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Parenting profiles of academic and racial socialization: Associations with academic engagement and academic self-beliefs of African American adolescents

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ABSTRACT

In addition to being involved and encouraging their youth academically, many African American caregivers also employ socialization practices that prepare their adolescents for entering into a school system where they will be an ethnic minority or be taught by predominantly non-minority educators. The purpose of the current investigation was to fill existing gaps in the literature by examining two dimensions of parental socialization practices: academic socialization (parent school involvement and academic encouragement) and racial socialization (cultural pride, preparation for bias, and egalitarian messages). Additionally, this study examined how the identified profiles are associated with African American adolescents' academic outcomes (academic engagement and academic self-beliefs). A latent profile analysis was utilized to analyze data on 140 African American adolescent participants ($M = 12.4$; $SD = 1.13$; 56% female). Profiles that were identified included (a) academic socializers, (b) low race salient socializers, (c) preparation for bias socializers, (d) unengaged socializers, (e) multifaceted socializers, and (f) race salient socializers. Although there was no demographic (age, gender, SES) variation in profile membership, there were some differences in academic engagement and adolescents' academic-self beliefs. Findings highlight the importance of examining how academic and racial socialization work together and their association with adolescents' academic outcomes. Implications are discussed for school psychologists and educators.

1. Introduction

Despite over 50 years of educational policy aimed at reducing disparities in academic achievement, research suggests that race-related stressors (i.e., racism, discrimination, and negative stereotypes associated with one's racial ancestry or background) are a critical, yet underinvestigated factor that continues to negatively impact the school experiences of African American adolescents (e.g.,

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Gibbons et al., 2004; Neblett et al., 2008; Smalls et al., 2007). In the school context, Black youth are at a greater risk for experiencing unconscious and overt racism through punitive discipline practices (Amemiya et al., 2020), belonging uncertainty (Gray et al., 2018), and negative racial climates in schools (Griffin et al., 2017). Given the suboptimal schooling environments Black youth may be required to navigate, and the general understanding that adolescence is a time of increased risk for youth, scholars have explored the ways that African American parents socialize their adolescents to promote positive academic outcomes (Greenberg et al., 2003; Jeynes, 2005; Smalls, 2010). Although studies emphasize the importance of more general parenting practices, race- or culturally-specific parenting behaviors are also important for fostering healthy development and positive academic outcomes of African American youth (Hughes et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2006).

Many African American parents have adopted socialization practices, which include employing general parenting strategies (e.g., communicating with administrators and checking homework assignments) and also participating in race- or culturally- specific parenting practices (e.g., conveying racial pride and racial barrier messages) to promote better psychosocial adjustment and positive academic outcomes within their youth (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Hughes et al., 2006; Jeynes, 2005; Neblett et al., 2006; Smalls, 2010). However, there are no known studies that have investigated within-group variability in the concerted effort of how parents utilize academic and racial socialization strategies to impact African American adolescents' academic outcomes. To do so would provide much needed information about the ways in which African American parents may utilize general and culturally specific parenting practices in concert to reduce the academic achievement gap between Black youth and their peers. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to address this gap by examining the following research questions: (a) What patterns exist among a sample of African American parents' academic and racial socialization practices? and (b) Are identified patterns associated with differences in African American adolescents' academic outcomes? To do this, we utilized a profile-centered approach to identify parenting profiles of parent school involvement, academic encouragement, promotion of racial/cultural pride, egalitarian, and preparation for bias messages among African American parents. Moreover, this study assessed whether differences in parenting patterns were related to African American adolescents' school engagement and academic beliefs.

2. African American adolescents' engagement and academic self-beliefs

Both theoretical and empirical scholarship acknowledge the primary role that positive academic beliefs and behaviors play in motivational processes for youth (Wigfield et al., 2015). Scholars have suggested that researchers move beyond the study of grades and test scores as academic outcomes as these variables reflect a narrow view of students' educational experiences (Wong & Rowley, 2001). Accordingly, there has been a growing interest in better understanding predictors of academic engagement. Academic engagement is a multidimensional construct describing students' feelings, behaviors, and thoughts about their school experiences and is empirically linked to academic performance and outcomes including achievement test scores, grades, school attendance, and graduation rates (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016; Fives et al., 2014; Li & Lerner, 2011; Skinner et al., 2008; Wang & Eccles, 2012).

Academic engagement refers to the value and effort a student places as an active learner (Smalls et al., 2007). Academic engagement, which measures a student's sustained interest in class and learning environment and examines effort in difficult tasks and one's ability to problem solve, has been linked to social identities that are made salient in the academic domain (Garcia & Pintrich, 1994). The academic domain is one in which race often is salient for African American youth, particularly during adolescence. For instance, as youth get older, their awareness of negative racial stereotypes becomes more apparent (Benner & Graham, 2013). Consequently, African American adolescents' levels of academic engagement may be influenced by such negative stereotypical beliefs as it becomes intertwined with the meaning of race and their experiences with racial discrimination in school and society (Chavous et al., 2008; Smalls et al., 2007).

Academic self-beliefs (i.e., student's views on their academic capabilities, the importance of classes, satisfaction with grades, and vertical or horizontal comparisons to peers) also are an important component of school adjustment (Saunders et al., 2004). Previous studies with African American youth demonstrate that positive views about one's academic ability are associated with greater academic adjustment (Witherspoon et al., 1997) and achievement (Awad, 2007; Cokley, 2000). Furthermore, studies consistently show strong associations between parenting behaviors and adolescents' beliefs about their academic abilities (e.g., Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Ford et al., 2002).

Adolescents' beliefs about their abilities are important. Theoretical frameworks such as attribution theory, self-efficacy theory, and social learning theory have posited that if youth believe they can accomplish a particular task, they will also perform better and be more motivated to select increasingly challenging tasks (Bandura, 2006; Kay et al., 2016). As adolescents feel more competent in a particular task academically, they begin to value it more, thereby increasing their interest and engagement (Vuolo et al., 2014). It is argued that youths' academic-self beliefs are determined by their self-efficacy and expectations of success. Whereas self-efficacy refers to people's judgments of their capacity to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986), expectations of success in school can indicate how youth believe they will do on academic tasks; thus, academic beliefs are important to how adolescents' evaluate their competence and ultimately how they perform.

