

VICARIOUS RACISM AND CHILD OUTCOMES: THE MODERATING ROLE OF
PREPARATION FOR BIAS IN BLACK AMERICAN FAMILIES

by

KIMBERLY OSBORNE

(Under the Direction of Margaret Caughy)

ABSTRACT

Racism experienced by caregivers can result in negative outcomes for their children as well. Black American caregivers may use ethnic racial socialization (ERS) to promote cultural pride and prepare children for discrimination (i.e., *cultural socialization, preparation for bias*). In this secondary data analysis, a community-recruited, low-income sample of 130 Black American caregivers reported on past-year experiences with racism, ERS practices, and their child's internalizing behaviors. A residualized change approach assessed whether caregivers' racist experiences predicted a change in child internalizing behaviors across two time points. Each ERS strategy was examined as a moderator. Cultural socialization was not a significant protective factor as hypothesized. Meanwhile, there was a significant interaction between preparation for bias and caregivers' racist experiences. The Johnson-Neyman technique indicated that caregivers' past-year experiences with racism predicted an increase in child internalizing behaviors when caregivers were providing preparation for bias messages an average of once a year.

INDEX WORDS: Vicarious racism, Black American families, ethnic racial socialization,
child internalizing behaviors

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DEDICATION

To the children and caregivers who provided hours of their time, year after year, in the service of improved empirical knowledge of child and family development in Black and African American communities.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
A Note on Terminology	3
Current Limitations of the Literature and Thesis Purpose.....	4
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
The Development of Racial Awareness in School-Age Children	5
Caregiver Experiences of Racism and Child Internalizing Outcomes.....	7
Conceptual Framework: Studying Developmental Competencies in Microgroup Children.....	9
Adaptive Cultures and Ethnic Racial Socialization	10
The Current Study.....	13
3 METHOD	17
Participants.....	17
Data Collection Procedure	18
Measures	18
Data Analytic Plan	20

4	RESULTS	23
	Post Hoc Statistical Power Analysis	25
5	DISCUSSION.....	31
	Caregivers’ Racism Experiences and Child Internalizing Behaviors	31
	Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias.....	33
	Developmental Timing of Preparation for Bias Message.....	34
	ERS in Low-Income Families.....	35
	Limitations and Future Directions	36
	Implications.....	38
	Conclusions.....	39
	REFERENCES	40

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Characteristics of Study Sample	22
Table 2: Bivariate Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations	27

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Conceptual Model for Study Hypotheses	16
Figure 2: Final Structural Equation Model	28
Figure 3: Johnson-Neyman Plot of the Interaction Between Caregivers' Racism Experiences and Preparation for Bias Socialization on Change in Child Internalizing Behaviors.....	29
Figure 4: The Effects of Caregivers' Racism Experiences on Change in Child Internalizing Behaviors, Plotted at Low and High Levels of Preparation for Bias	30

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The complexities of raising a child in today's society are exacerbated for Black and African American caregivers, as racial discrimination and prejudice pose a constant threat to child social-behavioral, health, and academic outcomes (Braveman & Barclay, 2009; Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Tatum, 1997). For adults, self-reported racism and experiences of institutionalized racism are related to worse mental and physical health outcomes (Braveman & Barclay, 2009; Paradies, 2006). Similar effects are found for young children, whether directly through personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination or indirectly through the effects of racism on caregivers (Caughy, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2004; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Tran, 2014; Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003). Furthermore, the prevalence of racism in the U.S. is alarming. Approximately 90% of Black and African American children and youth report personal experiences with racism by the time they are adolescents (Anderson & Stevenson, 2019; Pachter, Bernstein, Szalacha, & Garcia Coll, 2010; Seaton, Caldwell, Sellers, & Jackson, 2008). Racism represents a risk to the well-being of Black American children and is therefore a worthwhile concern to developmental researchers.

Recently, racism research has extended this literature to include the negative effects of racism experienced secondhand, known as *vicarious racism* (Harrell, 2000). Despite being outside of the child's immediate rearing environment and awareness, racism occurring to a caregiver can still influence the environments and interactions they share with the child. These experiences, identified as occurring within the exosystem of a child's ecological developmental

system, may therefore influence outcomes for the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Given that the number of Black American children demonstrating an awareness of systemic racism increases by 65% between the ages of six and ten, it is important to understand how caregivers' experiences with racism may affect children within this age range (McKown & Weinstein, 2003).

Furthermore, how caregivers prepare children for personal experiences of discrimination while this awareness is still developing may have important implications for protecting children from the negative effects of personal and vicarious experiences of racism.

One way caregivers prepare Black American children for these circumstances is through ethnic racial socialization (ERS). Extant research in the field asserts that messages and practices instilling pride in cultural heritage and traditions result in positive outcomes for minority children (see Hughes et al., 2006 for review). This component of ERS, termed *cultural socialization* by Hughes and colleagues (2006), has been linked to higher self-esteem, improved ethnic identity formation, and is protective against experiences of discrimination from early childhood into young adulthood (Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas-Drake, & West-Bey, 2009; Peck, Brodish, Malanchuk, Banerjee, & Eccles, 2014). The RESilience initiative (resilience through Racial Ethnic Socialization) launched by the American Psychological Association in the spring of 2018 has its foundation in this literature and further evidences the consensus in the field.

Similarly, caregivers who anticipate discrimination in their child's future may attempt to prepare the child for these experiences by setting their expectations for prejudice. Stemming from a shared history of oppression and racial trauma, *preparation for bias* messages explain injustices perpetrated against members of their ethnic group and teach children how to respond in similar situations (Hughes et al., 2006; Rodriguez, Umaña-Taylor, Smith, & Johnson, 2009).

Together, cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages represent a Black American caregiver's proactive stance and reactive response to the cultural and systemic racism existing in the U.S. today. Encounters with racism, whether indirectly through systemic forces and effects on caregivers or directly through interpersonal experiences, are becoming increasingly more difficult for African American youth to avoid. Meanwhile, Black American caregivers adapt their rearing strategies in the face of these challenges to promote resilience in their children (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Thus, an examination of these messages and the effects on child outcomes in the context of caregivers' racist experiences is warranted and may inform parenting interventions seeking to promote Black American youth development.

A Note on Terminology

Historically, research conducted by majority (or macro) group members has focused on the deficits of racial, ethnic, and cultural microgroups (Sears, 1975; Senn et al., 1975). In an effort to shift the language away from negative connotations, 'microgroup' and 'microculture' have begun to replace the word 'minority' in vernacular today. These terms instead highlight the unique histories, experiences, and values ethnic groups bring to the broader U.S. culture (Neuliep, 2009; Orbe & Harris, 2015). In accord with this initiative, the term 'minority' has been replaced throughout the remainder of this paper. Furthermore, though 'Black' and 'African American' are often used interchangeably, scholars in the field of ethnic/racial research have begun to use subgroup classifications that more closely represent the populations in question (Tatum, 1997). The term 'African American,' in part, suggests a remaining connection to the African continent; however, just ten percent of the Black American population in the U.S. are foreign born (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Given that all the children in the current sample are

American-born, a decision was made to use ‘Black American’ throughout the paper as it more accurately represents the sample’s demographics.

Current Limitations of the Literature and Thesis Purpose

Experiences of racism, both interpersonal and institutional, are substantially different across ethnic and racial microgroups (e.g., Black American, Native American, Hispanic). Thus, the current literature would benefit from examining the effects of vicarious racism experiences within distinct groups. More longitudinal research is also needed to better understand how vicarious racism influences *change* in child developmental outcomes over time, especially for young children while their understanding of race and racism is still developing. Extant literature has substantiated the protective and promotive effects of cultural socialization for Black American youth (Stevenson, 1998; Hughes et al., 2006). Despite this, low-income families report less use of ERS overall than higher educated and higher income families (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Peck et al., 2014; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). Research in low-income, Black American samples is needed to better understand ERS processes for a population experiencing greater risk of institutionalized racism.

