EVALUATING THE STRONG AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES PROGRAM: A CULTURALLY COMPETENT PREVENTIVE INTERVENTION FOR RURAL AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

by

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(Under the Direction of Velma McBride Murry)

ABSTRACT

Persistent health disparities are an indication that efforts to achieve parity are falling short. It may be that programs are not matching the ecological niche of effected communities. Conceptualization of what makes a program culturally competent in reaching the intended niche is improving; however, methods for evaluating such programs are limited. The current project is a sequential multimethod evaluation of the Strong African American Families (SAAF) program, a family-based preventative intervention designed to reduce sexual risk behavior in rural African American adolescents. It is hoped that it will serve as a model for evaluating cultural competence in programs for underserved populations. Study 1 is a process evaluation using conversation analysis. There is much room for adaptation between program design and implementation. Methods of understanding implementation are traditionally limited to rudimentary fidelity assessments. Through video-recorded interactions during the program (N = 91), the current study uses conversation analysis to illuminate the artfulness of implementation in the SAAF program and shows how program facilitators and participants cocreate meaning within the curriculum. Study 2 is an outcome evaluation using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The purpose of the current study was to identify the mechanisms through SAAF reduced sexual risk behavior among rural African American adolescents across a 29-month period. African American families (N = 284) with 11-year-old children in rural Georgia participated in the 7-week Strong African American Families (SAAF) project. Random assignment to intervention or control conditions occurred at the county level. The program was evaluated via pretest, posttest, and long-term follow-up interview data collected in the families' homes. SEM was used to detect the pathways by which increases in universal and racially specific intervention-targeted parenting practices led to reduced sexual risk at the long-term follow-up. Most study hypotheses were supported. Participation in the SAAF program was associated with positive parenting behaviors at the posttest. Parenting was associated indirectly with sexual risk behavior through adolescent self-pride, peer orientation, and sexual intent. Culturally competent programs, developed through empirical and theoretical research within the targeted communities, can have a long-term effect on adolescent sexual risk behavior by fostering adaptive universal and racially specific parenting.

INDEX WORDS: African American, Cultural Competence, Program Evaluation, Rural, Adolescence, Parenting, Sexual Risk Behavior, Prevention, Disparities, Qualitative, Conversation Analysis, Quantitative, SEM, Mixed Method

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter Mira Wolf Berkel who taught me, from the first time I heard her heartbeat, to fear nothing. I hope I can inspire her to be a light to her people and create not just tolerance, but love and acceptance.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Within the United States, persistent health disparities in preventable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, are an indication that efforts in achieving equality are falling short. While extant literature suggests that sexual debut amongst African American youth occurs later than their White peers (Halpern et al., 2004), African Americans are more likely to acquire HIV than any other racial and ethnic group (CDC, 2006; Halpern et al., 2004). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2006), African Americans represent more HIV cases than all other races combined in virtually every age group and transmission category. This disparity is even higher amongst youth under the age of 15, with African Americans representing 66% of new male cases and 72% of new female cases. The discrepancy between participation in sexual risk behavior and the consequences of that behavior suggests that there are contextual factors operating that have not been adequately addressed through prevention efforts. Traditional approaches to HIV prevention have not considered the barriers that are engendered by inequality and structural constraints on African Americans' lives which may explain why these programs are generally ineffective (Gentry, Elifson, & Sterk, 2005). While recent findings in the literature support the efficacy of generic preventive interventions developed for middle class European Americans, results are moderated by race and income level, such that, commonsensically, programs are effective within the populations

for whom they were designed (Coard, Wallace, Stevenson, & Brotman, 2004; Rowland & Wampler, 1983).

