .06]. A partially mediated model also produced acceptable fit to the data, $\chi^2 (369, N = 564) = 874.47, p < .001$; CFI = .95; SRMR = .05; RMSEA = .05, 90% confidence interval (CI) [.05, .06]. However, the nested model chi-square difference test indicated that the fully mediated model produced an equivalent fit to the data compared to the partially mediated model, $\Delta\chi^2 (3, N = 564) = 2.48, p > .55$. Therefore, the fully mediated model was retained for testing the significance of the indirect effects, because it was a more parsimonious representation.

4.2.4 Significance Testing for Indirect Effects

Racial identity status was hypothesized to mediate (i.e., explain) the associations between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress. Therefore, as recommended by Shrout and Bolger (2002), a bootstrapping procedure was employed to test the significance of the indirect effects of the fully mediated model to test Hypothesis 5. The bootstrapping procedure consisted of creating 1,000 bootstrap samples through random sampling and replacement and then running the hypothesized model 1,000 times with these 1,000 boot samples to obtain confidence intervals and standard errors for determining the significance of the indirect effects (i.e., the amount of mediation explained by each racial identity status). If the 95% confidence

interval does not contain zero, then the indirect effect is considered significant at the .05 level (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

Table 4 provides the unstandardized and standardized indirect effects of the fully mediated structural model. The indirect effect of gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages through the internalization Afrocentricity racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.00, p = .90, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.03, .01]$). Likewise, the indirect effect of gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages through the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .01, p = .58, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.00, .04]$). The indirect effect of gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages through the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was also non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.05, p = .13, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.13, .01]$). The indirect effect of gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages through the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was also non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.01, p = .62, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.07, .01]$). However, the indirect effect of gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages through the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was statistically significant and negative ($\beta_{indirect} = -.17, p = .00, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.31, -.10]$), thus supporting **Hypothesis 5**. The significant indirect effect suggests that the more messages Black women receive about having cultural pride and being aware of oppression, the less gender role stress they may experience, potentially as a function of having less self-hatred racial identity status attitudes.

The indirect effect of gendered racial hardship messages through the internalization Afrocentricity racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .02, p = .67, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.03, .08]$). Likewise, the indirect effect of gendered racial hardship messages through the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .01, p = .47, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.00, .07]$). The indirect effect of gendered racial hardship messages through the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was also non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .05, p = .17, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.01, .07]$). The indirect effect of gendered racial hardship messages through the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .01, p = .65, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.00, .08]$). However, the indirect effect of gendered racial hardship messages through the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was significant and positive ($\beta_{indirect} = .17, p = .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [.09, .33]$), supporting **Hypothesis 5**. This suggests that the more messages Black women receive related to gender and racial hardships, the more likely they are to experience gender role stress, possibly as a function having more racial self-hatred attitudes and beliefs.

The indirect effect of internalized gendered racial oppression messages through the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.06, p = .08, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.18, .01]$). The indirect effect of internalized gendered racial oppression messages through the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was also non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.04, p = .46, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.17, .05]$). However, the indirect effect of internalized gendered

racial oppression messages through the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .15, p = .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [.08, .28]$), thus supporting **Hypothesis 5**. This suggests that the more negative beliefs about Black women that are internalized, the more gender role stress they experience, potentially as a function of having more racial self-hatred attitudes. By contrast, the indirect effect of internalized gendered racial oppression messages through the internalization Afrocentricity racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = .01, p = .60, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.02, .07]$). Likewise, the indirect effect of internalized gendered racial oppression messages through the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status on subjective gender role stress was non-significant ($\beta_{indirect} = -.01, p = .36, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.05, .00]$).

The full model explained 20% of the variance in subjective gender role stress, 35% of the variance in the internalization Afrocentricity racial identity status, 8% of the variance in the internalization multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status, 13% of the variance in the pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status, 29% of the variance in the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status, and 41% of the variance in the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status.

Table 4. *Unstandardized estimates, standard errors, and standardized regression coefficients in the fully mediated structural model*

Predictor Variables→	Mediator Variable→	Criterion Variable→	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	$\beta_{indirect}$	95% CI
GP/OppA →	IA	— -	-.06	.14	-.05	— -	-.36, .15
GP/OppA →	IMCI	— -	.10	.13	.10	— -	-.11, .33
GP/OppA →	PA	— -	.33	.12	.31***	— -	.15, .57
GP/OppA →	PM	— -	.16	.12	.13	— -	-.04, .38
GP/OppA →	PSH	— -	-.46	.13	-.36***	— -	-.80, -.28
GP/OppA →	— -	SFS	-.16	.11	-.15	— -	-.38, .06
GRH →	IA	— -	.46	.20	.37**	— -	.13, .84
GRH →	IMCI	— -	.21	.16	.20	— -	-.06, .50
GRH →	PA	— -	-.35	.16	-.32*	— -	-.66, -.12
GRH →	PM	— -	-.17	.16	-.14	— -	-.45, .10
GRH →	PSH	— -	.48	.17	.37**	— -	.22, .84
GRH →	— -	SFS	.19	.15	.17	— -	-.11, .50
IGRO →	PA	— -	.55	.13	.51***	— -	.36, .83
IGRO →	PM	— -	.74	.12	.63***	— -	.54, .98
IGRO →	PSH	— -	.44	.12	.34***	— -	.20, .64
IGRO →	IA	— -	.40	.13	.32**	— -	.13, .60
IGRO →	IMCI	— -	-.21	.11	-.21 *	— -	-.42, -.04
IGRO →	— -	SFS	-.09	.11	-.08	— -	-.28, .14
IA →	— -	SFS	.03	.06	.03	— -	-.09, .15
IMCI →	— -	SFS	.07	.06	.07	— -	-.03, .18
PA →	— -	SFS	-.13	.08	-.13	— -	-.29, .03
PM →	— -	SFS	-.06	.09	-.06	— -	-.22, .08
PSH →	— -	SFS	.35	.07	.40***	— -	.31, .50
GP/OppA →	IA →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.00	-.03, .01
GP/OppA →	IMCI →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.01	-.00, .04
GP/OppA →	PA →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.05	-.13, .01
GP/OppA →	PM →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.01	-.07, .01
GP/OppA →	PSH →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.17***	-.31, -.10
GRH →	IA →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.02	-.03, .08
GRH →	IMCI →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.01	-.00, .07
GRH →	PA	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.05	-.01, .07
GRH →	PM	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.01	-.00, .08
GRH →	PSH	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.17**	.09, .33
IGRO →	PA →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.06	-.18, .01
IGRO →	PM →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.04	-.17, .05
IGRO →	PSH →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.15**	.08, .28
IGRO →	IA →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	.01	-.02, .07
IGRO →	IMCI →	SFS	— -	— -	— -	-.01	-.05, .00

Note. GP/OppA = Gendered Racial Pride & Empowerment and Oppression Awareness, GRH = Gendered Racial Hardship, IGRO = Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression, IA = Internalization Afrocentricity, IMCI = Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive, PA = Pre-Encounter Assimilation, PM = Pre-Encounter Miseducation, PSH = Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred, SFS = Subjective Gender Role Stress, *B* = Unstandardized Effect, *SE* = Standard Error, β = Standardized Effect, *CI* = Confidence Interval. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

CHAPTER V:

DISCUSSION

5.1 Review of Hypotheses and Research Questions

This dissertation addressed the relationships between recollected gendered racial socialization messages, current racial identity status perspectives, and current subjective gender role stress among Black women. Notably, the current study offered an advanced statistical approach of understanding such relationships to date and tested a theory-driven model of how these variables may intersect. The following research questions and hypotheses were advanced.

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity for Black women?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): How do the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity predict stress from Black women's embodiment of gender role norms?