3. A multi-dimensional approach to understanding parenting socialization practices

Multidimensional approaches can illuminate patterns between individuals based on characteristics or behaviors of interest (Jung & Wickrama, 2008; Weaver & Kim, 2008). In particular, studies utilizing profile-oriented approaches show that African American and other ethnic minority parents vary in the frequency (low, moderate, high), type (positive, negative, multifaceted, low race salience, unengaged), and function (protective, proactive, or adaptive) of messages they choose to convey when socializing their adolescents

(e.g., Ayón et al., 2019; Cooper et al., 2015; Neblett et al., 2008; White-Johnson & Sellers, 2010). Few studies, however, have explored how academic and race specific parenting practices work in concert to impact African American adolescents' academic outcomes (e.g., Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Smalls, 2010). Collectively, studies show that parents who are warm and democratic, involved and encouraging toward their adolescents academically, and convey race-related socialization messages have adolescents who are more highly engaged and feel more positively about school. Utilizing a latent profile approach, the current investigation examines the concerted efforts of African American parents' academic and racial socialization.

3.1. Academic socialization

Parental academic socialization is an amalgamation of the beliefs, behaviors, and expectations in which parents engage to guide their youth's academic and school-related development (Yamamoto & Sonnenschein, 2016). These practices often promote academic success while fostering autonomy in youth (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Steinberg, 1996). Academic socialization practices are particularly important given the academic difficulties generally experienced during adolescence (de Bruyn et al., 2003) and the additional risks that African American adolescents experience due to increased awareness of negative racial stereotypes and experiences with discrimination (Hill & Craft, 2003; Jeynes, 2005). To date, various dimensions of parent academic socialization have been identified including, but not limited to, parental school involvement, academic encouragement, and educational values (Suizzo et al., 2016; Taylor et al., 2004). Significant relationships have been established between academic socialization practices and African American youth's academic outcomes (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Darenbourg & Blake, 2014; Suizzo et al., 2016). In particular, two dimensions that have been highlighted as critical in the academic success of adolescents include parental school involvement and academic encouragement (Abdul-Adil & Farmer Jr, 2006; Hill & Roberts, 2019). However, our understanding of these practices in the context of African American adolescents' racialized experiences remains minimal. Thus, understanding the ways in which parents' academic socialization practices inform the academic outcomes of African American adolescents is vital. Based upon the literature, the current study examines two dimensions of parent academic socialization: (a) parental school involvement and (b) academic encouragement.

Parental school involvement encompasses how parents work with schools to foster positive academic outcomes for their adolescents (Hill & Craft, 2003; Taylor et al., 2004). This includes behaviors such as attending parent-teacher conferences and involvement in parent organizations (e.g., parent teacher associations). However, for African American families, barriers such as racial biases, socioeconomic status, and negative intergenerational experiences may prevent parents from engaging in traditionally studied school involvement behaviors (McKay et al., 2003; Taylor et al., 2004; Yamamoto & Sonnenschein, 2016). Despite this, parents remain involved in their children's schooling through means such as attending school events, helping with their youths' homework, and other school-related behaviors (Archer-Banks & Behar-Horenstein, 2008), thus expanding our conceptualization of parental school involvement practices.

Overall, parental school involvement consistently has been linked to adolescent academic outcomes including school engagement, academic self-beliefs, and educational utility (Castro et al., 2015; Simons-Morton & Chen, 2009; Wilder, 2014). Although studies show that academic involvement may be more strongly associated with African American adolescents' school performance (Taylor et al., 2004), the barriers presented to parents' ability to be involved in their adolescents' in-school experiences and the scarcity of research considering non-traditional demonstrations of school involvement (Abdul-Adil & Farmer Jr, 2006) makes this a particularly important topic of study for this population.

Through motivating their adolescents to do well in school, *academic encouragement* allows parents to provide academic-related support (e.g., checking homework) without restricting autonomy. Studies of African American students (e.g., Tucker et al., 2000) show that although youth are generally less involved in school during adolescence, students who are praised and encouraged by their parents are more actively involved during class and while completing their homework. Thus, researchers should seek to understand which optimal levels of parental academic encouragement positively impact African American adolescents' academic outcomes.

3.2. Racial socialization

African American parents also encourage academic success by transmitting messages regarding one's experience as a racial/ethnic minority (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). Racial socialization is defined as the mechanisms through which parents transmit the cultural behaviors, perceptions, values, and attitudes of their racial/ethnic group and prepare their adolescents for dealing with prejudice and discrimination (Hughes et al., 2006). Emerging research trends and conclusions point to both the promotive and protective role of racial socialization for Black adolescent development (Anderson & Stevenson, 2019; Neblett et al., 2012; Reynolds & Gonzales-Backen, 2017; Varner et al., 2018). Specially, these studies show that racial socialization buffers against the negative effects of racial discrimination and promotes positive development, including academic adjustment (Neblett et al., 2006, 2008; Smalls, 2009; Suizzo et al., 2008). Consistent with scholars' recommendations to study adaptive aspects of culture and culturally informed strengths (e.g., Gaylord-Harden et al., 2012), we consider how parents' racial socialization messages might use racial socialization in conjunction with more universal parenting practices and how such socialization might be associated with academic outcomes.