The aims of this thesis are to advance the literature on caregiver experiences of racism through the examination of these effects in a low-income, early school-aged Black American sample. Two time points of data were utilized to observe the residualized change in internalizing behaviors resulting from vicarious racism over and above child stability in these behaviors. Cultural socialization was assessed as a moderator in this relation to better understand its protective influence for low-income populations. Finally, preparation for bias was included as a moderator to help elucidate the complicated effects of this socialization strategy in early school-aged Black American children.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Development of Racial Awareness in School-Age Children

Research in the field of prejudice and interracial relations indicates children develop an awareness of ethnic-racial identifiers and some prejudiced categorization techniques and attributions as early as age three (Aboud 1988; Aboud, 1993; Allport, 1979). Both seminal in the field, Allport (1979) attributes this early-life prejudice to socialization from caregivers in response to typical child curiosity, whereas Aboud (1988) states that developmental limitations in cognition are what set the stage for prejudice in childhood. Social Identity Development Theory (Nesdale, 2004, 2007) accounts for both of these perspectives while also identifying ecological and family factors that influence whether these early prejudicial tendencies will sustain into later years, with research indicating prejudicial beliefs may become established as early as age seven (Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2005; Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, & Griffiths, 2005). This occurs for both micro and macrogroup children, though the effects of early prejudice are more pronounced for microgroup children as they attempt to navigate social worlds already shaped by unequal systems of power (McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Tatum, 1997).

Developing simultaneously with their cognitive (i.e., second-order theory of mind) abilities is a child's ability to infer stereotype usage by other people. Research suggests this ability begins developing at about age six and continues linearly from there, with qualitative differences at each stage (McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Quintana & Vera, 1999). One study found just 15% of six-year-old ethnic microgroup children were aware of broadly held

stereotypes. Meanwhile, 46% of eight-year-olds and 80% of ten-year-olds were (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Furthermore, these age-specific percentages increased more rapidly for ethnic microgroup children than for their same-age White peers, indicating an early divergence for these groups in their development of racism awareness (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Taken together, this research indicates Black American children ages six to ten may be particularly susceptible to racial messages received from their caregivers and from the broader society. This could be considered a sensitive period in Black American child development where the effects of race-based messages on child outcomes are more pronounced than they would be in other developmental stages (Gee, Walsemann, & Brondolo, 2012).

Also occurring around this developmental period is the entrance of children into formal education. Though it depends on the demographics of the school, this developmental transition typically means more frequent interactions with peers and teachers of other ethnicities and can mean more experiences of racism for Black American children. Research indicates increased exposure to diversity in preschool can lead to experiences of racism in peer interactions with these experiences sustained throughout the child's time in school (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Gaias, Gal, Abry, Taylor, & Granger, 2018; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 1996). Additionally, implicit racial biases held by teachers have been found to influence teacher achievement expectations for, and behaviors toward, ethnic microgroup children beginning in preschool (Garcia, Sulik, & Obradović, 2018; Gilliam et al., 2016; Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003). Therefore, for Black American children, beginning formal education likely includes the additional task of navigating racism experiences. Prior to their understanding of racism as systemic and attributable to external causes, children may falsely blame racism experiences on personal characteristics and internalize negative feelings. Further elucidation of the effects of

racism experiences and racial messages on developmental outcomes during this susceptible period is needed.

Caregiver Experiences of Racism and Child Internalizing Outcomes

Interpersonal and institutionalized racism create increased stress and strain for Black American caregivers, resulting in poorer outcomes for children (Braveman & Barclay, 2009; Caughy, O'Campo, & Mutaner, 2004; Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Tran, 2014). Bronfenbrenner's concept of the exosystem informs researchers that environments for caregivers not containing their children (e.g., the work environment, interactions with other adults) can still influence outcomes for children through effects on their shared environments and interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, a racist event occurring to a caregiver also has an effect on the child (Gee, Walsemann, & Brondolo, 2012). This form of racism, experienced secondhand by children, is known as *vicarious racism* in the racism stress literature (Harrell, 2000). In a meta-analysis of 30 studies examining the effects of vicarious (e.g., caregiver experienced) racism on child health outcomes, four of the seven hypothesized associations were significant for worse internalizing behaviors (Heard-Garris, Cale, Camaj, Hamati, & Dominguez, 2018). Samples in this meta-analysis were ethnically diverse, and child age ranged substantially. Therefore, the specific effects for young Black American children are unclear, though some research supports this association for adolescents (Ford, Hurd, Jagers, & Sellers, 2013; Heard-Garris et al., 2018; Simons et al., 2002).

Additionally, many factors can influence the extent to which negative effects are transferred to children, including caregiver acknowledgement that racism exists and the strategies and resources they utilize to cope (Caughy, O'Campo, & Mutaner, 2004; Simons et al., 2002). For example, in a sample of Black American families living in Baltimore with three- and

four-year-old children, parents who denied the experience of racism for those close to them and Black Americans in general were found to have children with significantly worse internalizing behaviors (Caughy, O'Campo, & Mutaner, 2004). Meanwhile, parents who reported actively coping with discrimination had children with the fewest behavioral problems (Caughy, O'Campo, & Mutaner, 2004).

Research on ethnic microgroup children's awareness of stereotypes and its influence on their academic performance lends further evidence for the indirect effects of racism on youth outcomes. In an experiment with ethnic microgroup children between the ages of six and ten, those who were aware of stereotypes performed worse on a backwards alphabet task when they were told that the task was a test of their academic ability as compared to microgroup youth who were told the task was not a test (McKwon & Weinstein, 2003). Researchers in the field propose that having a White authority figure (e.g., a teacher) observe their academic performance increases anticipation for microgroup youth of being stereotyped against when they have an awareness of broadly held stereotypes, causing them to perform worse than their macrogroup peers (McKwon & Weinstein, 2003). These effects were determined after controlling for child age and vocabulary level and were not influenced by child anxiety, a decrease in self-appraised performance, or the child's withdrawal of effort. Thus, awareness of broadly held stereotypes was determined to have influenced microgroup children's acute behaviors.

Though Black American children's awareness of stereotypes increases substantially between the ages of six and eight, their understanding of racism as systemic is still far from fully developed (McKwon & Weinstein, 2003; Quintana & Vera, 1999). Caregiver experiences of racism may increase a child's awareness of discrimination and prejudice at a time when they are not yet able to comprehend racism as occurring due to systemic forces, further increasing

chances they internalize these feelings. Despite early work on caregiver-experienced racism and ERS, the field would benefit from further examination of the vicarious effects of racism on the development of internalizing behaviors in Black American children (Hughes & Checn, 1997; Ogbu, 1981). Understanding the complex interplay of vicarious racism, caregiver messages about race, and the developmental timing of these messages and experiences could have important implications for Black American families.

Conceptual Framework: Studying Developmental Competencies in Microgroup Children

In an ever-changing sociopolitical context, microgroup members and communities adapt to contextual demands to shape promotive environments for children. This is the frame of reference Garcia Coll and colleagues' (1996) bring to their integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in microgroup children. In the model, three elements of social stratification theory (i.e., social position, racism, and segregation) are integrated to explain the influence of macrogroup systems of power on contexts for microgroup members. Specifically, it is through segregation at residential, economic, social, and psychological levels that the distinction between macro- and microgroup becomes clear in the U.S. Additionally, individuals from different microgroups perceive, respond, and prepare for racism and discrimination in culture-specific ways (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000). Researchers examining experiences of racism and caregiver ERS across microgroups must take care not to generalize the experience of one group to another.