Hypothesis 1a (H1): Endorsement of gendered racial pride and empowerment messages and oppression awareness messages (i.e., cultural pride socialization messages and preparation for bias messages; "healthy messages") will be positively associated with an internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 1b (H1): Endorsement of gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., preparation for bias messages; "healthy messages") will be positively associated with an

internalization racial identity status, negatively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status, and negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Endorsement of gendered racial socialization messages that promote internalized gendered racial oppression (i.e., negative racial and gender messages; “unhealthy messages”) will be positively associated with a pre-encounter racial identity status (pre-encounter), negatively associated with an internalization racial identity status, and negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Endorsement of an internalization racial identity status will be negatively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Endorsement of a pre-encounter racial identity status will be positively associated with subjective gender role stress.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Racial identity status will mediate the associations between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress.

The present results partially supported some of these hypotheses, and some were not supported (see Table 5). Supported hypotheses are discussed in more detail in the sections to follow, first in relation to the full model in which the relationships between gendered racial socialization messages and feminine gender role stress were mediated by racial identity status perspectives and then focusing on specific paths in the model.

Table 5. *Summary of support for each hypothesis*

Hypothesis	Full Support	Partial Support	No Support
H1a		X	
H1b		X	
H2		X	
H3			X
H4		X	
H5		X	

5.2 Subjective Feminine Gender Role Stress

Subjective feminine gender role stress (i.e., allowing women to write their subjective experiences of being female and rating the stress associated with those feminine experiences; Shea et. al., 2014) was examined as an outcome variable for both recollected gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity. Results revealed that *only* the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status was positively and significantly associated with subjective gender role stress as a Black woman, supporting **Hypothesis 4**. Interestingly, the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status was also the *only* racial identity status that mediated (i.e., explained) the associations between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress for both healthy (i.e., GP/OppA and GRH) and unhealthy (i.e., IGRO) messages, supporting **Hypothesis 5**. When taking a closer look at the associations between the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status and subjective gender role stress, results suggest that Black women who endorse negative feelings about themselves (e.g., self-hate) may

appraise their gender roles as stressful. Though there is currently no research that provides a clear reason for why this pre-encounter identity status is positively associated with gender role stress, it is possible self-hatred is capturing negative core beliefs. Core beliefs have been defined as “fundamental, absolute, and lasting comprehensions that a person develops about him or herself, others, and the world, that are constructed from the effort of extracting meaning from significant childhood or formative experiences” (Beck, 2011, p. 68). When such beliefs are internalized, they are grouped into categories and form schemas, which serve as the basis for interpreting new incoming information (Beck, 1964; Beck et al., 2015; Clark & Beck, 2011; Osmo et al., 2018). Beck (2005) identified three categories of negative core beliefs about oneself: helplessness, unlovability, and worthlessness. Perhaps, Black women who feel incompetent, inferior, incapable of obtaining attention, worthless, or insignificant, as a result of meaning that has been derived from socialization experiences, endorse such attitudes and perceive their role in society as stressful. For example, the pre-encounter self-hatred identity status is assessing racial attitudes and perspective such as, “I go through periods when I am down on myself,” and “I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black” (Worrell et al. 2004). Thus, Black women who are endorsing such attitudes may engage in negative self-talk in response to feeling like a failure or encountering setbacks due to their Black identity and, in turn, develop such core beliefs that may result in them feeling challenged in how to define themselves and their gender role in society. Future research should continue to explore this interesting association to determine how self-hatred attitudes and beliefs can negatively impact stress levels for Black women’s gender role experiences. Perhaps, further exploring Black women’s core beliefs and socialization experiences can

shed insight into understanding how Black women may have internalized such beliefs that impact their appraisal of gender role stress.

Notably, the mediation effect of the pre-encounter racial identity status on both healthy and unhealthy messages and subjective gender role stress fills significant gaps to the literature. Most of the literature to date has explored the impact of gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity development on psychological outcomes (Lesane-Brown, 2006; Neblett et al., 2009, 2013; Stevenson et al., 1997), but no studies have explored the impact of recollected gendered racial socialization messages on subjective gender role stress explained through racial identity. This is important to understand, given that race and gender development can occur simultaneously when receiving gendered racial socialization messages about what it means to be Black and female (McRae & Noumair, 1997). Further, racial identity is the meaning that an individual can ascribe to their group membership (Sellers et al., 1998). Thus, seeking to understand how a Black woman identifies or perceives her race was key to explaining the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and how (or if) gender roles for Black women are appraised as stressful or not stressful.

Remarkably, Black women who receive healthy messages that promote racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness (i.e., GP/OppA) were less likely to experience subjective gender role stress conditional on reporting less self-hatred attitudes. Perhaps, Black women who receive messages such as, “I should be proud to be a Black woman,” “Black women can accomplish anything,” and “I should not allow anyone to disrespect me,” (Brown et al., 2017) begin to feel good about their “Blackness,” which contrasts with endorsing negative stereotypical beliefs about themselves. As a result, Black women

have a more positive identity perspective that may potentially protect them from experiencing stress in general. More specifically, growing up in family contexts where parents provide a variety of racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness messages suggest that these Black women may have been in an environment conducive to developing positive core self-beliefs as a Black woman. Indeed, parents who provide these messages are likely to focus on the positive aspects of being Black rather than on the negative implications (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Stevenson et al., 1998). Thus, women who have received these messages may not only have a positive and healthy Black identity but may also have a positive and healthy female identity.

In contrast, healthy messages related to gendered racial hardships (i.e., GRH) and unhealthy messages related to internalized gendered racial oppression (i.e., IGRO) were associated with more subjective gender role stress as a result of more self-hatred attitudes. Such findings are unique to the current body of literature. Perhaps, gendered racial hardship messages such as “Black women should only marry Black men,” and “Being both Black and a woman, I will have to work harder than most people to reach my dreams/goals” (Brown et al., 2017) are more similar to internalized gendered racial oppression messages such as, “Black women have bad attitudes,” and hearing Black parents/caregivers speak negatively about Black women (Brown et al., 2017). This is quite interesting given that gendered racial hardship messages have been previously considered “healthy” messages due to preparing a Black woman for bias; however, such messages are related to endorsing more negative stereotypical beliefs about one’s Black identity, thus leading to more appraisal of gender role stress. Similarly, internalized gendered racial oppression messages are rooted in stereotypical beliefs about Black

women (Winchester et al., 2021), thus Black women who receive such messages are internalizing these beliefs and having challenges with their gender roles in society. Therefore, Black women who are perceiving their gender roles as stressful currently have internalized a negative view of themselves from receiving such hardship and internalized gendered racial oppression messages when growing up. Perhaps, parents and families are unaware of how the transmission of such messages -although preparing a Black woman for biases she may encounter- during childhood can potentially result in negative consequences in adulthood. In addition, it may be possible that Black women who were socialized hearing these messages precisely were a result of their mothers specifically experiencing gendered racial hardships. Thus, this could suggest that the child was exposed to negativity which could contribute to more self-hatred attitudes in adulthood. Though these results provide insight related to the impact of Black women's endorsement of negative stereotypes and beliefs about themselves and Black culture, future research should continue to understand the impact of such experiences on gender role stress for Black women. It is possible Black women may struggle with the double bind that is created as a result of racism and sexism and are blocked from achieving certain aspects of mainstream culture's feminine ideals (Wade, 1996; Winchester et al., 2021), thus, resulting in Black women "self-hating" themselves and their Black culture and heritage.

5.3 Gendered Racial Socialization and Racial Identity

Given that this dissertation used a multivariate model to understand recollected gendered racial socialization messages on subjective gender role stress explained by racial identity statuses, it also provides an understanding of how recollected gendered

racial socialization messages are associated directly with racial identity. Examining these direct effects answered the research question: What are the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity for Black women? Findings suggest that both recollected healthy and unhealthy messages are related to current racial identity perspectives but also raises a variety of questions for future research.