Several different forms of racialization have been identified in the literature (e.g., Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes et al., 2006). Research suggests that the most commonly transmitted racial socialization messages by African American parents include *cultural pride* and *preparation for bias*. Past studies estimate the commonality of these two types of practices being as high as 91% and 88% in African American families, respectively (Hughes, 2003). An additional theme that has emerged in the extant racial socialization literature is *egalitarian messages* (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes et al., 2006). Though these messages may be less commonly compared

to cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages, studies suggest that these messages are prevalent among Black families. For instance, among qualitative research, African American parents have reported emphasizing hard work, self-acceptance, and equality as the dominant racial socialization strategy used (Marshall, 1995; Thornton et al., 1990). We focus our study on these commonly occurring racial socialization strategies given their prevalence among African American family units.

When parents actively teach their youth about African American history and culture, they are transmitting *cultural pride* messages (Smalls, 2009). Largely, these behaviors are aimed at promoting positive feelings including greater self-efficacy, motivation, and persistence. Cultural pride messages promote positive racial identity development and prepare African American youth to succeed academically, despite encountering racial bias and stressful racial experiences in school (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Hughes et al., 2006; Neblett et al., 2006). In their meta-analyses highlighting the benefits of youth feeling positive about their race, Rivas-Drake et al. (2014) found that the overall association of having a positive racial affect was positively and significantly associated with academic adjustment, with an estimated effect size of 0.18. This summative finding provides support for the importance of cultural socialization for academic outcomes.

Egalitarian messages are seen through parents transmitting beliefs about interracial equality, peace, and co-existence (Lesane-Brown et al., 2005). Egalitarian messages also promote cross-racial relationships (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007) and emphasize diversity and awareness of other cultural groups (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Past research shows that African American adolescents whose parents transmit more egalitarian messages tend to be more curious and engaged in the classroom (e.g., Neblett et al., 2006). Furthermore, this same investigation also provided evidence indicating that egalitarian messages serve as a unique predictor of academic outcomes (Neblett et al., 2006).

Preparation for bias messages promote youth's awareness of discrimination as well as strategies that help youth cope with experiences associated with being an African American in majority spaces (Neblett et al., 2009). Although some studies show positive effects of preparation for bias messages (Smalls, 2009), others indicate that preparation for bias messages are related to negative academic engagement when conveyed alone (Murry et al., 2009). Also, investigations suggest that when coupled with other socialization dimensions (e.g., egalitarian messages), preparation for bias socialization is associated with adolescent academic and psychosocial outcomes (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Neblett et al., 2008). Together, these studies suggest that racial socialization dimensions individually impact adolescent outcomes, and these dimensions interact to have implications for African American adolescents' academic outcomes.

3.3. The present study

Our study is grounded in two theories regarding socialization in Black families: Boykin and colleagues' (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Ellison, 1995; Boykin & Toms, 1985) triple quandary theory and Garcia Coll et al.'s (1996) integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority youth. According to Boykin and colleagues (Boykin, 1986; Boykin & Ellison, 1995; Boykin & Toms, 1985), socialization is complex for Black parents as they are tasked with using a combination of socialization practices in child rearing. These socialization practices include those that emphasize life skills that apply universally (e.g., promoting education using egalitarian messages) and other practices that are unique to their youth's status as an African American (cultural pride) and as a racial minority navigating oppressive systems such as schools (preparation for bias). Garcia Coll et al. (1996) also posited that schools can be inhibiting environments for Black youth as a result of the presence of suboptimal factors such as anti-Black racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Given the prevalence of these racial stressors, Garcia Coll et al. (1996) also suggested that Black parents may leverage their racial socialization practices to protect their youth from the deleterious effects of racial subordination in hopes of promoting positive development (Hughes et al., 2006).

Building upon theoretical (e.g., Boykin & Toms, 1985; Garcia Coll et al., 1996) and empirical evidence demonstrating the interactive relationships and concerted efforts of academic and racial socialization as a foundation (e.g., Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Smalls, 2010), the current investigation utilizes a multidimensional profile-centered approach to identify parental socialization profiles. This study identifies parenting profiles among African American parents using academic (parental school involvement and academic encouragement) and racial socialization (cultural pride, preparation for bias, egalitarian messages). Additionally, we examine the ways in which these identified parenting profiles are associated with academic engagement and academic beliefs of African American adolescents.

4. Method

4.1. Participants

Participants were 140 self-identified African American adolescents from a medium-sized Midwestern city in the United States. For the current study, African Americans were defined as an ethnic group of persons living in the United States with total or partial ancestry from any of the Black racial groups of Africa. Youth were between 11 and 15 years old ($M = 12.4$, $SD = 1.13$) and approximately 56% were female. The sample included students in the sixth (28%), seventh (43%), and eighth (29%) grades. Approximately 41% of the students reported a grade point average of a B average or higher. Forty-four percent of participants lived in dual-parent households. Sixty percent of participants reported receiving free or reduced lunch at school. Most parents reported having at least some college education (66% and 52% for mothers and fathers, respectively).

4.2. Procedure

Participants were recruited from two racially and economically diverse school districts in the Midwestern region of the United States. Two schools within each district participated in this investigation. School District 1 comprised the majority of the sample (59%). In this district, approximately 30% of students received free or reduced lunch. In terms of racial/ethnic diversity, this school district was racially mixed with 34% of students being classified as European American, 62% African American, 3% Hispanic, and 1% Asian American. In the second school district, approximately 58% of students received free or reduced lunch. The school district was also racially mixed with 40% of the students being classified as European American, 57% African American, 2% Hispanic, and 1% Asian American. Across districts, racial composition was 59% African American, 37% European American, 2% Hispanic, and 1% Asian American. Although *t*-tests indicated age differences across district, the two school districts did not differ significantly on any of the study variables; *t*-tests compared student participants from each district (i.e., District 2 participants were older than District 1 participants).