Experiences for ethnic microgroups in the U.S. today are influenced by the legacy of how that group came to be in the U.S. and the distinct policies and administrative actions that have influenced that experience ever since. These historical legacies of enslavement, legal segregation, and disenfranchisement hold social significance for people of color across the life

course and can therefore play a role in child developmental outcomes (Gee, Walsemann, & Brondolo, 2012). The Black American community, one that has suffered severe historical trauma with minimal retributions, faces renewed threats and traumatization in the current sociopolitical context. The community also remains one of the most vigilant and responsive. It is for this reason the current study elected to focus solely on caregiver practices of ERS and the effects of racism within Black American families.

Adaptive Cultures and Ethnic Racial Socialization

The intricacies and difficulties of preparing a child for racism cannot be understated. In her book, Beverly Tatum (1997) explains that cultural racism infects the air like a smog; racially-charged messages, policies, and ideologies are so ubiquitous they are unavoidable and, unbeknownst to the individual, seep into subconscious beliefs and actions. This results in the occurrence of both explicit racist behaviors and implicit racial microaggressions being commonplace in today's society (Tatum, 1997). The multidimensionality of these experiences further complicates how caregivers of color navigate the socialization they provide to their children. Having experienced oppression and marginalization throughout their lifetimes, Black American and other microgroup caregivers in the U.S develop what Garcia Coll and colleagues' (1996) have termed *adaptive cultures* for their children. Adaptive cultures blend traditions and legacies, as well as economic and political histories, to meet current contextual demands (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Messages and practices used by caregivers to socialize children about their ethnic identities and microgroup statuses (e.g., preparation for bias and cultural socialization) are an important component of adaptive cultures on the micro, interpersonal level. From celebrating cultural holidays to explaining a discriminatory experience depicted in the news, these decisions

and practices enacted by caregivers can have profound effects on their children's development of ethnic identity, self-esteem, and sense of belongingness.

As children mature and develop increasing autonomy, the possibility they will encounter racial discrimination without their caregivers' *in vivo* guidance becomes greater. By the time Black American children reach early adolescence, 75% report having been hassled by store personnel, 73% report having been perceived as dangerous by others, 67% report having been insulted by someone due to their ethnicity, and 47% report having been called a racial slur outright (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Simons et al., 2002). Evidence suggests that Black American caregivers adapt in the face of this impending discrimination by increasing levels of ERS overall, and preparation for bias specifically, upon their child's entrance into school (Contreras, Caughy, & Owen, *in review*; Hughes et al., 2006). Though cultural socialization has been linked overwhelmingly in the literature to more positive outcomes for microgroup children, the specific effects of preparation for bias across contexts and ages remain unclear. What follows is a brief review of the literature on these two forms of ERS in Black American families.

Cultural socialization. In a recent review of ERS in Black American samples, Black American adolescents who reported more cultural socialization from caregivers also reported an increased connection to culture and increased behavioral involvement in their ethnic group (Peck et al., 2014). Feeling connected to cultural heritage may positively influence outcomes for Black American youth exposed to discrimination. For example, youth who reported having a strong sense of ethnic identity were protected against the effects of self-reported racism on their mental and physical health (Paradies, 2006). There is evidence to support that the use of cultural socialization by caregivers when children are young can have lasting positive effects into adulthood (Fischer & Shaw, 1999). Utilization of these messages when children are young and

still learning about race might be especially important. For example, in a preschool-age sample, parents' usage of cultural socialization was found associated with decreased problem behaviors overall and especially internalizing and externalizing behaviors for boys (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002). In a sample of first graders, children whose parents prioritized cultural socialization with an emphasis on coping (i.e., fewer messages of mistrust) had significantly lower internalizing behavior scores than children whose parents did not (Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011). Thus, extant literature supports cultural socialization as both protective and promotive such that it protects against negative outcomes in developmental domains (e.g., behavioral, mental and physical health) and promotes ethnic identity development.

Preparation for bias. Unlike the literature on cultural socialization, the effects of preparation for bias messages on child outcomes are not resoundingly positive, including higher rates of internalizing behaviors, lower self-esteem, and more symptoms of depression (Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011; Davis & Stevenson, 2006; Dotterer & James, 2018; Harris-Britt, Valrie, Jurtz-Costes, & Rowley, 2007; Liu & Lau, 2013). In the presence of racism, however, preparation for bias can act as a protective factor, though this has been identified primarily in older samples ranging in age from 14 to 25 (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Fischer & Shaw, 1999). Ultimately, the nature of preparation for bias messages and effects on child outcomes given child age and context is highly convoluted in extant literature.

For very young children (ages three to five), preparation for bias messages may not have any effect on child behavior outcomes because children do not yet fully comprehend the intent behind the messages (Caughy et al., 2002). As previously articulated, however, child engagement in school may influence the perceived relevance of these messages to caregivers and children at a time when the child's ability to comprehend these messages is improving. For

example, in a sample of eighth graders, receiving low levels of preparation for bias in the presence of greater perceived discrimination resulted in lower reported self-esteem. Meanwhile, moderate levels of preparation for bias were deemed protective (Harris-Britt et al., 2007). However, a combination of both high preparation for bias and high perceived discrimination resulted in significantly worse self-esteem outcomes for these youth. This is in line with previous research in the field indicating an intensification of discrimination experiences for youth receiving high preparation for bias (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Stevenson, Reed, Bodison, & Bishop, 1997). Taken together, this research indicates that social climate and levels of discrimination, as well as child age, all influence the protective or harmful nature of preparation for bias messages.

It appears that a combination of cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages are the most beneficial for child outcomes (Harris-Britt, Valrie, Jurtz-Costes, & Rowley, 2007), whereas a lack of ERS practices in general during development has resulted in negative outcomes for Black American youth (Caughy, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2004; Fischer & Shaw, 1999). Though negative outcomes for children resulting from caregiver denial of racism and/or preparation for bias messages are concerning, it should be noted that preparing a child for racism is intricate and sensitive. The difficulties in navigating this process for caregivers should not be understated. Elucidating these intricacies, however, could benefit parenting initiatives, such as RESilience, which currently provide few recommendations to caregivers regarding preparation for bias messages.

The Current Study

As Garcia Coll et al.'s (1996) integrative model emphasizes, research on the development of children of color must consider the familial, sociopolitical, and cultural contexts within which

development occurs. In Black American families, caregiver experiences of racism and segregation can influence the adaptive cultures created for children, including the influence of caregiver ERS practices. Despite theoretical support for this link between caregiver experiences of racism, the ERS they provide to their children, and ultimately child outcomes, little research has examined these associations longitudinally, resulting in a dearth of empirical support for causal pathways (Heard-Garris et al., 2018). In a review of the research on ERS as a protective factor against racism and poor mental health outcomes, Reynolds and Gonzales-Backen (2017) cite just three out of 21 articles involving more than one data collection time point. Further, not a single paper reviewed involved children younger than nine.