5.3.1 Internalization- Afrocentricity

The internalization-Afrocentricity racial identity status (i.e., degree to which individuals believe that Black Americans should live by Afrocentric principles; Worrell et al., 2020) was predicted by a combination of more gendered racial hardship messages, (i.e., GRH), supporting **Hypothesis 1b** and more internalized gendered racial oppression messages (i.e., IGRO). Such findings are notable given that gendered racial hardship messages are often conceptualized as “healthy” messages, and internalized gendered racial oppression messages are considered “unhealthy.” Specifically, gendered racial hardship messages promote an understanding for Black women to be aware of the hardships they may encounter in not being afforded the same opportunities and experiences as White women, having to work harder due to having double minority statuses, and experiencing difficulties in finding a significant other (Brown et al., 2017). Such hardship messages provide a general awareness of the inequities experienced by Black women. Thus, Black women are more likely to have a stronger orientation towards the Black community and a greater social preference for Black individuals believing in Afrocentric morals and principles. Perhaps, Black women who are raised and socialized in contexts that experience gendered racial hardships are aware of such challenging

experiences and thus believe it is important to live life understanding how such hardships have impacted the Black community (Mutisya & Ross, 2005). Specifically, Mutisya and Ross (2005) suggested that the negative impact of colonization and discriminatory practices has shown that having an Afrocentric perspective can help Blacks revitalize their cultural identity and have a better understanding of their culture and its values. Similarly, internalized gendered racial oppression messages that involve Black women reporting having heard their parents or caregivers speak negatively about other Black women (Brown et al., 2017) was also associated with having a more Afrocentric worldview. This finding is interesting given that it would be assumed that such messages would result in a Black woman *not* desiring to want to live life by Afrocentric principles. However, given that these messages place special emphasis on Black culture (e.g., “Lighter skin is better than darker skin”; Brown et al., 2017), such messages highlight ideals, norms, and values related to being a Black woman, resulting in a Black woman possibly striving to adhere to those deeply rooted Afrocentric principles and beliefs in order to be accepted by Black culture. It is also possible that the unexpected positive result may be attributable to the way an internalized Afrocentric racial identity is measured by the CRIS (Anglin & Wade, 2007). Cokley (2002) noted in a previous study that the term “Afrocentric” was used throughout the five-items of the CRIS scale without ever being defined. In addition, contrary to what would be expected theoretically, the internalized Afrocentric subscale was positively associated with the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White racial identity subscale (Anglin & Wade, 2007). Thus, it is impossible to ascertain whether Black women who reported receiving such internalized gendered racial oppression messages had the same understanding of “Afrocentric”. Given the often

negative representations of the word “Afrocentric” it is possible that Black women associated inaccurate or negative beliefs with the term (Cokley, 2002). Possibly, Black women who endorsed aligning with “Afrocentric” as a term were responding to the anger characteristic of the Immersion-Emersion stage, and not to the revised aspect of the internalization stage that is associated with a more positive and salient Black sense of self (Anglin & Wade, 2007). Future research should continue to examine the impact of how gendered racial hardship and internalized gendered racial oppression messages influence a more Afrocentric viewpoint. Possibly, parents and families are transmitting these messages in ways that are deeply rooted in Black culture, with less emphasis on mainstream society’s ideals and norms, thus when Black women get older, they begin to see the world through a more Afrocentric lens. In addition, future research should explore how experiences of racial discrimination predict the messages that Black women receive about what it means to be Black and a woman. Such research could highlight how internalizing such experiences may promote a more Afrocentric perspective.

5.3.2 Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive

The internalization-multiculturalist inclusive racial identity status (i.e., Black acceptance with a willingness to engage with other ethnic groups; Worrell et al., 2020) was predicted by less internalized gendered racial oppression messages (i.e., IGRO), supporting **Hypothesis 2**. Given that such messages were associated with endorsing a more Afrocentric perspective, it is not surprising that these messages are associated with Black women being less likely to identify connecting with other groups (e.g., Hispanics, Asian Americans, Whites, LGBTQ+, etc.). However, such findings are interesting. Since these messages are rooted in negative stereotypic beliefs about Black women, it would be

assumed that Black women would want to detach from their “Blackness” and seek out other cultural groups where they may receive different messages that would make them feel inclusive. Perhaps, Black women who receive messages endorsing negative stereotypic beliefs about Black women feel as though other cultural groups will not accept them, thus they strive to conform to the ideals of Black culture, resulting in a more Afrocentric perspective versus a multiculturalist inclusive one. Although research related to internalized gendered racial oppression messages is still growing, future research could benefit by continuing to explore how such negative messages can lead to endorsing more internalization attitudes given that this identity status is associated with healthier racial attitudes towards being Black and inclusive of other cultural groups. Further, research should continue to examine racial identity development among Black women, specifically gendered racial identity. Perhaps, given that racial identity is multidimensional, it is possible that because Black women move through the stages as a natural process, thus regardless of such negative messages Black women would still progress to this racial identity status. However, future research could benefit from examining such unhealthy messages along with gendered racial identity to truly understand how when racial and gender experiences are combined for Black women, racial development may change or fluctuate across time.

5.3.3 Pre-Encounter Assimilation

The pre-encounter assimilation racial identity status was predicted by a combination of more gendered racial pride and oppression awareness messages (i.e., GP/OppA) and internalized gendered racial oppression messages (i.e., IGRO) and less gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., GRH). Such findings extend the current state of

the literature. Specifically, gendered racial pride and oppression awareness messages such as “Black women should not be limited by their race or gender” and “I may experience racism in certain environments” (Brown et al., 2017) are transmitted by parents and caregivers during childhood to combat the inconsistencies with mainstream America’s beauty norms and ideals (Thomas & King, 2007), as well as to ensure Black women are prepared for racial encounters of being a Black woman (Brown et al., 2005). Therefore, it is somewhat surprising that Black women who may receive such messages may find themselves assimilating into White culture.

Pre-encounter assimilation refers to a preference for a national identity label (e.g., “American”) rather than an ethnic label (“Black American”) (Worrell et al., 2020). This racial identity perspective explores endorsing statements such as, “I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.” Given that the literature has not explored the impact of recollected racial socialization messages on current racial identity status, it is worth noting that individualistic and/or universalistic racial socialization messages (i.e., “no specific racial reference, work hard, and all people are equal”) are associated with socializing in ways congruent with mainstream society (Demo & Hughes, 1990). Perhaps, Black women who received messages related to racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness during childhood may find in adulthood that it was easier to adopt more individualistic/and or universalistic attitudes since Eurocentric standards and norms are common and valued due to systemic and interpersonal racism. Future research should continue to explore how certain contexts (e.g., predominantly White settings) may potentially impact whether or not Black women find it easier to assimilate. For example, if a Black woman is in a predominantly White setting, it may be

easier for her to de-emphasize her “Blackness” to navigate through that context without experiencing negative psychological consequences (i.e., microaggressions, racism). In addition, future research should examine how parents and families transmit racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness messages in ways that might promote assimilating with mainstream society.