Culturally competent programs, which are services created to match the ecological niche of affected populations (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989), may serve to reduce such disparities (Tucker & Herman, 2002). Indeed, there has been an upsurge in researchers calling for cultural competence in prevention programming that incorporates an understanding of the unique and heterogeneous contexts of African American families (Gentry et al., 2005). Evidence is beginning to accumulate that programs designed for the local context are more efficacious (Stanton et al., 2006). Stevenson and Davis (1994) conducted one of the few comparisons of universal versus culturally competent strategies in an HIV prevention program. African American adolescents were exposed to one of two HIV prevention videos that were matched on content, but varied in terms of their culturally similarity to the youth in the study. The culturally similar video featured African American actors, appropriate slang and Black English, African American fashion and music, and relevant life experiences. The control video featured White actors who spoke upper-middle-class English and had life experiences that were irrelevant for the targeted population. Results indicated that African American adolescents were more likely to remember HIV related information when they were exposed to the culturally similar video.

In spite of these promising findings, however, it appears that we know very little about what makes a program culturally competent. The current set of papers will highlight one family-based program that was designed to be culturally competent for rural African American early adolescents, the Strong African American Families (SAAF)

program (Brody et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004). Given that understanding the context of youth development was of critical importance in developing this program, in this chapter, I will briefly highlight important contextual influences that create challenges for families in this unique ecological niche of African American communities in rural Georgia.

Literature Review

That we know so little about what makes a program culturally competent may be related to the complex nature of culture. According to APA (2002) guidelines, culture may be defined to encompass all defining and intersecting aspects of identity, including but not limited to race, language, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation, age, nation, religion, and socioeconomic status. None of these cultural categories works in isolation, but rather must be considered together as interlocking systems (Collins, 1998). Metro status is another important, yet often overlooked, contextual influence on families' lives. From a review of the literature, one might conclude that all African American youth live in urban areas. However, the rural Southeast is home to a large proportion of African American families (Adimora et al., 2001). Furthermore, while most prevention efforts for African Americans focus on inner-city youth, living in a rural area is associated with many contextual challenges.

Of these challenges, the intertwined influences of racism and poverty are predominant. Racism persists in the United States in spite of social movements to the contrary and remains a primary source of stress confronting African American families (Murry, Brown, Brody, Cutrona, & Simons, 2001; Peters & Massey, 1983). Consequently, any discussion of context for African Americans must include an

acknowledgement of racism. Racism effects African Americans in both overt, extreme and mundane, insidious ways (Peters & Massey, 1983) which have lasting effects from youth through adulthood. Primarily, racial discrimination interferes with African Americans' life opportunities, in the form of disparities between African Americans and the majority population in economic and political power, civil rights, and accessibility to resources.

While African Americans in urban areas share these challenges, they look very different in the rural South. For example, families residing in the rural South have often lived in the same small towns for generations. In these towns, remnants of slavery are still visible in the geographic design and in discriminatory attitudes that have been passed down through generations (Dill, 1998). Opportunities for advancement out of poverty are diminishing as the economy orients more towards consumer services and away from agriculture and industry. The new service economy, with limited room for social mobility, heightens economic barriers for rural African Americans, creating barriers for achieving success along socially defined pathways. Low levels of education may be partially responsible for unemployment, however, many African Americans perceive that even the most highly educated could not surmount the barriers enforced by racism (Adimora et al., 2001). Skin color, for example, appears to be a deciding factor in who employment agencies send to the factories and to whom they offer the few available office positions. Gainful employment contributes to a sense of purpose in life, whereas the lack of opportunity can rob community members of their self-worth. Racism and poverty are linked across the lifespan to poor mental and physical health, as well as behavioral outcomes such as substance use and sexual risk behaviors (Caldwell,

Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, & Notaro, 2002; Kerpelman & Mosher, 2004; Murry et al., 2006; Nyborg & Curry, 2003).