During homeroom periods, trained graduate and undergraduate research assistants distributed informational letters and consent forms to students with instructions on obtaining parental consent. School District 1 (34%) had a higher response rate than School District 2 (19%). The response rate presented the total number of consent forms returned based upon the total forms distributed during recruitment at each district. Eighty nine percent of the returned consent forms provided parental consent for student participation. Data collection occurred during school hours in groups of 10–15 students. Given indications that race-related questions may impact adolescents' responses to academic-specific questions, the survey questions were divided into two parts: (a) academic views and beliefs, and (b) contextual experiences (e.g., race-related, family, peers). To address potential ordering effects within each section, two survey versions (i.e., the same items presented in different orders) were administered to participants. Surveys took between 30 and 50 min for participants to complete and students were compensated with a \$10 incentive.

4.3. Measures

4.3.1. Academic socialization

4.3.1.1. Parental school involvement. To assess parents' involvement, a student self-report measure was used. Specifically, we adapted nine items from Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's (1995, 2005) parental home and school involvement scales. Items were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never; 5 = everyday). Examples of items include (a) "My parents talk with me about my school day" and (b) "My parents check to see if I have completed my school day." Higher scores indicate greater school involvement by parents. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.81. Previous investigations have demonstrated internal consistency of the school involvement items (e.g., Green et al., 2007) and this 9-item adapted scale has been utilized with African American samples (Cooper & Smalls, 2010).

4.3.2. Academic encouragement

The Student Report of Encouragement Scale (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997) is a student self-report measure that was used to measure parental educational encouragement. This 10-item scale ($\alpha = 0.82$) assesses parental encouragement of students' achievement from the perspective of their youth (e.g., "My parents encourage me to believe I can do well in school"; 1 = not at all true; 5 = completely true). Previous studies (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005) demonstrated adequate internal consistency reliability with elementary and middle-school adolescents.

4.3.3. Racial socialization

The Racial Socialization Questionnaire-Parent Version (Lesane-Brown et al., 2005) is a student self-report that was used to assess parents' socialization practices. This scale, which was based upon existing theoretical conceptualizations of racial socialization (Boykin & Ellison, 1995; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Thornton et al., 1990), employs a multidimensional approach to parental messages about race and culture. For the current investigation, three commonly communicated dimensions were examined from the RSQ: (a) promotion of racial/cultural pride, (b) egalitarian views, and (c) preparation for bias. *Promotion of racial/cultural pride* (5 items; Cronbach's alpha = 0.78) assessed parental efforts to promote cultural customs, traditions, and values that are unique to people of African descent. Examples of items include "How often do your parents tell you that you should be proud to be Black?" and "How often have your parents talked to you about Black history?" *Egalitarian views* (4 items; $\alpha = 0.75$) measured parental communication of messages that promote interracial equality, peace, and co-existence between races and ethnicities (e.g., "How often do your parents tell you that you should have friends of all different races?" and "How often have your parents told you that you can learn things from people of a different race?"). *Preparation for bias*, which was based upon a 4-item subscale ($\alpha = 0.70$), examined socialization messages about awareness of and strategies for coping with discrimination. Examples of items include "How often do your parents tell you that Blacks have to work twice as hard as Whites to get ahead?" and "How often have your parents told you that some people think they are better than you because of their race?" Items were evaluated on a 4-point scale (1 = never; 4 = often) and higher scores indicate greater socialization of the respective socialization dimensions. In addition to subscale reliabilities (ranging from 0.70 to 0.78) suggesting adequate internal consistency among items, several prior studies also provide support for the internal consistency of each the socialization subscales (e.g., Cooper et al., 2019; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Neblett et al., 2009). The studies have indicated internal consistency reliabilities ranging from 0.71 to 0.86.

4.3.4. Academic outcomes

4.3.4.1. Academic engagement. The Student Engagement Scale (15 items; Skinner & Belmont, 1993) is a student self-report that measures student effort and attention in classroom-related activities. Examples of items included are “I try very hard to do well in school”, “When I’m in class, I concentrate on doing my work”, and “When I do badly on a test, I work harder next time”. Response options consist of a 4-point Likert scale (1 = not at all true; 4 = very true). All items were used to calculate a total mean engagement score. Cronbach’s alpha was estimated at 0.85 for the current investigation. Previous studies (e.g., Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Smalls et al., 2007) have utilized this scale with African American adolescent populations and demonstrated internal consistency of items.

4.3.4.2. Academic self-beliefs. Academic self-beliefs were measured using the 10-item, student self-report school subscale from Hare’s multidimensional self-esteem scale (Hare, 1977). Items were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) and assessed students’ sense of self-importance in their classes (e.g., “I am an important person in my classes”) and self-concept of ability (e.g., “I am as good as other people in my classes”). There was adequate internal consistency of the scale items ($\alpha = 0.73$). Previous investigations have demonstrated construct validity of this measure (Shoemaker, 1980) and the measure has been utilized across various samples (Kelley et al., 1997; Spencer et al., 1996; Vacek et al., 2010).

4.4. Demographic covariates

Based upon existing studies suggesting that demographic factors shape the racial socialization process and associated academic beliefs, we examined whether identified profiles varied by several demographic factors including (a) adolescent age, (b) gender (1 = female and 2 = male), (c) family structure, and (d) SES as measured by free or reduced lunch status (1 = do not receive free or reduced lunch; 2 = receive free or reduced lunch) and maternal education. After running the Latent Profile Analysis (LPA), we examined whether identified patterns varied according to age due to research showing that older adolescents receive different and more frequent racial socialization from parents (Hughes et al., 2009; Hughes & Chen, 1997). Also, based upon existing studies (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007), we examined whether identified profiles varied based upon adolescent gender. Due to research indicating that higher parental SES is associated with different racial socialization messages (White-Johnson & Sellers, 2010) and higher academic achievement in youth (Lee et al., 2007), profile differences by free or reduced lunch status and parent education level were examined.