In fact, research thus far on caregiver ERS has primarily been conducted with school-age, adolescent, and young adult samples. In another review of the literature on caregiver ERS and various child outcomes, Hughes and colleagues (2006) cited only one study with children under the age of five (Caughy et al., 2002), four studies including children ages five and six (Branch & Newcombe, 1986; Hughes & Chen, 1997; McKay et al, 2003; Spencer, 1983), three studies of children at least age six (Hughes, 2003; Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota, & Ocampo, 1993; McHale et al., 2006) and only one study with longitudinal data (White parents and their adopted African-origin youth; DeBerry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996). Much less is known about the effects of ERS for Black American children between the ages of six and eight; a stage in ethnic microgroup development marked by increased sensitivity to messages about race. This gap in the literature makes it difficult to discern the early influences of ERS on child outcomes and change in development over time. Furthermore, though Black American families with higher socioeconomic statuses have been found to report more ERS messages and display more

Africentric items in their households, much less is known about the occurrence and influence of ERS in low-income families (Peck et al., 2014; Caughy et al., 2002).

The current study aims to address these gaps in the literature by examining practices of ERS in low-income, Black American families with six- to seven-year-old children and attending to the following two aims. First, caregivers' experiences of racism in the past year and the influence on the change in child internalizing behaviors from kindergarten to first grade were examined, with more reported racist experiences hypothesized to predict a greater increase in internalizing behaviors. Second, the moderating role of preparation for bias and cultural socialization messages were assessed. For a conceptual model depicting study hypotheses, see Figure 1. Though the current study hypothesized that cultural socialization would act as protective in this relationship, there is no prevailing evidence indicating which direction preparation for bias messages might influence the effect of caregiver experiences of racism on child internalizing outcomes for this particular age group. This study aspires only to add to current literature and further elucidate the role each dimension of ERS plays on child outcomes.

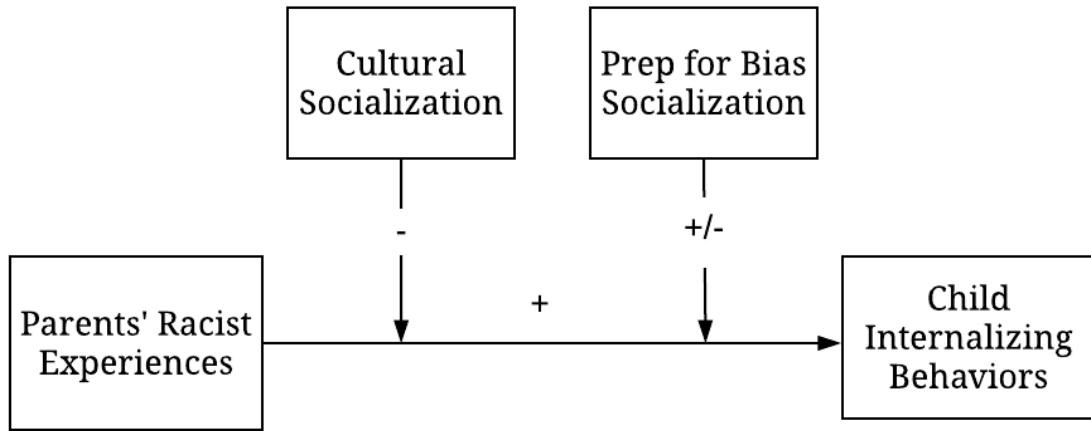


Figure 1. Conceptual model for study hypotheses.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

The current study is a secondary data analysis of a larger, longitudinal study ($N = 407$) that examined emergent self-regulation skills and school readiness among low-income, microgroup preschoolers of two ethnicities. Families participating in the original study were recruited from an urban area in Texas. Research assistants distributed study information to local organizations in the community such as recreational centers and churches, as well as local WIC clinics, and Head Start programs. The study also employed a community recruiter who had ties to the Black/African American community in the area. In addition, several participants learned about the study through word-of-mouth.

Eligible families had a target child between 29 and 31 months of age at the first time point, at least one caregiver who self-identified as Hispanic/Latinx or Black/African American, and a family income below 200% of the federal poverty level. Of the 407 families enrolled in the study, 182 were Black American caregiver-child dyads. Caregiver-reported experiences of racism were collected once at Time 3 when children were in kindergarten. Therefore, the current study focuses on the 132 Black American caregiver-child dyads who were seen at either Time 3 or 4. The 50 Black American families lost to follow-up by Time 3 did not differ significantly on family income status, $t(180) = .57, p = .57$, but did differ on child gender, $\chi^2(1) = 6.22, p < .05$, such that 80% of boys were followed up with compared to 63.4% of girls. Additionally, two

primary caregivers who self-identified as White, non-Hispanic were removed from the sample resulting in a final sample of 130 caregiver-child dyads.

A majority of the sample children were identified by their primary caregivers as Black/African American (95.4%), while 4.6% were identified as multiracial/multiethnic. Child age at Time 3 was approximately 6.20 years ($M = 74.48$ months, $SD = 4.13$), and child age at Time 4 was approximately 7.17 years ($M = 86.06$ months, $SD = 3.97$). About 40% of the target children were female, and a majority of the participating primary caregivers were mothers (89.2%). Additional demographics are displayed in Table 1.

Data Collection Procedure

Participants were visited in their home for data collection. Two home assessors attended each visit, with one assessor interviewing the primary caregiver while the other conducted the child assessments. Home assessors were matched to the ethnicity of the child. Total time for each home visit was between 1.5 and 2 hours. Primary caregivers were compensated with a \$50 gift card, and the children received an age appropriate toy. All data collection procedures were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of [author institution] and [author institution], and this secondary data analysis has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of [author institution].

Measures

Caregivers' experiences of racism. The Schedule of Racist Events (SRE; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996), a widely-used measure assessing the frequency and stress appraisal of racist experiences across educational, occupational, neighborhood, and institutional contexts, was administered to primary caregivers at Time 3. Drawing from Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional theory, the authors of the measure aspired to capture both the immediate evaluation

that a racism-related event had occurred and the secondary appraisal deeming whether it was stressful to that individual. For the purpose of the current study, only the Recent Experiences subscale was used. Respondents rate on a scale of “1” (*never*) to “6” (*almost all of the time*) how often in the past year they have encountered 17 different racist experiences and how different they perceive their life would be had not they not been treated in these racist ways. High scores on the Recent Experiences subscale of the SRE represent a high frequency of racist events in the past year. Scores were recoded to benefit intuitiveness (0 = *never* and 5 = *almost all of the time*) and sum imputed subscale scores allowing for a maximum of three missing items were used in analyses. Additionally, one extreme outlier ($x = 60$, greater than four standard deviations above the mean) was truncated to the next highest value ($x = 47$).

Ethnic/racial socialization. The Preparation for Bias and Cultural Socialization subscales of the Parent’s Messages to Children about Race/ Ethnicity scale (Hughes & Chen, 1997) administered at Time 3 were used to assess caregiver ethnic/racial socialization (ERS) messages and practices. The subscales include five items each and have shown strong internal reliability (Preparation for Bias: α 's = .84 - .87; Cultural Socialization: α 's = .74 - .91) in the original sample (Caughy & Owen, 2015). Items in the Preparation for Bias subscale refer to discussions with the child and with people nearby while the child can overhear regarding prejudice, such as “Have you ever told your child that people might try to limit him/her because of his/her race or ethnicity?” Example items on the Cultural Socialization subscale include “have you ever taken your child to places or events that reflect his or her racial or ethnic heritage?” and “have you ever encouraged your child to read books concerning the history or traditions of your ethnic/racial group?” On both scales, if caregivers respond yes to an item, they are asked to reflect on how many times they have done this in the past 12 months (0 = *never at all* and 6 =

more than eight times). A mean subscale score allowing for one missing item was calculated for each subscale. High scores on either subscale represent a higher frequency of engaging in these messages and practices with or around children.