While the connection between racism and sexual risk is unclear, multiple qualitative studies have reported that when asking African Americans in the Southeast about sexual risk, participants spontaneously introduced vestiges of discrimination as an important influence on behavior (Adimora et al., 2001; Timmons & Sowell, 1999). For example, in response to feelings of social isolation, many participants viewed having a romantic partner was a way to establish connection with others, buffering them from the alienating effects of racism. However, the consequences of racism, such as poverty and the sex-ratio imbalance, where males are missing from communities due to disparities in morbidities, mortalities, and incarceration rates, serve to destabilize positive relationships (Adimora et al., 2004; Adimora et al., 2001; Sterk-Elifson, 1994). Furthermore, although African American females have few sexual relationships (Halpern et al., 2004), they are more likely to overlook non-monogamous behavior by their partners because they are aware of the lack of eligible males (Bowleg, Lucas, & Tschann, 2004; Harawa, Greenland, Cochran, Cunningham, & Visscher, 2003; Wingood & DiClemente, 1998). Small sexual networks mean that HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases can spread swiftly through rural communities (Adimora et al., 2004).

In addition to creating a climate in which HIV is easily spread, rural areas also have limited access to health services, despite extant research demonstrating that rural adolescents participate in risk behaviors at percentages equal to or exceeding that of urban adolescents (Albrecht, Amey, & Miller, 1996; Kogan, Berkel, Chen, Brody, & Murry, 2006; Levine & Coupey, 2003; Milhausen et al., 2003). However, because rural

areas do not reach a critical mass in terms of population, they often lack the resources, such as public transportation and government services, available in urban areas (Loda, Speizer, Martin, Skatrud, & Bennett, 1997; Murry & Brody, 2004). The sprawling nature of rural towns means that public health agencies are located far from the majority of available housing. Without public transportation, adolescents must depend on others with private transportation to access health services, limiting their right to confidentiality. Furthermore, the culture of the rural South emphasizes religion, conservativism, and privacy about sex (Myrick, 2001). Such values create barriers for youth who might seek out sexual health services.

The cumulative effect and consequences of risk factors inherent in residing in southern rural areas, such as poverty, racism, and limited access to resources, have implications for planning prevention services, in terms of the development of program content and its implementation. Thus, it is important for culturally competent programs to reflect the lived experience of participants, meaning that racism, poverty, and access to services must be addressed. In addition, the resilience and strength of rural African American families need to be integrated in program development, as these families have historically dealt with challenging circumstances with great success. Future program development efforts can gain insight on ways to incorporate these life experiences of African American families by using the Strong African American Families program as a model. This program is an example of a culturally competent program in that it was developed based on theory that was garnered from longitudinal research about rural African American families, and informed by collaboration with community members (Brody et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004). SAAF was designed to reinforce African

American families' protective capacities that have fostered resilience and strength despite the challenges they have historically confronted and have overcome.

Limited information is available to guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of culturally competent programs, which match the ecological niche of affected populations. The purpose of the current project was to provide preventionists with a model for creating programs that match their unique settings, using the SAAF program as a template to guide these endeavors. The current set of papers describes the design, implementation, and results of the SAAF program. The next section provides an overview of the papers that follow.

The first paper, entitled "*A Conversation Analytic Approach to Evaluate Process in the Strong African American Families Program*," describes the implementation of the program. Before conclusions about any program can be reached, an evaluation of what occurred within the program must be conducted. The SAAF program was designed to be culturally competent, but whether it was implemented according to that perspective depends on the actions of program facilitators. The first paper examines the question of how facilitators implemented the program and to what extent their actions were respectful of the life circumstances of program participants. In contrast to traditional methods of process evaluation, such as fidelity assessments, that leave us uninformed about interactions and development that occur during a program, this paper demonstrates how conversation analysis (CA) can be employed as a method of understanding the process of interaction between facilitators and participants. Using CA to analyze video recordings of program sessions, I have described strategies facilitators used to implement the manualized content and work with participants through differences in understanding.

Specifically, I examined an activity to promote racial socialization practices, in which participants identify different ways of responding to racism, asking the question, how were facilitators and participants able to make meaning out of the program content.