In addition, Black women who receive internalized gendered racial oppression awareness messages (i.e., IGRO) such as, “Lighter skin is more attractive than darker skin” (Brown et al., 2017) also were more likely to adopt pre-encounter assimilation attitudes, supporting **Hypothesis 2**. Such unhealthy messages are rooted in the adoption of racist ideology, stereotypes, and beliefs of inferiority as well as how a Black woman may accept her marginalized status as justified, natural, and inevitable (Banks & Stephens, 2018; Shellae Versey et al., 2019; Winchester et al., 2021). Therefore, receiving such messages can impinge the psychological self-concept and well-being of Black American women, resulting in the desire to conform to ideals and values that emphasize an identity not associated with being Black. Further research should seek to examine parental transmission of such unhealthy messages as well as the family context. Such examination could determine how parents are transmitting messages that are rooted in negative beliefs about Black women as a result of their own internalization of these messages, thus impacting the socialization practices of their children. Perhaps, Black parents are intending to give these messages with hope that their child will conform to mainstream society’s ideals and norms so they can be seen more positively by others who are not Black. In contrast, gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., GRH) such as, “A good Black man is hard to find” (Brown et al., 2017) were associated with less pre-

encounter assimilation attitudes, **supporting Hypothesis 1b**. Gendered racial hardship messages promote an understanding for Black women to be aware of the hardships they may encounter in not being afforded the same opportunities and experiences as White women, having to work harder due to having double minority statuses, and experiencing difficulties in finding a significant other (Brown et al., 2017). Such hardship messages provide a general awareness of the inequities experienced by Black women. These messages strongly communicate the inequities that exist between White and Black women, thus Black women are less likely to assimilate and endorse Eurocentric ideals and norms. Perhaps, Black women realize that the hardships they encounter are a result of White culture not being accepting of who they are, thus Black women are less likely to want to assimilate with a culture that may have played a role in creating those hardships. Future research should continue to examine how messages related to gendered racial hardships may impact a Black woman less likely wanting to assimilate. Perhaps, allowing Black women to provide their subjective experiences of receiving such messages can provide insight related to how such messages may lead to less assimilation.

5.3.4 Pre-Encounter Miseducation

The pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status (i.e., acceptance of negative stereotypes about Black Americans; Worrell et al., 2020) was predicted by more internalized gendered racial oppression messages (i.e., IGRO), supporting **Hypothesis 2**. Internalized gendered racial oppression messages such as “Black women with natural hairstyles (e.g., afro, braids, and dreads) are unattractive,” and “Black women typically have bad attitudes,” are rooted in negative stereotypes about Black women, thus resulting in Black women becoming miseducated about their Black identity as well as Black

culture. Given that both internalized gendered racial oppression messages and the pre-encounter racial identity status are assessing endorsement of negative stereotypes about Black Americans, it may be beneficial for future research to tease apart the differences that lie between these two concepts. For example, the pre-encounter miseducation racial identity status assesses attitudes such as “Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work” and “Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them” (Worrell et al., 2004). Perhaps, internalized gendered racial oppression is a result of being miseducated about one’s Black identity and internalizing these messages as though they are representative of all Black Americans. For example, previous research has suggested that parents increase the likelihood that Black women will internalize negative stereotypical beliefs about themselves when they hear oppressive messages that are inclusive of all Black individuals. In turn, Black women have experienced an increase in depressive symptoms (Davis Tribble et al., 2019; Jerald et al., 2017; Stokes et al., 2020). Therefore, it may be beneficial to allow Black women to provide further insight into specific contexts and parental transmission of such messages that could provide a clearer understanding of the similarities and differences between these concepts.

5.3.5 Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred

The pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status (i.e., negative view of the self because one is a Black American; Worrell et al., 2020) was predicted by a combination of more gendered racial hardship messages (i.e., GRH) and internalized gendered racial oppression messages (i.e., IGRO) and less gendered racial pride and oppression awareness messages (i.e., GP/OppA). Thus, it appears that gendered racial hardship

messages and internalized gendered oppression awareness messages are similar in their message content. Specifically, gendered racial hardship messages such as, “There are more opportunities for White woman, so, as a Black woman, I have to work twice as hard,” and internalized gendered oppression awareness messages such as, “Lighter skin is more attractive than dark skin” (Brown et al., 2017) increase the likelihood of Black women having more self-hatred attitudes. Although gendered racial hardship messages are considered more healthier in nature, it is possible that such messages related to hardships promote a more internalized negative self-perception of one’s Black identity and lead to negative perceptions of the Black race. In addition, internalized gendered racial oppression messages are rooted in stereotypical beliefs about Black women’s character and physical attributes (Winchester et al., 2021), thus Black women who receive such messages may be internalizing these beliefs and finding themselves endorsing negative views of their Black culture and heritage. Thornton and colleagues (1990) found that some parents may have internalized negative messages about being Black that have been transmitted throughout generations and society, thus these parents may not feel inclined to provide positive messages about Blackness to their children. In addition, such negative and unhealthy messages perhaps may be a parent’s reaction to experiences of racism and discrimination. That is, such messages could be intended to protect their Black children from further experiences of oppression and racism, possibly from wanting their child to conform to a White ideal (Shellae Versey et al., 2019; Winchester et al., 2021). In contrast, gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness messages are associated with less self-hatred attitudes, supporting **Hypothesis 1a**. Perhaps, Black women who receive messages such as, “I should love my

skin color,” “I should accept myself with the features I was born with,” and “I should not let anyone disrespect me,” (Brown et al., 2017) begin to feel positive and prideful about being a Black female, which differs from endorsing a negative view of the self. Further research should continue to explore how during childhood Black women can receive messages simultaneously and how the intersection of messages (e.g., racial and cultural pride and preparation for bias) at different levels may result in distinct outcomes. Perhaps, oppression awareness is different from hardships, resulting in more or less internalization of self-hatred attitudes, respectively. Examining the subjective experiences of these differing messages via further qualitative research can shed more insight into why Black women endorse negative beliefs about themselves and Black culture.

5.4 Unsupported Hypotheses

Although most of the hypotheses that were hypothesized in this dissertation were partially supported, there were some hypotheses that were not supported. First, the hypothesized relationship (H1a, H1b, H2) between recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress was not supported in the model. Given that this was one of the first studies to examine recollected gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress, the findings are still notable. Both healthy and unhealthy messages were associated with subjective gender role stress as a result of having more or less self-hatred attitudes, thus suggesting that Black women are appraising their gender roles as stressful or not stressful when endorsing or not endorsing negative stereotypical beliefs about themselves. However, the direct relationships did not reveal any positive or negative associations. In the preliminary

analyses, the SFSS evidenced negative kurtosis values which didn't appear problematic; however, such distributional properties of the SFSS could have impacted the ability to detect a significant relationship. Moreover, given that prior research has supported that gender roles are often learned in the context of race roles (McRae & Noumair, 1997), it is important to continue to explore the impact of gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress experiences among Black women. Specifically, allowing Black women to provide insight related to specific gender role norms from both Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives can begin to highlight how such messages can influence gender role ideology.

In addition, the hypothesized negative relationship (H3) between endorsement of the internalization racial identity status and subjective gender role stress was unsupported. Though this was the first study to examine current racial identity status and current subjective gender role stress, the findings warrant further exploration. Previous literature has examined the relationship between the internalization stage of Cross's 1991 model and mental health outcomes, suggesting less endorsement of psychological distress (Durkee & Williams, 2015; Neblett et al., 2004; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Wilson et al., 2017). However, the internalization racial identity status was *positively* but non-significantly related to subjective gender role stress. Such findings could be a result of not using a gendered racial identity scale. Given that the SFSS scale was adapted for Black women, it is possible that racial identity should have been assessed using a more intersectional scale. Thus, further research should explore the impact of current gendered racial identity experiences on subjective gender role stress among Black women. Perhaps,

Black women's gendered and racial identity experiences combined can highlight the unique impact racial and gender identity can have on Black women's lived experiences.