4.5. Data analytic strategy

Correlations, means, and standard deviations of core study variables are provided in Table 1. Parenting profiles were formed by creating latent constructs from indicator variables using LPA. LPA considers the relationships among variables within individuals and uses similarities across measures to create profiles of relatively homogenous groups (Roeser et al., 1998). LPA assumes local independence such that cases are classified into profiles after model-based posterior membership probabilities are estimated by maximum likelihood methods. This methodological approach is an extension of the k-means technique because it provides a more formal quantitative approach to selecting an ideal number of profiles among several alternatives (Magidson & Vermunt, 2004). We conducted LPA analysis using Mplus software (Version 8.00; Muthén & Muthén, 2018) to determine the sustainability of 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-, 6-, and 7-profile solutions in the exploration of academic socialization variables (parental school involvement and academic

Table 1
Correlations, means, and standard deviations of measured variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age [‡]	1.00									
2. Gender [‡]	−0.04	1.00								
3. SES (Lunch) [‡]	0.05	0.17 [*]	1.00							
4. Encouragement	−0.16	0.08	0.06	1.00						
5. Involvement	−0.07	−0.06	0.13	0.50	1.00					
6. Pride	−0.13	0.05	0.09	0.39	0.36 ^{***}	1.00				
7. Barriers	0.05	0.08	−0.01	0.17	0.10	0.61 ^{***}	1.00			
8. Egalitarian	0.05	0.16	0.05	0.42 ^{**}	0.27 ^{**}	0.63	0.46 ^{***}	1.00		
9. Engagement	0.03	0.07	0.07	0.43 ^{***}	0.21 [*]	0.28 ^{**}	0.22 [*]	0.40	1.00	
10. Self-Beliefs	0.05	−0.01	−0.06	0.31 ^{***}	0.32	0.33	0.30 ^{***}	0.28 ^{**}	0.51 [*]	1.00
Mean	12.41	1.66	1.66	4.27	3.29	2.73	2.26	3.14	3.41	3.94
SD	1.13	0.48	0.48	0.66	0.84	0.80	0.87	0.82	0.47	0.82
Range	11.00–15.00	1.00–2.00	1.00–2.00	1.00–5.00	1.22–5.00	1.00–4.00	1.00–4.00	1.00–4.00	1.33–4.33	1.00–5.00

Note: [‡] Indicates study covariate; Gender was coded 1 = female and 2 = male; Socioeconomic Status was coded 1 = do not receive free or reduced lunch and 2 = receive free or reduced lunch; Academic Encouragement was coded from 1 = not at all true to 5 = completely true; Parent School Involvement was coded from 1 = never to 5 = everyday; Racial Pride, Racial Barrier, and Egalitarian messages were coded from 1 = never to 4 = often; Academic Engagement was coded from 1 = not at all true to 4 = very true, Perception of Academic Ability was coded from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Table 2

Model fit indices for 2- to 7- profile solutions of socialization profiles.

Model	AIC	BIC	Entropy	BLRT
2 Cluster	1687.341	1734.408	0.82	−901.354, $p \leq .001$
3 Cluster	1645.278	1709.994	0.805	−827.672, $p \leq .001$
4 Cluster	1626.202	1708.568	0.828	−800.639, $p \leq .001$
5 Cluster	1607.515	1707.531	0.813	−785.101, $p \leq .001$
6 Cluster	1592.531	1710.197	0.869	−769.757, $p = .013$
7 Cluster	1587.890	1723.206	0.865	−756.265, $p = .286$

Note: Bold indicates best fitting model. AIC = Akaike Information Criterion, BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion, BLRT = Bootstrap Likelihood Ratio Test.

encouragement) and racial socialization variables (cultural pride, preparation for bias, egalitarian messages).

Several steps were taken to identify the best-fitting profile solution. First, in line with prior research (e.g., Nylund et al., 2007), Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) scores were used to determine the optimal number of profiles such that scores closer to 0 were indicative of better fit. Entropy values were also used to indicate the best-fitting profile solution such that values closer to 1.0 suggests a better classification. Finally, we chose to employ a bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT), which compares nested latent profile models through using bootstrap samples to estimate the distribution of the likelihood difference test statistic, wherein the obtained values indicate which profile-solution is most optimal (McLachlan & Peel, 2000; Nylund et al., 2007). Profile solutions with a BLRT p -value greater than 0.05 suggest that the higher profile solution is not a better fit than the lower profile solution, whereas profile solutions with a p -value less than 0.05 indicate that a particular solution, k is a better fit than the next lowest profile, $k - 1$.

5. Results

5.1. Latent profile analysis: parenting profiles

Results of the LPA identified that a 6-profile solution fit the data most optimally (AIC = 1592.53; BIC = 1710.20; BLRT = 769.76, $p = .013$; Entropy = 0.87). Fit indices (e.g., AIC, BIC, BLRT, Entropy) for each potential profile solution are shown in Table 2. Both the overall sample means and profile means were used to interpret the pattern of each identified parenting socialization profile (see Table 3). The six identified profiles included (a) *academic socializers* ($n = 2$, 1.43% of overall sample), (b) *preparation for bias socializers* ($n = 30$, 21.43%), (c) *low race salient socializers* ($n = 21$, 15%), (d) *unengaged socializers* ($n = 16$, 11.43%), (e) *multifaceted socializers* ($n = 45$, 32.14%), and (f) *race salient socializers* ($n = 26$, 18.57%). A depiction of the identified profiles using standardized means of the study variables is presented in Fig. 1.

Profile 1 was identified as *academic socializers* due to parents in this group displaying high school involvement and educational encouragement and moderate levels of cultural pride, preparation for bias, and egalitarian messages. Parents in Profile 2 were defined as *preparation for bias socializers* due to elevated preparation for bias messages in comparison to their low school involvement and educational encouragement levels, as well as low cultural pride and egalitarian messages. Profile 3 reflected parents with high school involvement, high educational encouragement, high egalitarian messages, and low levels of cultural pride and preparation for bias messages. As such, this profile was defined as the *low race salient socializers* profile. Parents in Profile 4 were deemed *unengaged socializers* due to their low levels of both academic and racial socialization components. Parents in Profile 5 reported moderate levels of involvement, encouragement, pride, bias, and egalitarian messages, and were thus identified as the *multifaceted socializers* profile. Profile 6 was identified as the *race salient socializers* profile because these parents were high on cultural pride, preparation for bias, and egalitarian messages, while moderate in their levels of school involvement and educational encouragement with their adolescents. Parents who were classified as *academic socializers* (Profile 1) were not included in subsequent mean comparisons due to the small profile size ($n = 2$).