Once a process evaluation has been completed, evaluators can draw stronger conclusions about the program's efficacy on targeted outcomes. The second paper, "*The Strong African American Families Program: Longitudinal Pathways to Sexual Risk Reduction*," is an outcome evaluation of SAAF. Following a cultural competence perspective, the program was designed to incorporate contextual stressors and strengths indicated by theory, empirical research, and community members' input. These elements suggested that universal (i.e., involvement and communication) and racially specific (i.e., racial socialization) forms of parenting would buffer youth from the negative effects of racism. In the second paper, I hypothesized that the SAAF program would be effective in increasing the use of these strategies, and their usage, in turn, reduced youth sexual risk behavior. Using Structural Equation Modeling to analyze pretest, posttest, and longitudinal data enabled me to provide evidence supporting the effectiveness of the program as well as the theory on which the program was based.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1: A CONVERSATION ANALYTIC APPROACH TO EVALUATE PROCESS IN THE STRONG AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES PROGRAM

Abstract: Persistent health disparities are an indication that efforts to achieve parity are falling short. It may be that programs are not matching the ecological niche of effected communities. Conceptualization of what makes a program culturally competent in reaching the intended niche is improving; however, there is much room for adaptation between program design and implementation. Methods of understanding implementation are traditionally limited to rudimentary fidelity assessments. The current paper uses conversation analysis to illuminate the artfulness of implementation in the Strong African American Families program and shows how program facilitators and participants cocreate meaning within the curriculum.

Introduction

As the health status of Americans diverges across lines of advantage, disparities continue to plague the field of prevention (Sarto, 2005). African Americans now represent more HIV cases than all other races combined in virtually every age group and transmission category (CDC, 2006). This disparity is even higher amongst youth under the age of 15, with African Americans representing 66% of new male cases and 72% of new female cases. Such persistent health disparities in preventable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, are an indication that efforts in achieving equality are falling short. Coard's

(2004) assessment of the literature provides a possible explanation for this persistence. While recent findings support the efficacy of generic parent training developed for White, middle-class families, results are moderated by race and income level, such that, logically, programs are more effective within the populations for which they were designed (Coard et al., 2004).

This pattern is consistent with the cultural competence perspective, which promotes the tailoring of services to meet the unique ecological niche of the affected community (Cross et al., 1989), in that programs designed for White, middle-class Americans are effective within that ecological niche. Lacking are programs that have been tailored to the ecological niches of other effected groups. The Strong African American Families (SAAF) program (Brody et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004) was created in that light, with researchers and community members collaborating to address strengths and needs of the local population. SAAF was conceived in response to the growing prevalence of HIV in African American communities in rural Georgia. Guiding its development was over a decade of theoretical and empirical work with these same communities, as well as input and feedback from community stakeholders (Brody et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004). Together, researchers and community members identified challenges specifically relevant to the local context, such as racism and stifling economic prospects, as well as family and community strengths, such as racial socialization, that buffer youth from such challenges. The goal of SAAF was to foster those strengths in families where children were preparing to make the transition to adolescence.

Methods of measuring identified program outcomes have advanced considerably with the development of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques (Bryk &

Raudenbush, 1987; Spoth, Redmond, & Shin, 1998) in that they allow program evaluators to test a logic model of the program, unpacking intervention effects on mediating factors leading to long-term program outcomes. Using this method, preliminary outcome evaluations of SAAF suggest that participation in the program did indeed increase the identified protective parenting practices within the family (Murry et al., 2005). However, the interpretation of program outcomes is dependent on a clear understanding of *how* facilitators implemented the program (Helitzer, Yoon, Wallerstein, & Dow y Garcia-Velarde, 2000). In fact, Anderson and colleagues (2002, p. 153) maintain that "the cultural competence of a program is more dependent upon the characteristics of individual staff members than the program's theoretical underpinnings." Thus, there is a great amount of room for adaptation between phases of program planning and implementation (Ringwalt, Vincus, Ennett, Johnson, & Rohrbach, 2004). As a result, the claim that a program is culturally competent can only be verified by process evaluation, yet methodological advancement in this area is much less adequately developed.