5.5 Limitations and Future Research

This study is one of the first to use the GRESS-BW and the first to explore the overall relations between healthy and unhealthy gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress. More importantly, the findings demonstrate a link between both healthy and unhealthy gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity statuses on subjective gender role stress. While other studies have explored the relations between gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity, this study was the first to use an intersectional scale adapted to explore Black women's gender role stress. Additionally, the findings suggest that gendered racial socialization plays a complex role in the lives of Black women. Although racial socialization literature demonstrates significant moderating influences of different types of racial socialization messages regarding if they have a protective effect or an exacerbating effect (Brown & Tylka, 2011; Grills et al., 2015; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Tang et al., 2016), results from this study suggest that both healthy and unhealthy messages can be protective against gender role stress as well as exacerbate the effects of stress experienced by Black women.

While the current study advanced the understanding of recollected gendered racial socialization messages, racial identity, and subjective gender role stress in several ways, it is not without limitations. First, the research design was cross-sectional, thus allowing for data to be collected at a specific time and not longitudinally. Though many significant relationships emerged in the analysis process, causal inference cannot be determined.

Correlational studies cannot provide conclusive information related to the causal relationships among variables, thus requiring more rigorous research to incorporate experimental designs that could potentially manipulate the independent variable in various ways (Stangor, 2011). Therefore, the results from this study can suggest relationships exist between the variables; however, there is no way to prove that one variable caused a change in another variable (Asamoah, 2014). Future research may enhance the gendered racial socialization, racial identity, and gender role stress literature by assessing these variables over a longer term to understand the true temporal order of effects. In addition, future research may seek to incorporate an experimental design to further investigate healthy and unhealthy racial socialization messages, racial identity statuses, and subjective gender role stress by manipulating the variables to determine certain outcomes.

Although the purpose of this study was to assess only racial socialization experiences of Black women who identified as 18 years of age or older and who were born and raised in the United States, the results cannot be generalized for other ethnic/racial minority groups. Generalization involves drawing broad inferences from particular observations (Polit & Beck, 2010). Thus, the goal is to provide a contextualized understanding of some aspect of the human experience through studying and analyzing data. Given that this study only used Black women's experiences related to gendered racial socialization, racial identity, and subjective gender role stress results are limited in nature to this specific group. Therefore, further research that includes other ethnic/racial groups could be beneficial to explore as it relates to comparisons and differences of these variables.

Third, this study did not control for sexual orientation and age. There was a primary focus on the experiences of Black women regardless of their sexual orientation or age. Most research related to gendered racial socialization messages and racial identity has not explored how sexual orientation status could moderate outcomes. Further, most gendered racial socialization messages have either focused on youth/adolescents or college students. Thus, it could be beneficial for future research in this area to explore the impact of sexual orientation as it relates to the associations of gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress to understand how one identifies may or may not be influenced by such messages. In addition, there are other covariates that can also be further explored. Given that gendered racial socialization can result in unique experiences for Black women, it is crucial to assess gendered racial microaggressions to better prepare Black women for such experiences to reduce mental health consequences (Cooper et al., 2011; Grollman, 2012). Additionally, understanding other agents of gendered racial socialization to include social media, teachers, peers, and specific contexts (e.g., online, schools) can also add to the growing body of literature in this area (Hughes et al., 2016a). Such factors may result in intersectional experiences that may be consequentially impacted in terms of class and social status (Walton & Boone, 2019).

Fourth, this study excluded the immersion-emersion stage of Cross et al., 1991 racial identity model. The primary reasons for focusing on low racial salience (i.e., pre-encounter) and high racial salience (i.e., internalization), was because these are considered the two extremes in Cross's model (Cross et al., 1991). Thus, future research should incorporate further examination of the immersion-emersion stage given that this

stage is related to Black individuals *immersing* themselves into Black culture and rejecting anything that is White (Cross et al., 1991). Such research could provide an understanding of how such gendered socialization messages can directly impact a Black woman with identifying or not identifying in this racial identity status and if that results in appraisal of gender roles as stressful or not stressful.

Fifth, this study is limited in its methodology. MTurk samples have been shown to be more reliable and valid than student samples (Kees et al., 2017). Further, rigorous validity checks were employed to ensure accurate responses. However, the generalizability of the study is still limited to those seeking compensation through the MTurk platform, which, while demographically diverse, may not be fully representative of the American culture from a broader standpoint. In addition, this study assessed racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress based on gendered and racial experiences combined. To date, however, there are no measures assessing *gendered racial identity*. Thus, researchers in this area should seek to understand how Black women's self-concept may be influenced simultaneously by their race and gender. Such efforts could result in preventative measures being taken while understanding the developmental processes for Black women (Jones & Day, 2018; Thomas et al., 2011).

Finally, this study is more broadly limited by survey design problems. The randomization process of the survey likely minimized some of the measurement error, but participants still may have been influenced by expectancy effects. Although there were multiple validity checks, it is impossible to ascertain whether all participants were being completely honest in their responses or if their responses were reflective of their true experiences. Such limitations are challenging to address. However, future directions

could include a mixed-method design (i.e., qualitative and quantitative research) that addresses such limitations. Specifically, using an explanatory sequential design in which the qualitative phase builds directly on the results from the quantitative phase could be useful in contextualizing findings thoroughly (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, implementing a convergent design to compare findings from quantitative and qualitative data sources could also be useful (Creswell & Plano, 2011). This would involve collecting both types of data at the same time, using parallel constructs for both types of data, analyzing the data separately, and comparing the results through procedures such as side-by-side comparison (Creswell & Plano, 2011). Thus, future research could seek to understand the true meaning behind gendered racial socialization messages, racial identity, and subjective gender role stress for Black women. This could be investigated by incorporating an understanding of specific Afrocentric and Eurocentric ideals that Black women may adhere to through qualitative data and how such adherence may impact stress (quantitative data).

5.6 Implications for Clinical Practice

The results of this study can inform clinical practice related to Black women's experiences of gendered racial socialization and subjective gender role stress. Black women may present in counseling with experiences of gendered racial socialization messages, and it is important to be aware of the ways in which these messages can manifest themselves as gender role responses in addition to depression, stress, and anxiety symptoms. While gendered racial socialization messages may be healthy or unhealthy, gendered racial hardship (i.e., healthy) and internalized gendered racial

oppression messages (i.e., unhealthy) have a positive impact on Black women's gender role stress when there is endorsement of self-hatred attitudes. In addition, the evidence surrounding unhealthy messages is still growing; however, these messages have been associated with traumatic stress among Black women, exacerbating the impact of gendered racial microaggressions (Moody & Lewis, 2019; Winchester et al., 2021). Such messages convey family member's endorsement of Black women's character and physical attributes in a negative way (e.g., Black women typically have bad attitudes; Black women with natural hairstyles are unattractive). Therefore, it is important for mental health professionals to understand the ways in which gendered racial socialization diverges from what is more commonly known about racial socialization in a broader sense. Specifically, mental health professionals should seek to explore gendered racial socialization experiences among Black women by asking such questions as "Have a parent or caregiver conveyed messages related to physical beauty or personality traits that highlight Black women negatively?" "Have a parent or caregiver conveyed messages related to racial and cultural pride and oppression awareness that encourage you to feel good about being a Black woman?" Such probing can help identify the impact of such healthy and unhealthy messages on a Black woman's overall psychological well-being (Winchester et al., 2021). Mental health professionals have a continuing responsibility to seek out, discover, and integrate knowledge of the role of oppression in people's lives into clinical practice. The results of this study can inform practitioners working with Black women of the myriad ways multiple intersecting oppressions can impact their clients' lives, including how clients can utilize positive aspects of their cultural upbringing to cope with these experiences.