Child behavior outcomes. To assess for the change in child internalizing behaviors (e.g., anxiety, depression) from Time 3 to Time 4, the Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001; CBCL/6-18) was used at both time points. This school-aged version is one of the most frequently used assessments of child behavior and has been validated on children ages six and up. Test-retest reliability scores range from .71 to .93, and internal reliability α 's are between .78 and .97. Caregivers were asked to rate their child's internalizing behaviors on a 3-point scale (*not true, somewhat or sometimes true, and very true or often true*). The Achenbach scoring program estimated norm-referenced *t*-scores for each child, with higher scores indicating more internalizing behaviors. Sample *t*-scores at Time 3 ranged from 33 to 75 and from 33 to 70 at Time 4. A *t*-score between 60 and 63 is considered worrisome, meanwhile a *t*-score of 64 or higher is within the clinical range for internalizing behaviors. The average change from Time 3 to Time 4 internalizing *t*-scores in the sample was $-.57$ ($SD = 7.95$).

Covariates. Family income status was examined as a covariate. To measure economic status, an income-to-needs ratio was created by dividing reported family income by the federal poverty threshold for the family's household size. The family average of this ratio across all four time points was used in analyses as a continuous variable. The mean income-to-needs ratio for Black American families in this sample was $.73$ ($SD = .60$).

Data Analytic Plan

To address the aims of the current study, bivariate relations between study variables were examined first using Pearson correlation coefficients. Next, subscale scores for cultural

socialization, preparation for bias, and caregivers' recent experiences with racism were mean-centered to maintain orthogonal relations of the interaction term with the first-order terms during moderation analyses. Structural equation modeling methods were used to test study hypotheses in *Mplus* version 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2013). Missing data were minimal, ranging from 2% to 6% across study variables. The variable with the most missing data was caregiver experiences of racism. The result of the Little's (1986) test was not significant, $\chi^2(21) = 30.26, p = .09$. Thus, missing data were determined to be missing completely at random (MCAR) and were analyzed with Full Information Maximum Likelihood with robust standard errors (MLR) to minimize biased parameter estimates.

A model was tested to examine the direct effects of the independent variables on the outcome of child internalizing behaviors at Time 4. To account for the lagged effect of internalizing behaviors across the two time points, a residualized change approach was utilized by controlling for Time 3 internalizing scores. Consecutive models were fit to examine the moderating effects of cultural socialization and preparation for bias separately on the outcome variable. A range of model fit indices were used to evaluate the fit of the theoretical model, including the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square test statistic (Satorra & Bentler, 2010).

Table 1. Characteristic of Study Sample (N = 130)

	N	%
<u>Child's race/ethnicity</u>		
Black/ African American	124	95.4
Multiracial/multiethnic	6	4.6
<u>Child sex</u>		
Male	79	60.8
Female	51	39.2
<u>Caregiver's relationship to child</u>		
Mother	116	89.2
Father	8	6.2
Grandmother	6	4.6
<u>Family Income</u>		
< 50% federal poverty level	55	42.3
50-99% federal poverty level	46	35.4
100-149% federal poverty level	14	10.8
150+% federal poverty level	15	11.5
<u>Primary caregiver's race/ethnicity</u>		
Black/ African American	127	97.7
Latinx/Hispanic	3	2.3
<u>Primary caregiver's level of education</u>		
Less than high school	18	13.8
High school/GED	57	43.8
More than high school	55	42.3

Note. According to the United States Census Bureau, the poverty threshold at the time of data collection for a family of four was \$24,230.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Descriptive information for the primary study variables is displayed in Table 2. Mean levels of the ERS dimensions indicate that cultural socialization was the most prevalent in the sample, with the average utilization of each message or practice being between two and three times in a year $M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.31$ and the sum of all messages averaging 15.78 ($SD = .58$) in the sample. Bivariate analyses revealed that with more past year experiences of racism, caregivers reported more of each ERS practice and more child internalizing behaviors at Time 3, though the correlation with Time 4 behaviors was not significant. Additionally, Time 4 child internalizing behaviors and cultural socialization were correlated in the expected negative direction, though not significantly. Meanwhile, the non-significant correlation with preparation for bias was positive.

Structural equation models were used to examine both the direct effects of racism and ERS on change in internalizing behaviors while adjusting for covariates, as well as to evaluate the potential interaction between the two. Several consecutive models were fit to determine the model best-fitting to the data. Initially, all variables were free to covary with one another, resulting in a just-identified model, $\chi^2(0) = 0.00$, $p = 0.00$; $CFI = 1.00$; $SRMR = 0.00$. Beginning with the control variables, all covariances were assessed and removed in a step-wise fashion. It was determined that the nonsignificant covariances of Time 3 internalizing behaviors with cultural socialization and preparation for bias, and of family income status and caregivers' racist experiences, would be constrained to benefit parsimony. The final model allowed for the three

predictor variables occurring at the same time point to covary and for Time 3 internalizing behaviors to covary with caregiver's racism experiences. Fit indices for this model indicated excellent fit to the data, $\chi^2(3) = 2.65, p = .45; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .04$.

Racism experiences reported at Time 3 did not significantly predict a change in child internalizing behaviors from Time 3 to Time 4, $\beta = .07, SE = .08, p = .34$, nor did preparation for bias, $\beta = .06, SE = .08, p = .46$. After controlling for family income status, cultural socialization at Time 3 predicted a marginally significant decrease in child internalizing behaviors across the two time points ($\beta = -.15, p = .07, 95\% CI [-.31, .01]$). Next, an interaction term was created between cultural socialization and caregivers' reported frequency of racism experiences to assess the possible moderating effects. The coefficient for cultural socialization was unchanged, and the interaction term was not significant ($\beta = -.04, p = .67$).

The final model results are displayed in Figure 2. An interaction term was created between preparation for bias and caregivers' experiences of racism. Model fit was excellent, $\chi^2(3) = 2.65, p = .45; CFI = 1.00; SRMR = .03$, and the interaction term was statistically significant, $\beta = .16, SE = .07, p < .05, 95\% CI [.02, .30]$ over and above the effects of family income status, cultural socialization, and the direct effect of preparation for bias. The model explained 50.3% of the variance in the residualized change in child internalizing behaviors from Time 3 to Time 4.

The Johnson-Neyman (1936) technique for assessing continuous moderators was used to plot the interaction in *Mplus*. The moderating role of preparation for bias socialization in the prediction of internalizing behaviors from caregivers' experiences of racism is depicted with 95% confidence bands around the effect (Figure 3). Along the continuum of preparation for bias messages, caregiver experiences of racism were associated with an increase in child internalizing

behaviors when caregiver messages of preparation for bias (X-axis) were equal to or greater than one standard deviation above the mean. The shaded area in Figure 3 depicts this region of significance for the effect.

Using the results of the Johnson-Neyman technique, a slopes analysis was conducted to compare the effect of caregivers' racist experiences on child internalizing behaviors at low versus high levels of preparation for bias. The effect was plotted at one standard deviation above and below the mean of the sample (Figure 4). As expected, the slope was not significant for low preparation for bias, at which point the confidence bands for the effect cross zero in the Johnson-Neyman plot, $t(129) = -.09, p = .25$ and the adjusted effect of caregivers' racist experiences on child internalizing behaviors is not significant. However, the slope is significant for high levels of preparation for bias, $t(129) = .11, p < .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.02, .22]$, indicating that more frequent racist experiences for the caregiver only predicted a statistically significant increase in child internalizing behaviors when caregivers were also engaging in more preparation for bias socialization with their six-year-old children. A preparation for bias score at one standard deviation above the mean corresponds with a scale score of two, reflecting that caregivers utilized each message of preparation for bias once on average in the past year.