Table 3

Academic outcomes, means (standard deviations) by socialization profiles.

	Profile 2 Preparation for Bias Socializers ($N = 30$)	Profile 3 Low Race Salient Socializers ($N = 21$)	Profile 4 Unengaged Socializers ($N = 16$)	Profile 5 Multifaceted Socializers ($N = 45$)	Profile 6 Race Salient Socializers ($N = 26$)
Academic outcomes					
Academic Self-Beliefs	3.85 (0.16) ^a	3.65 (0.24) ^b	3.59 (0.20) ^{c,e}	3.99 (0.15) ^{d,e}	4.38 (0.13) ^{a,b,c,d}
Acad. Engage.	3.44 (0.09)	3.20 (0.10) ^{f,h}	3.30 (0.10) ^g	3.48 (0.09) ^h	3.59 (0.09) ^{f,g}

Note: Means sharing a common superscript (e.g., ^a) are significantly different ($p < .05$) from one another. Profile 1 is not included due to its small n .

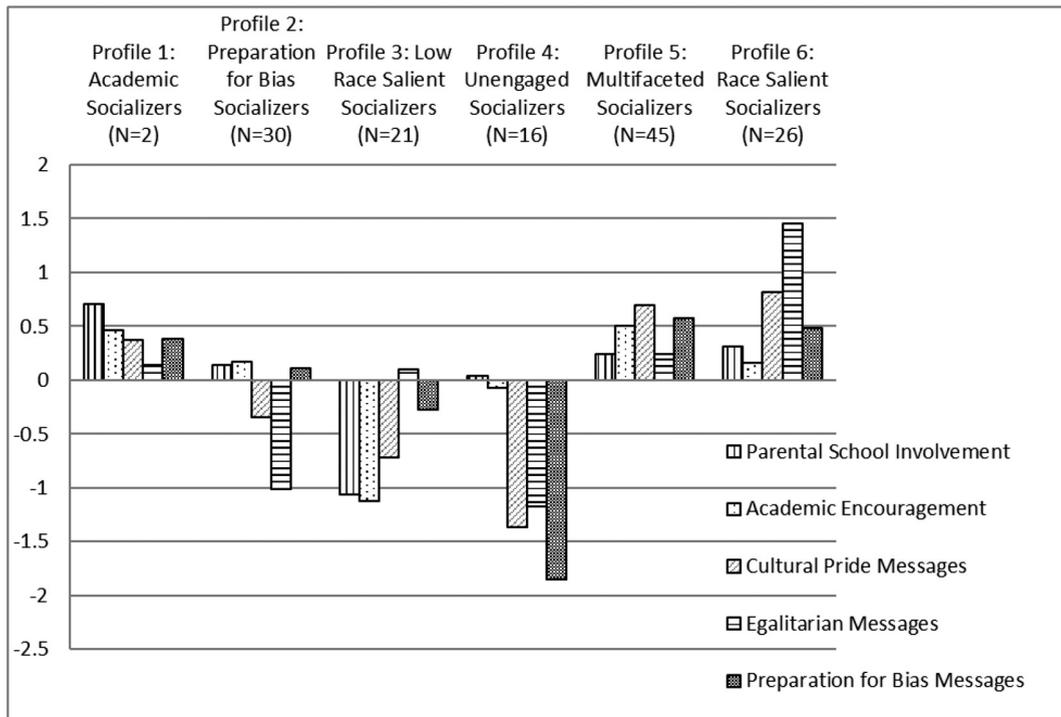


Fig. 1. Parental socialization profiles using standardized means.

5.2. Demographic variations among parental socialization profiles

To examine demographic (age, gender, family structure, maternal education and free or reduced lunch status) and academic (academic engagement, academic self-beliefs) variation across profiles, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Chi-Square analysis and post-hoc comparisons between identified profiles using Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels were conducted. Analyses indicated no significant demographic variation in profile membership for age ($F_{5, 136} = 3.14, ns$), free or reduced lunch status ($F_{5, 136} = 1.19, ns$), gender ($\chi^2_1 = 0.81, ns$), maternal education ($\chi^2_{10} = 5.74, ns$), or family structure ($\chi^2_5 = 9.46, ns$).

5.3. Variation in academic engagement among parental socialization profiles

ANOVA analyses and post-hoc tests were conducted that revealed significant mean differences in academic engagement ($F_{5, 136} = 12.21, p = .03$; see Table 3). Specifically, for parents who were classified as *race salient socializers* (Profile 6), adolescents reported significantly greater academic engagement than *preparation for bias socializers* (Profile 2; $F_{5, 136} = 8.36, p < .01$) and *unengaged socializers* (Profile 4; $F_{5, 136} = 4.80, p = .03$). Also, results indicated that for parents classified as *multifaceted socializers* (Profile 5), adolescents reported significantly greater academic engagement than *preparation for bias socializers* (Profile 2; $F_{5, 136} = 4.43, p = .04$). No other differences were found between identified profiles.

5.4. Variation in academic self-beliefs among parental socialization profiles

A one-way ANOVA revealed significant mean differences in academic self-beliefs ($F_{5, 136} = 12.27, p = .03$). For parents classified as *race salient socializers* (Profile 6), adolescents reported significantly more positive academic self-beliefs than parents classified as *preparation for bias socializers* (Profile 2; $F_{5, 136} = 7.53, p = .01$), *low race salient socializers* (Profile 3; $F_{5, 136} = 6.54, p < .01$), *unengaged socializers* (Profile 4; $F_{5, 136} = 11.12, p < .01$), and moderately higher academic self-beliefs than the *multifaceted socializers* (Profile 5; $F_{5, 136} = 3.54, p = .06$).