In therapeutic practice, cognitive behavioral stress management (CBSM) techniques have often been used to assist Black women to effectively cope with stressful experiences (Greer et al., 2018). CBSM is a group of interventions that combines cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), psychoeducation about stress exposure and health, self-monitoring of such exposures and responses, coping skills training, techniques to improve social support, and training in various grounding, relaxation, and mindfulness activities (Brown & Venable, 2008). Such interventions mitigate symptoms of stress and improve health and quality of life (Greer et al., 2018). Although CBT is considered the gold standard of psychological interventions (Otte, 2011), Black Americans have been less likely than White Americans to engage in CBT for mental health challenges (Kelly, 2006). Among those Black Americans who have shown interest, the limited literature suggests that CBSM, including culturally modified approaches to CBSM, show some promise for reducing stress among Black Americans (Lechner et al., 2013). Given that both healthy and unhealthy gendered racial socialization messages, coupled with racial identity statuses and adhering to gender roles, may have substantial effects on psychological processes involved in stress responses, it is important to assess the frequency, intensity, and duration of such experiences (Brondolo et al., 2015). Early recognition of these stressful experiences can improve health quality for Black American women.

Further, mental health professionals can adapt interventions that may be used from a Eurocentric standard to employ with Black women specifically to better understand their cultural experience. This may entail making appropriate cultural adaptations to clinical services for an Afrocentric client that may include more race-

specific interventions and supportive therapy. There is also a need to understand how Black women may identify in terms of their racial identity. For example, if a Black woman identifies as being in the pre-encounter assimilation stage, it may not be appropriate to implement techniques and strategies from a race-specific intervention as this individual is more likely to adopt a Eurocentric perspective. However, if a Black woman endorses self-hatred and has been miseducated about her Black identity, it may be beneficial to raise conscious awareness and explore interventions related to self-worth and self-esteem using culturally modified approaches such as CBSM interventions. By using a measure such as the CRIS in therapeutic interventions, mental health professionals can inform themselves of the differing worldviews and Black identities their clients may have to ensure retention and improvement of overall outcomes.

Finally, understanding how gendered racial socialization messages are communicated can be beneficial in understanding relevant ways to implement interventions for parents and educators in effectively transmitting messages in a healthier way. In clinical practice, this may entail the mental health professional exploring the modes of transmission (e.g., deliberate versus inadvertent) to determine the impact on Black women's experiences. For example, if messages are being communicated to a Black woman proactively and explicitly (Lesane-Brown, 2006), interventions may seek to incorporate psychoeducation around how certain messages may be deemed unhealthy or healthy and the impact such messages can have on racial and gender development. In addition, if messages are being communicated passively and implicitly (Lesane-Brown, 2006), interventions may incorporate psychoeducation related to assertive communication patterns to improve racial and gender development among Black women.

Such efforts could reduce gender role stress and allow for more adaptive psychological functioning.

5.7 Summary and Conclusions

The goal of this study was to understand how Black American women's recollected gendered socialization messages influence their racial identity development and stress associated with their gender roles. Results suggest that recollected gendered racial socialization messages do have an impact on current racial identity and gender role stress. Most of the hypotheses were partially supported; however, there were some results that did not align with the hypotheses. First, contrary to hypotheses, neither healthy (i.e., gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness; gendered racial hardship) or unhealthy (i.e., internalized gendered racial oppression) messages were associated with subjective gender role stress. Secondly, gendered racial pride and empowerment messages and oppression awareness messages were not significantly related to either the internalization Afrocentricity or multiculturalist inclusive racial identity statuses. However, gendered racial hardship messages were significantly related to the Afrocentricity racial identity status. Thirdly, internalized gendered racial oppression messages were significantly related to all the pre-encounter and internalization racial identity statuses. Finally, the pre-encounter self-hatred racial identity status was the *only* racial identity status that explained the associations between gendered racial socialization messages and subjective gender role stress. Such findings add valuable knowledge to the literature. While the experiences of racism and sexism are perpetual, the findings presented demonstrate that recollected gendered racial

socialization messages may have implications for Black women's mental health in the form of subjective feminine gender role stress. Thus, it is of critical importance for parents and caregivers to consistently consider the quantity and content of messages that are conveyed to their Black children. Parents and caregivers should continue to strive to impart messages related to gendered racial pride and empowerment and oppression awareness to encourage Black women to feel good about their "Blackness," while also being aware of oppressive experiences that may be encountered because of their identity as a Black female.

In addition, further research should continue to explore how uplifting Black women in a positive light can help reduce self-hatred attitudes and beliefs, resulting in enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence and less overall subjective gender role stress. However, gendered racial hardship messages that were considered healthy, should continue to be explored to further determine if such messages related to inequities experienced by Black women are actually "healthy" in nature given that Black women can internalize these beliefs and experience more gender role stress.

Further, the internalization stage of Cross's 1991 model represents individuals who are at peace with being Black and experience race as a positive attribute. Therefore, regardless if a Black woman identifies as having Afrocentric internalized attitudes or multiculturalist inclusive attitudes, she is at peace with her Black identity. In contrast, pre-encounter attitudes are associated with negative feelings about being Black (Chavez-Korrell & Vandiver, 2011). Given that recollected gendered racial socialization messages can have an impact on both pre-encounter and internalization attitudes, it worth continuing to examine such experiences and how this may relate to Black women finding

their gender roles as stressful via more nuanced methodology (e.g., taxometric approaches or qualitative research).

Moreover, messages related to internalized gendered racial oppression messages should also continue to be further examined, as the findings in this study were notable. When parents and caregivers relay messages that denigrate Black women's features and facets, Black women internalize such experiences and begin to distance themselves from their Black identity. In turn, they perceive their gender roles in society as stressful. Thus, it is important that a shift occurs from denigrating Blackness to edifying Blackness for Black women to reduce symptoms of stress (Winchester et al., 2021).

Mental health professionals should be mindful of thorough assessment and treatment planning when working with Black women who may have received either healthy or unhealthy messages during childhood and the potential psychological impacts of these messages. Moreover, it is important to understand the multicultural context and subjective experiences of Black women to better determine which messages may lead to distress.

In conclusion, this dissertation adds to the present literature on gendered racial socialization by expounding upon the differences between healthy and unhealthy messages and the impact on subjective gender role stress explained by racial identity statuses. Although this study provides a preliminary understanding of the consequences of healthy and unhealthy messages, it is vitally important for families, clinicians, researchers, and educators to identify effective gendered racial socialization practices that support an overall healthy racial and gender identity that promotes Black American women's well-being.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographic Information

Code: _____

CROSS SOCIAL ATTITUDE SCALE

Beverly J. Vandiver, William E. Cross, Jr., Peony E. Fhagen-Smith, Frank C. Worrell,
Janet K. Swim, & Leon D. Caldwell.

Section I

(a) Male ☐ Female ☐

(b) How old are you? ____

(c) Please indicate your ethnic background **by circling the answer** that applies to you. Choose **only one** category.

a. African	e. Hispanic Black
b. African-American	f. Mixed _____ / _____
c. Black	g. Other _____
d. West Indian/Caribbean Black	

(d) If you are **currently** a student, are you a high schooler ☐ an undergraduate ☐ or a graduate student ☐?

(e) Name of School: _____ 5b. City where school is located:

(f) What is your semester standing in the school you listed in #5? _____

(g) What is the racial composition of the school listed in #5? Mostly Black ☐
Mixed ☐ Mostly White ☐

(h) What is your current grade point average? ____

(i) If you are attending college, what is your major? _____

(j) If you are **no longer a student**, what is the highest education level obtained? Circle one.

a. Elementary school	d. Business or trade school	g. Bachelor's or four-year degree
b. Some high school	e. Some college	h. Some graduate/professional school

c. High school diploma/equivalent	f. Associate or two-year degree	i. Graduate or professional degree
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------------------

(k) If you are **no longer a student**, what is your current occupation? _____

(l) What religious affiliation do you hold? _____

(m) How often do you attend religious services? Seldom ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐

(n) How important is your religion to you? Not Important ☐ Somewhat Important ☐
Very Important ☐

(o) What is the best estimate of your/your family's yearly income before taxes? Circle "Y" for yours and "F" for family.

a. Less than \$10,000	Y	F	d. Between \$30,000 and \$40,000	Y	F
b. Between \$10,000 and \$20,000	Y	F	e. Between \$40,000 and \$60,000	Y	F
c. Between \$20,000 and \$30,000	Y	F	f. Over \$60,000	Y	F

(p) How would you describe the primary community in which you were raised?