Post Hoc Statistical Power Analysis

A post hoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power version 3 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) to assess for the observed power of the statistical model. The alpha level was set at $p < .05$ and the recommended effect sizes used for the assessment were $f^2 = .02$ for a small effect, $f^2 = .15$ for a medium effect, and $f^2 = .35$ for a large effect (Cohen, 1977). For the intended six-predictor, linear multiple regression with a sample size of 130, the power to correctly detect a small effect was just .17, meanwhile the power for detecting a moderate effect

was .92 and exceeded .99 for the detection of a large effect. It's possible the marginally significant direct effect of cultural socialization on the change in child internalizing behaviors would have a stronger level of significance if the model had more power for detecting small effects.

Table 2. Bivariate Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (N = 130)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Caregiver Experiences of Racism	—						
2. Preparation for Bias	.26**	—					
3. Cultural Socialization	.22*	.40**	—				
4. Internalizing Behaviors T3	.21*	.15	.06	—			
5. Internalizing Behaviors T4	.17	.10	-.08	.60**	—		
6. Average Income-to-needs ratio	-.02	.23*	.27**	-.17	-.18*	—	
7. Child gender ^a	.04	.03	-.02	-.02	-.10	.01	—
Mean	9.64	1.24	3.17	47.13	46.37	.73	.39
SD	11.52	1.17	1.31	9.05	8.83	.60	.49
Range	47.00	4.67	6.00	42.00	37.00	2.83	1.00

Note. Child gender coded 1 for girl and 0 for boy. An average score was used for the preparation for bias and cultural socialization subscales. The average income-to-needs ratio was calculated for families across all four time points.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, ^a = Spearman Rank

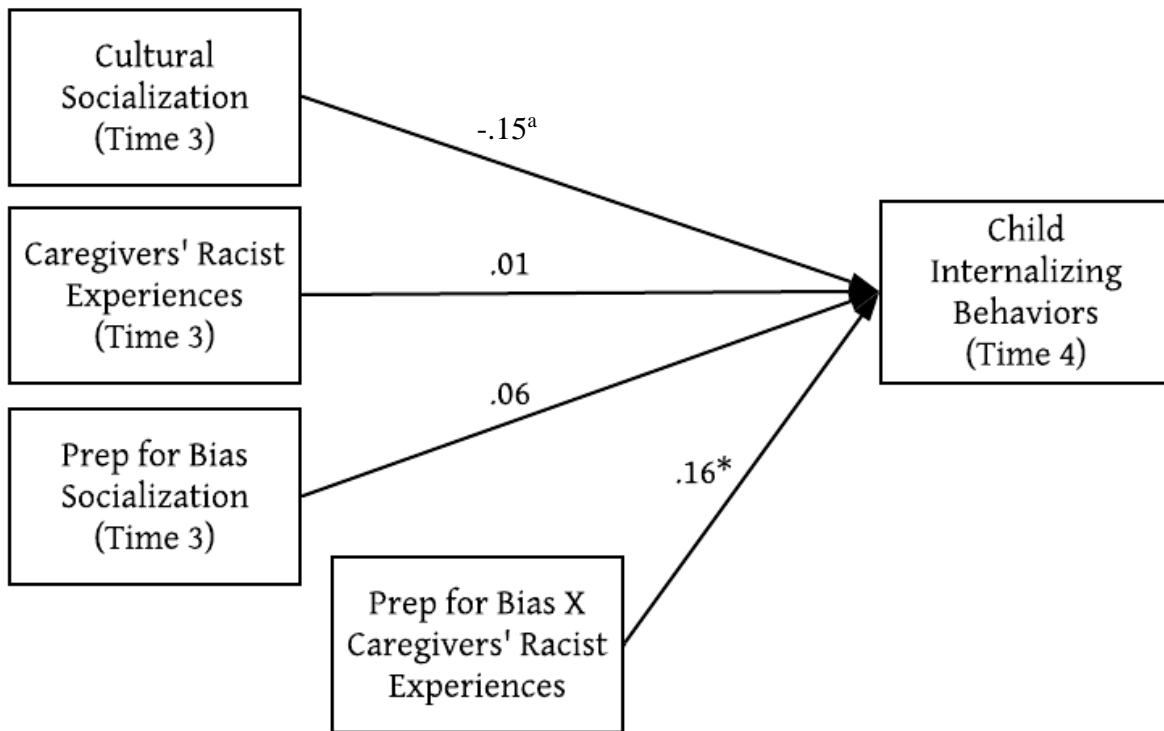


Figure 2. Structural equation model for the direct effect of caregivers' experiences of racism in the past year on change in child internalizing behavior from Time 3 to Time 4, moderated by preparation for bias.

Note. Variables were centered before the moderation analysis. Family income status and Time 3 internalizing behaviors were controlled for. Model fit was excellent, $\chi^2(3) = 2.65, p = .45$; $CFI = 1.00$; $SRMR = .03, R^2 = .50$. Standardized parameter estimates are shown in the figure.

^a $p < .10, *p < .05$

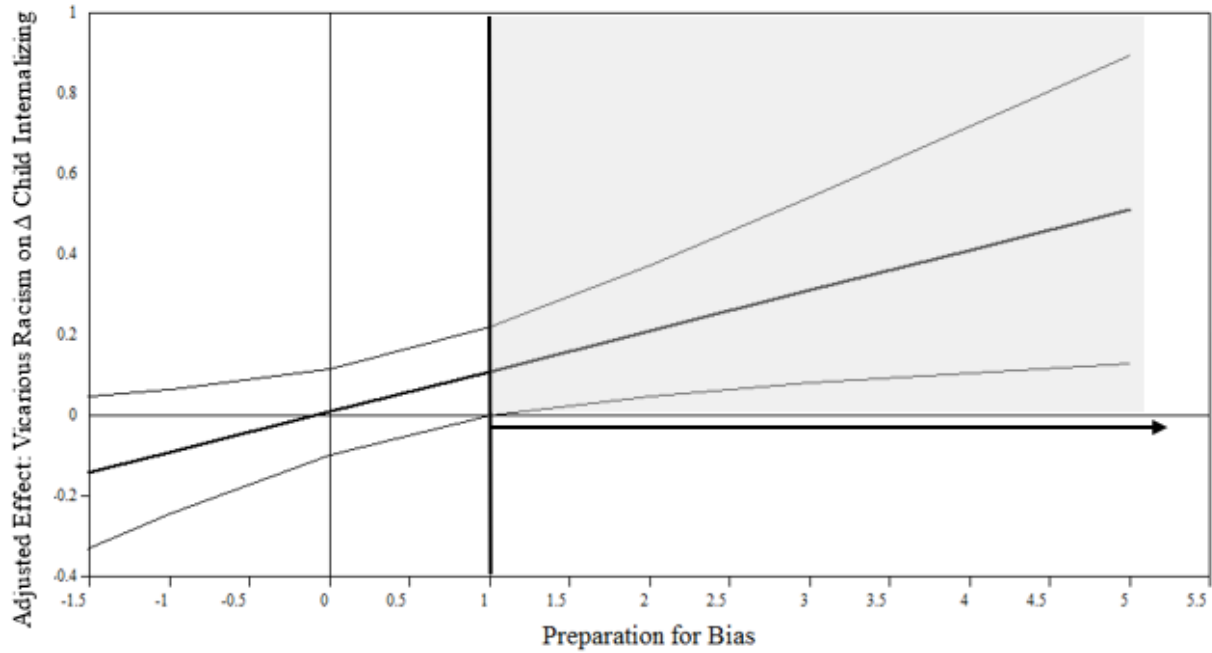


Figure 3. Conditional effect of preparation for bias socialization on the effect of caregivers' experiences with racism on child internalizing behaviors.