6. Discussion

The current study utilized a profile-oriented approach to identify parental socialization profiles among African American parental socialization practices and their relationship to the academic outcomes of their youth. The results of this study were drawn from a sample of African American participants living in a diverse, medium-sized city in the Midwest of the United States. As both adolescent and parent experiences with discrimination and racism contribute to the timing and content of socialization messages for African Americans (Banerjee et al., 2018), we expect our results to be generalizable to other African American families living in diverse cities

in the United States. Two important findings emerged from the current investigation. First, six distinct academic and racial socialization profiles were identified among a sample of African Americans. Second, analyses suggested that the identified profiles varied by academic outcomes.

Using LPA, this study found six parental socialization profiles that fit the data most optimally: (a) *academic socializers*, (b) *preparation for bias socializers*, (c) *low race salient socializers*, (d) *unengaged socializers*, (e) *multifaceted socializers*, and (f) *race salient socializers*. These findings suggest that there is variation in the academic and racial socialization practices that African American parents employ with their adolescents. Specifically, some parents focused on both academic and racial socialization in high or moderate levels. Also, some parents appeared to focus on preparation for bias messages above all others, whereas others were less communicative across all socialization dimensions.

Similar to the *multifaceted* profile identified in past research (White-Johnson & Sellers, 2010), the *academic socializers* (Profile 1) profile was labeled as such because of general and race specific messages that were conveyed in levels above the mean. Although only two parents were described by their adolescents as *academic socializers*, it is important to consider the impact of profiles that are characterized as such due to their similarities with profiles in previous studies. In contrast, a similar profile to our *preparation for bias socializers* (Profile 2) has not been identified in past studies; however, this profile contributes to the existent literature by identifying parents who seem to focus on transmitting messages that convey the negative ways in which negative race-related experiences might affect their youth's day to day lives. The *low race salient* group (Profile 3) was similar to the *low race salience* profile identified in previous studies (Cooper et al., 2015; White-Johnson & Sellers, 2010). As with past research that identified a *low affective-nonsalient* profile (Smalls, 2010) and studies that identified *low frequency* (Neblett et al., 2008) and *infrequent* (Cooper et al., 2015) profiles, *unengaged socializers* (Profile 4) in the current study displayed low levels of general and race-related parenting socialization components. In accordance with past studies that suggested that parents need to balance their socialization at this time and not be either too highly or too lowly involved (Cooper & Smalls, 2010), the majority of the sample in the current study fell within the *multifaceted socializers* (Profile 5) category. This finding also is in accordance with Neblett et al. (2008) in which the largest identified profile (i.e., *moderate positive*) was characterized by moderate levels of general and race-related parenting practices. Parents in the *race salient* profile (Profile 6) shared similarities with the *cultural affective-race salient* profile found in a previous study investigating general and race-specific parenting profiles utilizing profile analysis (Smalls, 2010). This investigation provided no support for demographic variation (e.g., age, gender, SES) among parental socialization profiles. Although past research indicates that adolescent age, gender, and SES are associated with parental socialization practices (e.g., Benner et al., 2016; Benner & Graham, 2013), studies using profile-oriented approaches have tended to not find associations with child and father demographic factors (Benner et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2014; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

Specific to academic behaviors and beliefs, the current study suggested that the various socialization profiles had differing effects on academic outcomes. Specific to academic engagement, for parents who were classified as *race salient socializers*, adolescents reported being significantly more engaged in school than adolescents whose parents were *unengaged socializers*. Here, support is shown for past studies which suggest that parents still have an impact on their youths' academic behaviors despite the changing relationships that are seen during adolescence (Awong et al., 2008; Bulanda & Majumdar, 2008; Neblett et al., 2006). Namely, parents being involved in their adolescents' lives, both academically and dealing with issues pertaining to race, fostered adolescents whose levels of academic engagement were significantly higher than parents who were not involved at all.

For parents who were *race salient socializers*, adolescents had higher levels of academic engagement than adolescents whose parents were classified as *high preparation for bias socializers*. Similarly, parents who were classified as *multifaceted socializers* also had adolescents who reported being significantly more engaged in school than *high preparation for bias socializers*. These findings are consistent with past studies that have suggested that high levels of preparation for bias messages may have negative impacts when not paired with cultural pride and egalitarian messages (Hughes et al., 2009; Varner et al., 2018).

Because both *race salient socializers* and *multifaceted socializers* had adolescents who were more engaged academically, these profiles should be further examined. It should be noted that parents in both of these profiles had more moderate academic socialization practices, yet varied according to their racial socialization practices. Consistent with prior research suggesting that parents foster independence in their youth while still seeking to maintain appropriate boundaries (e.g., Henry et al., 2006; Varner et al., 2018), moderate academic socialization (e.g., school involvement and academic encouragement) may be associated with higher levels of academic engagement among this sample of African American adolescents. Findings of the current study also point to contextual variation in parental socialization practices, namely, that some racial socialization messages may be more relevant for certain contexts. Furthermore, the varied effects of racial socialization practices highlighted in prior research (i.e., Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2016; Butler-Barnes et al., 2019; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Neblett et al., 2006; Smalls, 2009; Varner et al., 2018) are also supported through the results of the current study, as the present findings indicated that racial socialization practices varied among *race salient socializers* and *multifaceted socializers* from high to moderate levels of race-related communications, although both led to high levels of academic engagement.

This investigation also suggested differences among adolescents' academic self-beliefs based on parental socialization profile membership. Findings suggested that *race salient socializers* had adolescents who had more positive academic self-views than any other group. Specifically, for parents who were *race salient socializers*, adolescents reported significantly more positive academic self-beliefs than parents who were *low race salient socializers*, *preparation for bias socializers*, and *unengaged socializers*, and moderately higher academic self-beliefs than the *multifaceted socializers*.