Rural ☐ Suburban ☐ Urban ☐ Other _____

(q) What is the racial composition of the community listed in #16? Mostly Black ☐ Mixed ☐
Mostly White ☐

(r) Are you a United States citizen ☐ a permanent resident of the US ☐ or Other ☐ _____?

(s) How many ethnic organizations do you belong to? 1 2 3 4 5+

(t) What is the highest education level obtained by your mother (or female guardian) and father (or male guardian)? For mother, circle the "M" in the appropriate box; for father, circle the "F."

a. Elementary school	M	F	f. Associate or two-year degree	M	F
b. Some high school	M	F	g. Bachelor's or four-year degree	M	F
c. High school diploma or equivalent	M	F	h. Some graduate or professional school	M	F
d. Business or trade school	M	F	i. Graduate or professional degree	M	F

(u) How would you describe your family's socioeconomic status?

Poor ☐ Working Class ☐ Middle Class ☐ Upper Middle ☐
Wealthy ☐

(v) How would you describe your current physical health?

Very Poor ☐

Poor ☐

Fair ☐

Good ☐

Very Good ☐

(w) How would you describe your current mental health?

Very Poor ☐

Poor ☐

Fair ☐

Good ☐

Very Good ☐

Appendix B:

The Gendered Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale for Black Women (GRESS-BW)

Items by Factor	Factors								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Factor 1: Gendered Racial Pride and Empowerment ($\alpha = .96$)									
I should be proud to be a Black woman. (1)	.80	.25	.01	.26	.05	.27	.24	.32	.14
Black women are beautiful. (2)	.80	.27	-.03	.21	.05	.23	.28	.36	.03
Black woman is an important part of my identity (of who I am). (4)	.84	.34	.05	.25	.16	.30	.45	.18	.30
I should feel good about being a Black woman. (5)	.89	.27	.003	.26	.09	.29	.32	.33	.23
Black women can accomplish goals on our own. (9)	.59	.34	-	.38	.02	.38	.20	-.03	.07
Black women should not be limited by their race or gender. (10)	.66	.26	.12	.29	.16	.35	.30	.01	-.08
Black women should be assertive. (12)	.52	.33	-.01	.22	.11	.35	.33	-.05	.33
Black women should not let other people define what it means to be a Black woman. (13)	.64	.37	-.03	.27	.12	.24	.30	.02	.30
Black women are strong. (15)	.84	.22	.09	.19	.14	.20	.38	.23	.26
Black women should have self-respect. (16)	.87	.25	.09	.28	.16	.34	.37	.21	.24
Black women can accomplish anything. (17)	.89	.24	.05	.28	.11	.32	.36	.24	.12
I should know my self-worth as a Black woman. (18)	.81	.21	.05	.23	.25	.44	.48	.12	.29
I should love my skin color. (37)	.87	.16	-.03	.27	.29	.35	.38	.30	.18
I should accept myself and the features with which I was born. (38)	.73	.07	.48	.22	.06	.27	.28	.12	.03
Black women should accept and love their hair texture. (40)	.60	.45	-.02	.12	.33	.43	.25	-.14	-.12
Over the centuries, Black women have survived many challenges (e.g., slavery, civil	.71	.29	-.03	.26	.18	.51	.44	.13	.14

rights, and discrimination). (42)									
Black women today are survivors. (43)	.75	.40	-.04	.32	.05	.37	.49	.24	.34
Black women should have self-confidence. (51)	.80	.08	.10	.35	.23	.43	.41	.31	.22
Black women are intelligent. (61)	.70	.26	.02	.26	.15	.44	.44	-.05	.13
<hr/>									
Factor 2: Family Expectations and Responsibilities ($\alpha = .89$)									
Having a family is more important than having a successful career. (59)	.24	.71	-.11	-	.22	.20	.21	-.02	.21
				.05					
Black women are responsible for maintaining the family. (62)	.20	.68	-.10	.20	.12	.19	.35	.08	.21
Black women must always consider family in everything we do. (64)	.24	.70	-.18	.01	.20	.28	.43	.18	.15
I always need to take care of family before anything else. (68)	.37	.73	-.14	.09	.30	.19	.34	.04	.19
I need to let a man be a man. (72)	.19	.62	-.04	.21	.24	.32	.43	.02	.20
Black women should never show our emotions. (79)	.29	.54	-.12	.22	.09	.17	.29	-.07	.22
Taking care of the family is the most important job that a Black woman has. (80)	.35	.84	-.19	.11	.28	.28	.29	-.08	.09
It is a Black woman's job to keep the family together. (83)	.41	.76	-.14	.14	.36	.22	.42	-	.19
								.002	
Black women should not talk openly about sex. (84)	.18	.50	-.11	.19	.38	.01	.05	.13	.18
Black women must always cater to men with regard to sex. (86)	.18	.54	-.10	-	.36	.06	.04	-.03	.14
				.07					
Black men have it tough so I should support them no matter what. (90)	.29	.71	-.20	.20	.18	.32	.38	-.05	.29
<hr/>									
Factor 3: Internalized Gendered Racial Oppression ($\alpha = .94$)									
Lighter skin is more attractive than dark skin. (93)	.12	-.09	.93	.02	-	.06	-.02	-.09	.15
					.08				
Black women with natural hairstyles (e.g., afro, braids, and dreads) are unattractive. (94)	.11	-.14	.90	.06	-	.04	-.01	-.02	.06
					.06				

Black women typically have bad attitudes. (95)	.11	-.08	.87	.07	-	.15	-	-.08	.11
Spoke negatively about Black women. (103)	.11	-.05	.81	-	.03 .02	.15	.001 .05	-.14	-.02
<hr/>									
Factor 4: Independence, Career, and Educational Success ($\alpha = .84$)									
Black women shouldn't consider settling down until we have a successful career. (58)	.31	.31	.10	.57	.15	.24	.34	-.15	.01
For Black women establishing a career comes first, everything else is secondary. (60)	.09	.30	.002	.68	.09	.14	.38	-.07	.09
I should never depend on a man for anything. (69)	.38	.003	.08	.62	.06	.23	.21	-.03	.25
I have to get my education first, and worry about men later. (71)	.28	-.10	-.02	.70	.17	.38	.25	.08	.25
I can never depend on anyone else for anything. (75)	.13	.25	.06	.59	-	.04	.20	-.08	.28
I must always be able to support myself. (76)	.30	.08	.002	.62	.09	.39	.50	.24	.11
Education is more valuable than relationships with men. (77)	.17	.08	-.19	.73	.13	.22	.09	.01	.09
Black women should be independent. (87)	.32	.01	.10	.73	.09	.13	.11	.16	.12
<hr/>									
Factor 5: Sexual Behavior ($\alpha = .83$)									
Getting pregnant before I am married will bring shame on my family and community. (27)	.24	.34	-	.13	.63	.16	.15	-.01	.43
Black women should not be promiscuous or "fast." (28)	.17	.01	-.13	.16	.68	.04	.19	.21	.16
A good Black woman does not have children before being married. (81)	.21	.32	-.07	.12	.77	.23	.25	.12	.03
A good Black woman does not live with a man without being married to that man. (82)	.04	.32	-.16	.00	.71	.28	.22	.09	-.07
Black women should avoid sex before marriage. (85)	.05	.29	-.06	.16	.70	.11	.23	.22	-.03
<hr/>									
Factor 6: Oppression Awareness ($\alpha = .72$)									
Black women must work hard for a good education. (32)	.41	.16	.04	.37	.18	.54	.35	.43	.22