Note. The Johnson-Neyman technique was used to examine the moderating influence of caregivers' preparation for bias socialization on the direct effect of caregivers' racist experiences on change in child internalizing behaviors. The area shaded in gray indicates the region of significance.

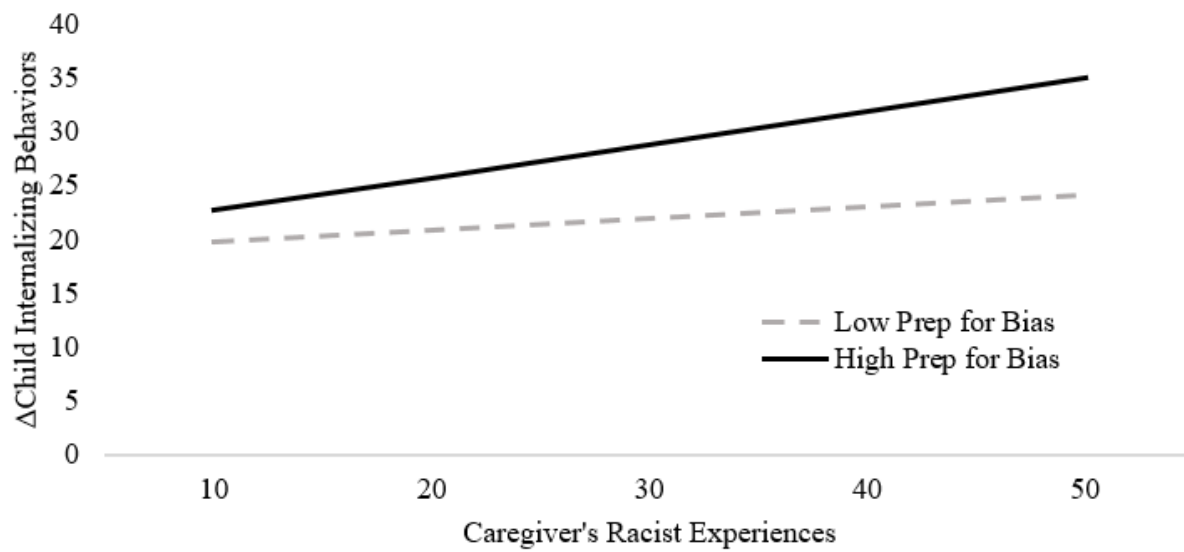


Figure 4. Graph depicting the effect of caregivers' racist experiences on the residualized change in child internalizing behaviors from Time 3 to Time 4, moderated by caregivers' use of preparation or bias socialization.

Note. Variables were centered before the moderation analysis.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to test the moderating role of both cultural socialization and preparation for bias in the association between caregivers' recent experiences with racism and child internalizing behaviors one year later. Advancing previous work on vicarious racism and the timing of ERS, the current study explored the effects of caregiver racism experiences in a low-income sample of Black American children in the context of caregiver ERS. Though cultural socialization was not a significant moderator as hypothesized, the direct effect of cultural socialization was marginally significant, with cultural socialization associated with a modestly smaller change in child internalizing scores. Furthermore, after accounting for families' ERS and income levels, the direct effect of caregivers' experiences of racism on child internalizing behaviors was not significant. However, preparation for bias was a moderator of the effects of caregivers' racism experiences. Caregivers' experiences of racism were associated with increases in child internalizing problems when they utilized preparation for bias messages once on average in the past year.

Caregivers' Racism Experiences and Child Internalizing Behaviors

In their cultural adaptation to ecological theories of development, Garcia Coll and colleagues (1996) emphasize the importance of considering the development of children of color within the context it occurs, accounting for familial, structural, and cultural influences. Though still burgeoning, research on vicarious racism indicates that caregiver experiences of racism can result in negative outcomes for their children in mental health domains, including internalizing

behaviors (Anderson et al., 2015; Espinoza, Gonzales, & Fuligin, 2016). In this study, the vicarious effects of caregivers' racist experiences were found to be contingent on the level of preparation for bias socialization provided by caregivers. Specifically, when caregivers provided messages preparing children for discrimination an average of once or more in the past year, children showed a statistically significant increase in anxious and sad behaviors one year later. Prior research on vicarious racism has found significant direct effects from caregiver racism experiences to child psychological outcomes, though some results were only correlational, and samples were diverse in age and ethnicity (Anderson et al., 2015; Bécares, Nzroo, & Kelly, 2015; Espinoza, Gonzales, & Fuligini, 2017; Ford et al., 2013; Gassman-Pines, 2015; Tran, 2014). The current study extends this literature by examining the longitudinal effects of caregiver ERS and caregiver-experienced racism on child internalizing behaviors in a young, Black American sample.

Unlike the direct influences on psychological outcomes cited in adolescent samples, caregiver-experienced racism may not have the same effect on early-school aged children (Espinoza, Gonzales, & Fuligini, 2017; Ford et al., 2013). Prior research has indicated that more proximal factors within child rearing environments may determine whether school-age children feel the effects of their caregivers' racist experiences, specifically caregiver depression, undesirable parenting behaviors, and lacking effective coping responses to racism (Anderson et al., 2015; Caughy, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2004; Tran, 2014). However, these links to child socioemotional problems were correlational, and causality cannot be inferred. My results indicate for early school-aged children, the interaction between vicarious racism and preparation for bias may be more important to developmental outcomes than either one alone. This is in line with a study conducted by Espinoza, Gonzales, and Fuligini (2017) with a sample of Mexican

American caregiver-child dyads. Specifically, when preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust were high, caregiver-experienced racism had a more pronounced and detrimental effect on youth self-esteem one year later. The results of the current study help expand research on the effects of vicarious racism on early-school aged children by accounting for the stability in child internalizing behaviors across two time points and strengthening support for the combined effects of vicarious racism and preparation for bias.

Cultural Socialization and Preparation for Bias

Given the substantial literature base demonstrating the protective and promotive effects of cultural socialization for children of color, it was surprising that the moderation was not significant for the current sample. Prior research has found caregiver socialization of cultural pride in preschool and first grade can protect children against increased anxiety and depression, regardless of context, with these positive effects documented in older samples as well (Hughes et al., 2006; Reynolds & Gonzales-Backen, 2017). Hughes and colleagues (2009), on the other hand, found that cultural socialization messages were more related to academic engagement and efficacy than with behavioral outcomes.

Compared to cultural socialization, preparation for bias messages may have more severe effects on child outcomes because of their rarity and their negative tone. Meanwhile, messages and practices socializing cultural heritage may be more in sync with the child's sense of family identity and thus are unremarkable to them. Prior research supports this explanation, such that caregivers who report using *both* cultural socialization and preparation for bias messages with their early school-aged children report more child internalizing behaviors and depression than caregivers who prioritize cultural socialization with an emphasis on coping (Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011; Dotterer & James, 2018). It is important to note, however, that these patterns are not

represented in older samples. Specifically, a combination of ERS strategies has been related to more positive outcomes for adolescents, emerging and young adults (Stevenson, 1998; Stevenson, Herrero-Taylor, Cameron, & Davis, 2002; Neblett et al., 2008). For older ethnic microgroup members, receiving both sets of messages may promote a realistic worldview of the issues inherent in racialized societies while also equipping children with cognitive resources to draw upon during future negative encounters with these situations. This process of instilling resilience through preparation for bias messages may only be effective if children are developmentally capable of understanding the messages caregivers are presenting to them.