In comparing *race salient socializers* to *low race salient socializers*, the added benefit of race-specific messages on the academic beliefs of African American adolescents can be seen. Specifically, simply encouraging school success through academic socialization in combination with egalitarian messages was not as effective as including cultural pride and preparation for bias messages as well.

Moreover, adolescents who reported receiving this academic- and egalitarian-focused, non-race-specific pattern of socialization behaviors had significantly less positive academic self-beliefs than those who reported receiving high racial and moderate academic socialization in combination with the other forms of socialization. These results suggest the added benefit of socialization messages highlighting cultural pride practices when rearing African American youth. In examining *race salient socializers* in comparison to *preparation for bias socializers*, students with parents who were high on racial socialization and moderate on academic socialization practices also had more positive academic self-beliefs than students who reported receiving only high levels of preparation for bias messages and low levels of all of the other parental socialization practices of interest in the current study. This finding is bolstered by past studies indicating the potentially negative effects of receiving preparation for bias messages without other socialization messages (e.g., Varner et al., 2018).

Furthermore, in comparing *race salient socializers* to *unengaged socializers*, the importance of parental involvement can be seen. It is evident that having parents who transmit messages pertaining to the importance of academic success and race-related socialization (e.g., cultural pride messages) is more beneficial than parents who are not involved. Last, the added benefit of racial socialization practices is seen through the finding that adolescents who indicated *race salient* socialization reported having more positive academic self-beliefs than adolescents who reported *multifaceted* socialization. Overall, findings show that students who reported having parents who were high in their levels of racial socialization messages and moderate in their academic socialization behaviors reported more positive academic self-beliefs than any other group. This is consistent with recent research findings suggesting that components of racial socialization and parental academic socialization are factors in improving academic outcomes for African American youth (Banerjee et al., 2018; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

6.1. Limitations and directions for future research

The current study is not without limitations. First, parents who were classified as *academic socializers* were not included in subsequent mean comparisons due to small profile size. A larger sample size would have enabled examination of the related academic behaviors and beliefs for this group of adolescents. Further, there may be variation in parent and adolescent reported socialization practices (i.e., Harris-Britt et al., 2007; Paulson et al., 1991). The use of adolescent reports, although illuminating, may only reflect adolescents' views of communicated messages and does not accurately capture actual parenting behaviors. Whereas adolescents' perceptions of their parents' behaviors are relevant for understanding their own behaviors and beliefs (i.e., Harris-Britt et al., 2007), prospective studies should obtain parent reports to explore the relationship between parental socialization practices and the associated academic outcomes for these African American adolescents. In this investigation, we did not collect measures on peers. However, as suggested by previous studies (e.g., Nelson et al., 2018), we acknowledge that both peers and parents play an important role in racial socialization processes and the academic beliefs of African American adolescents. Future investigations should continue to examine the ways in which parental and peer race-related socialization are associated with the academic beliefs and behaviors of African American youth.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the data presented in the current study, we were unable to explore the transactional and reciprocal nature of academic and racial socialization, or the ways in which these practices contribute to long-term outcomes for these adolescents. Additionally, although we know that parents might deliver cultural pride and preparation for bias messages to protect their youth from future occurrences of discrimination, parents may also deliver these messages as a result of their adolescents already having faced racial injustices and thus these message serve as a compensatory mechanism. Therefore, longitudinal exploration of parents' academic and racial socialization practices, as well as adolescents' academic behaviors and beliefs, will result in a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which these parenting practices directly influence the outcomes of African American adolescents in school.

6.2. Implications and study conclusions

The current study provides initial support for the existence of patterns in the ways in which African American parents utilize academic and racial socialization practices to promote positive academic outcomes for their adolescents. This investigation also suggests that these parental socialization profiles differ in their relationship to the academic engagement and academic self-beliefs of African American youth in school.

The observed relationship between specific parental socialization practices and academic outcomes has implications for the development and use of programming aimed at bolstering positive outcomes and preventing and reducing negative academic outcomes among African American students (Okeke-Adeyanju et al., 2014). Previous studies suggested that different segments of a given population benefit from parent training differently (Coard et al., 2004; Toure et al., 2020), highlighting particular issues for African American or other minority parents. Specifically, these studies show that parenting programs are less successful for African American families because African American families are less likely to complete treatment, to make clinically significant improvements, and to see their effects sustained over time (Toure et al., 2020). As cultural sensitivity can impact engagement and the retention of information, success in improving the academic behaviors and beliefs of African American youth through parent training will rely heavily on cultural considerations within parenting contexts (Smalls, 2009). Although researchers have attempted to adapt programs to be more appropriate for African American participants, there has been a lack of research examining the combined influence of both general and race specific components. It is posited here, that this and other work pertaining to the impact of parents' socialization practices on positive outcomes for African American youth could better contribute to the literature on culturally sensitive parenting programs through incorporating racial socialization into the design, modification, and implementation of such programs.

6.3. Implications for school psychology

Based on these findings, there are several implications for school psychologists and counselors. Clinicians working in school settings can aim to focus on promoting racial socialization through encouraging and empowering messages about their race to African American students. As youth spend a majority of time in school settings, school staff have an important role in promoting self-worth and providing cultural pride messages to African American youth. Such efforts can include implementing culturally affirming school-based interventions, utilizing practices that validate African American youth's personal experiences, or using culturally-responsive adaptations in implementing evidence-based school treatments (e.g., Aston et al., 2018; Aston & Graves Jr, 2016; Jones, 2014; Jones et al., 2017). In addition, using family-based interventions in schools is essential and honors the special relationship African American youth have with their parents. School psychologists can establish special culturally-relevant family programming with parents to encourage the practice of racial socialization and promote parental involvement in academics for African American youth in their schools (Jones, 2010). School psychologists and counselors can also play a role in helping African American children address and combat racism by collaborating with teachers to adapt anti-racist and culturally promoting messages in their classrooms to foster a safe and supportive learning environment.

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