I may experience sexism in certain environments (e.g., school and work). (35) (R)	-	-.08	-.17	-	-	-	-.13	-.01	.08
	.18			.08	.03	.53			
I may experience racism in certain environments (e.g., school and work). (36)	.48	.23	-.05	.19	.32	.67	.24	-.12	.32
I should choose a romantic partner who will respect me. (45)	.18	.14	.13	.07	.18	.63	.22	.20	.12
I should not allow anyone to disrespect me. (55)	.20	.14	-.09	.19	.06	.57	.37	.14	.01
<hr/>									
Factor 7: Sisterhood ($\alpha = .75$)									
A mother's love and support is important for Black women. (48)	.49	.26	-.10	.31	.20	.29	.73	.43	.15
As a Black woman, I should treat others as I wish to be treated. (63)	.37	.20	-.19	.31	.36	.44	.70	.34	.02
I come from a long legacy of strong women. (65)	.41	.37	.07	.14	.27	.40	.59	-.06	.15
Black women should be supportive of Black men. (88)	.48	.51	-.12	.10	.20	.35	.72	.06	.17
<hr/>									
Factor 8: Religious Faith and Spirituality ($\alpha = .77$)									
God will not give you more than you can handle. (24)	.36	.23	-.18	.10	.24	.37	.28	.60	.11
The church is a source of strength for Black women. (25)	.34	.32	.01	-	.40	.21	.22	.58	.05
				.02					
Black women should have faith in God. (26)	.43	.31	-.18	.05	.21	-	.36	.67	.07
						.01			
<hr/>									
Factor 9: Gendered Racial Hardship ($\alpha = .72$)									
Black women should only marry Black men. (22)	.30	.41	-.06	.03	.22	.15	.33	-.04	.59
There are more opportunities for White women, so, as a Black woman, I have to work twice as hard. (44)	.42	.39	-.14	.32	.03	.38	.17	.04	.68
Being both Black and a woman, I will have to work harder than most people to reach my dreams/goals. (50)	.47	.33	-.02	.48	.16	.45	.49	-.02	.63
A good Black man is hard to find. (92)	.22	.16	-.04	.14	-	.09	.07	.25	.47
					.06				

Appendix C: The Cross Racial Identity Scale

Instructions: Read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings, using the 7-point scale below. There are no right or wrong answers. Base your responses on your opinion at the present time. **To ensure that your answers can be used, please respond to the statements as written,** and place your numerical response on the line provided to the left of each question.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	Agree	strongly agree

- _____1. As an African-American, life in America is good for me.
- _____2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
- _____3. Too many Blacks “glamorize” the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don’t involve crime.
- _____4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.
- _____5. As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
- _____6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.
- _____7. I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.
- _____8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.
- _____9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
- _____10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
- _____11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	Agree	strongly agree

- _____12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.
- _____13. I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.
- _____14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.
- _____15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.
- _____16. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).
- _____17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.
- _____18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be “American,” and not African-American.
- _____19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.
- _____20. Many African-Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
- _____21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.
- _____22. Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.
- _____23. White people should be destroyed.
- _____24. I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree	disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	Agree e	strongly agree

- _____25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
- _____26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.
- _____27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.
- _____28. African-Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
- _____29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.
- _____30. I hate White people.
- _____31. I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.
- _____32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.
- _____33. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
- _____34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.
- _____35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.
- _____36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.
- _____37. Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.
- _____38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.
- _____39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.

- _____40. As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.).

Appendix D: The Subjective Femininity Stress Scale (Un-adapted)

Instructions: The following questions are about *gender* issues. Please describe your *personal experience* of what it means to be a *man* by completing the following sentence, “As a woman...” 10 times. Just give 10 different responses. Respond as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. There are no right or wrong responses. Don’t worry about logic or importance, and don’t overanalyze your responses. Simply write down the first thoughts that come to your mind.

1. As a woman...
2. As a woman...
3. As a woman...
4. As a woman...
5. As a woman...
6. As a woman...
7. As a woman...
8. As a woman...
9. As a woman...
10. As a woman...

Please refer to your responses above. For each “As a woman...” response, indicate how OFTEN this experience is STRESSFUL for you.

	Never/Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/Almost Always
“As a woman...” Response 1	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 2	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 3	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 4	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 5	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 6	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 7	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 8	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 9	1	2	3	4	5
“As a woman...” Response 10	1	2	3	4	5

The Subjective Femininity Stress Scale (Adapted)

Instructions: The following questions are about *gender* issues. Please describe your *personal experience* of what it means to be a *man* by completing the following sentence, “As a woman...” 10 times. Just give 10 different responses. Respond as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. There are no right or wrong responses. Don’t worry about logic or importance, and don’t overanalyze your responses. Simply write down the first thoughts that come to your mind.

1. As a Black woman...
2. As a Black woman...
3. As a Black woman...
4. As a Black woman...
5. As a Black woman...
6. As a Black woman...
7. As a Black woman...
8. As a Black woman...
9. As a Black woman...
10. As a Black woman...

Please refer to your responses above. For each “As a Black woman...” response, indicate how OFTEN this experience is STRESSFUL for you.

	Never/Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/Almost Always
“As a Black woman...” Response 1	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 2	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 3	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 4	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 5	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 6	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 7	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...” Response 8	1	2	3	4	5
“As a Black woman...”	1	2	3	4	5

Response
9

“As a
Black
woman...”

1

2

3

4

5

Response
10

Appendix E: IRB Approval

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INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD December 1, 2020

Principal Investigator: April Berry
IRB # and Title: IRB PROTOCOL: 20-428
[1679753-1] What Does It Mean to Be Black? An Investigation of Recollected Racial Socialization Messages and Racial Identity Development on Subjective Gender Role Stress Among Black Women

Status: APPROVED Review Type: Exempt Review
Approval Date: December 1, 2020 Submission Type: New Project
Initial Approval: December 1, 2020 Expiration Date:
Review Category: 45 CFR 46.104 (d)(2): Research that only includes interaction involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording):

ii. Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside of the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation

This panel, operating under the authority of the DHHS Office for Human Research and Protection, assurance number FWA 00001602, and IRB Database #00000286, has reviewed the submitted materials for the following:

1. *Protection of the rights and the welfare of human subjects involved.*
2. *The methods used to secure and the appropriateness of informed consent.*
3. *The risk and potential benefits to the subject.*

The regulations require that the investigator not initiate any changes in the research without prior IRB approval, except where necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the human subjects, and that **all problems involving risks and adverse events be reported to the IRB immediately!**

Subsequent supporting documents that have been approved will be stamped with an IRB approval and expiration date (if applicable) on every page. Copies of the supporting documents must be utilized with the current IRB approval stamp unless consent has been waived.

Notes:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

April T. Berry, the daughter of Douglas and Mattie Berry, was raised in Newton, Mississippi. Currently, she is a fifth-year doctoral student in the Combined-Integrated Clinical and Counseling Psychology PhD program at the University of South Alabama. In the Fall of 2012, she attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in May 2015. She then entered graduate school at Alabama A&M University in Normal, Alabama in August 2015. She obtained her Master of Science in Counseling Psychology, with a concentration in Clinical Psychology in May 2017. She anticipates graduating with her PhD in Clinical and Counseling Psychology in August of 2022. Upon completion of her doctorate, she expects to have a career as a Clinical Director where she will have the ability to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in mental health services offered to the community.