Developmental Timing of Preparation for Bias Messages

Within adaptive cultures, the intention behind caregiver message of preparation for bias is to promote Black American child resilience in the face of current day racial tensions (Thomas & Blackmon, 2015). However, children of this age may not be interpreting preparation for bias the way the messages are intended. In line with prior research on the developmental timing of race-related messages, the current study indicates Black American children in this developmental stage may be particularly susceptible to messages about racial barriers when they are also vicariously experiencing racist events occurring to their caregivers (McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Nesdale et al., 2005; Quintana & Vera, 1999). Specifically, research indicates during this development stage, children can understand racism as a negative thing but do not yet have the cognitive skills needed to attribute this abstract concept to external loci (Quintana & Vera, 1999). When a child's caregiver is experiencing more frequent occurrences of racism, a rearing environment that includes messages of impending discrimination may only serve to reduce the child's positive perceptions of the world and increase feelings of pessimism, sadness, and anxiety (Liu & Lau, 2013).

Additionally, caregiver endorsement of preparation for bias messages at home may increase a child's stereotype threat awareness and cause them to worry more about how their behavior is being perceived by others, especially authority figures like teachers (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). As research on stereotype threat awareness has indicated with children ages six to ten, feeling the pressure of having to perform well on a test for fear of endorsing negative stereotypes about their ethnic group can result in poorer performance, especially in classrooms where children perceive their teachers treat them differently than their macrogroup peers (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001; McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Therefore, despite positive intentions from caregivers of instilling resilience, the tone and content of preparation for bias messages in combination with children's understandings of race and racism at this developmental age may only serve to increase internalizing behaviors.

ERS in Low-Income Families

The covariance between family income status and cultural socialization as well as preparation for bias was statistically significant and positive across models, indicating that as family income status increased towards 200% of the federal poverty level, the amount of ERS provided to children also increased. This is in line with prior research indicating that families of color with higher income and education provide more ERS to their children (Caughy et al., 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Peck et al., 2014; Thornton et al., 1990). The average level of cultural socialization in the current sample was 3.17 (e.g., two to three times per year), and the average income status is .73 times the federal poverty level. Some culturally socializing strategies may be less accessible to low-income families, such as taking a child to Black history museums or providing them with books to read with young Black characters. Thus, for the caregivers in our sample living within 100% of the federal poverty level, lower rates of cultural socialization may

be a result of limited access to time or monetary resources rather than a lack of desire to socialize children in these ways. Further, Hughes and Chen (1997) note that other forms of cultural socialization more common within low-income families may not be captured by the measure itself, possibly resulting in reports by caregivers appearing low.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study advances the current literature on ERS practices and child development for Black American families in important ways, it is not without limitations. For example, limiting the sample to solely low-income, Black American dyads was purposeful but creates issues with generalizability. As such, the findings cannot be generalized to Black American families across the economic spectrum. Likewise, the experiences of one ethnic group should not be assumed to be the same for others, thereby limiting the ability to generalize these findings to members of other ethnic groups.

Though not uncommon for samples of children this age, preparation for bias was not particularly prevalent in this sample and may indicate its emergence as an important socialization strategy during this time in development (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006). Specifically, some research indicates caregivers increase the amount of preparation for bias they provide to children as children enter formal education, with caregivers increasing their usage of these messages as children gain more autonomy (Contreras, Caughy, & Owen, *in review*; Hughes et al., 2006). It's important to not as well that having two time points was a marked strength of this study. Of the 21 articles reviewed by Reynolds & Gonzales-Backen (2017), only three involved longitudinal data, and the youngest sample ranged in age from 11 to 17 ($M = 13.75$). Prior longitudinal research examining similar outcomes (e.g., psychological functioning, levels of depression) found poorer outcomes in children receiving messages prompting them to mistrust

individuals of other races or messages perpetuating negative things about Black culture itself (Granberg, Edmond, Simons, Gibbons, & Lei, 2012; Neblett et al., 2008). Meanwhile, research examining the role of preparation for bias messages in associations between vicarious racism and child internalizing and psychological outcomes has primarily been cross-sectional (Caughy, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2004; Hughes & Chen 1997). Therefore, the field would benefit from extended longitudinal studies to better understand this emergence of preparation for bias during the early school-age years.

An additional limitation of the current study is the utilization of solely caregiver-report measures, though child age made it difficult to incorporate child self-report measures. Though some empirical work has examined discrepancies between caregiver perceptions of messages delivered and adolescent perceptions of ERS received, including preparation for bias, further empirical work is needed to assess child perceptions of these messages during the early school-age years (Peck et al., 2014). Furthermore, the field would benefit from recruiting more fathers and collecting reports of ERS from extended family and other influential people in the child's life (e.g., godparents, older siblings, cousins, unrelated mentors).

Future research may consider testing the efficacy of information campaigns such as the RESilience initiative. The caregiver testimonials provided on the RESilience Blog, however, help to elaborate on the complicated and intricate task of navigating these conversations in real life. These testimonials provide a starkly different perspective of the experience of ERS to the pre-constructed responses and examples used on self-report measures. Ultimately, these testimonials point to an important direction for future research on ERS, specifically observational research and qualitative analysis of caregiver-child dialogue on these matters.

Implications

The evidence presented here for the susceptibility of six-year-old children to messages about race, racism, and cultural pride has a range of implications for practice and policy. As children are developing cognitive classification skills and seeking to organize their social worlds, a unique opportunity is presented to both micro- and macrogroup adults to positively educate children about ethnicity and race. Exposure to diversity in school settings can serve to increase racial bias if child perceptions are not intervened upon to enhance acceptance of ethnic and racial diversity. Likewise, promoting interracial friendships within these settings can decrease racial bias later in life (Allport, 1954; Gaias et al., 2018). It is important that caregivers and teachers are intentional in all racial messages they provide to young children. Policies to further desegregate schools, in combination with teacher training on implicit biases, may therefore reduce development of racial bias in the next generation despite influences occurring within the home (Allport, 1954; Nesdale, 2007).

Black American caregivers are particularly adaptive in the face of changing sociopolitical circumstances for the betterment of their children. Much of these experiences for children are shaped by society and will occur outside of a caregiver's control. Therefore, the findings of this study can provide guidance to caregivers regarding how to provide ERS in a manner that will benefit children (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Garcia Coll et al., 19996; Tatum, 1997). Consistent evidence for the protective effects of cultural socialization suggests these messages in particular should take precedence, however some cultural socialization practices may be less accessible to low-income families. Researchers should acknowledge that this may influence the frequency of cultural socialization behaviors reported in low-income families. Additionally, interventions targeting low-income Black American families should consider incorporating these practices into

their curriculum with no extra charge to families and training program leaders to use these messages as well. Just as RESilience and other initiatives have embarked on a mission to disseminate evidence-based recommendations to caregivers, so too should an information campaign be utilized within schools and through national media campaigns.

Conclusions

Over generations, Black American caregivers have continually developed adaptive ERS techniques to meet their children's situation-specific needs. They are attuned to the sociopolitical context impacting the development of their children and are in a unique position to affect positive change in their children's lives. Through ERS practices that instill pride in their children for their ethnic group membership, Black American caregivers simultaneously enhance their children's identity development and promote their self-esteem. As contexts continue to change, Black American caregivers will remain the most important protective agents in their children's lives as they navigate preparing their children for inevitable experiences within racialized societies. Arguably the most important task faced by these societies, however, is to finally shift the responsibility of having race-related conversations with children off the shoulders of caregivers of color and make it a responsibility that everyone carries.

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