According to Dusenbury (2003), process evaluation provides for an understanding of several key elements of a program including questions related to quantity (the amount of the program delivered and fidelity to the curriculum) and quality (adaptation to meet specified audience and participants' engagement with program material) of implementation. Addressing quantity is often achieved by providing attendance data and facilitators' fidelity scores. Broadly defined, fidelity refers to the extent to which a program was delivered as scripted, although definitions and measures vary widely across studies (Dusenbury et al., 2003; Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, & Lake, 2004). Most

assessments of fidelity include checklists in which observers give facilitators a point for each major concept or activity delivered (Dusenbury, Brannigan, Hansen, Walsh, & Falco, 2005). While acceptable reports of interrater reliability indicate that this form of measurement might be a suitable way of estimating how much material facilitators covered, it actually tells us very little about what learning and development occurred during the program (see Appendix A for an example of a fidelity checklist).

Addressing quality of implementation has been all but ignored in the prevention literature, however, there is an assumption that characteristics of facilitators influence program outcomes beyond the behaviors scripted in the curriculum. This assumption is evident in the important but unanswered question as to whether racial matching of facilitators with participants improves program outcomes (Sue, 2002). It is not the intent of the current paper to answer this question, but what is significant for the current discussion is that program designers of many culturally competent programs endorse hiring of racially-concordant facilitators (Bailey & Paisley, 2004; Long et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004). Underlying this strategy is the assumption that to some extent shared race fosters shared life experiences and worldviews. Deciding to employ facilitators of the same race signals an attempt to adapt the program to the intended audience, making program activities and discussions more culturally competent. While we are operating under the assumption that the practices of matched-race facilitators will be more competent, we know nothing about the strategies matched-race facilitators might use in implementing the program.

The literature provides little guidance on how to study this question. Hallfors and Godette (2002) reported on the quality of program implementation with Safe and Drug

Free Schools (SDFS) in DC. Of the acknowledged limitations of the study, a ranking one is its use of self-report measures of implementation, a strategy that is inherently limited to the facilitators' perspective (Dusenbury et al., 2005). However, the study is important in the sense that it is among the first to report the quality of implementation. The topic of culturally competent implementation is much more developed in clinical literature, however, studies of culturally competent strategies in therapeutic settings have also been limited to clinicians' self reports (Fuertes, Bartolomeo, & Nichols, 2001). Dusenbury and colleagues (2005) recommend the use of observational strategies and devised a quality of process measure to be used with observations of Life Skills Training program sessions. However, they did not report evidence about the validity of their instrument. Given the limited development of theory and empirical evidence supporting such a measure, it is difficult to determine the appropriateness and usefulness of the scale's items.

Thus, the field of evaluation is in need of methodology that allows for a better understanding of the quality of program implementation. Conversation analysis (CA) is an observational methodology that supplements the information provided in fidelity checklists to provide for an understanding of *how* facilitators implement the program. The current paper employs CA to examine how facilitators and participants in the SAAF program demonstrated their understandings of the program content, examining participants' response to the curriculum and how facilitators dealt with misunderstandings or fostered a deeper processing with that material.

Methodology: Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis is a sociological method of analyzing observational data, derived from ethnomethodology (Sacks, 1972). As its name would suggest, CA privileges

talk that occurs within human interaction and focuses on the organization of this talk to carry out social interactions. A primary tenet of this perspective is that, in contrast to theoretical perspectives like empiricism, CA does not view talk as a way of communicating some reality that is 'out there,' but rather the talk per se is the reality to be studied (Garfinkel, 2004). CA recognizes that talk does not merely communicate about experiences, but also performs actions (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997). Verbs like, 'to teach,' 'to question,' 'to answer,' 'to explain,' and 'to challenge,' are examples of actions that occur through speech and occur regularly in any educational setting (Schegloff, Koshik, Jacoby, & Olsher, 2002). The accomplishment of these types of actions is dependent on others to take it up in that way. For example, a social actor can hear a family member's suicide threat in many ways, possibly as an honest cry for help or as a joke (Silverman, 1998). Responding with laughter transforms the threat into a joke and allows the recipient to refuse help without incurring the moral allegations. CA focuses on the strategies social actors use to jointly create meaning and achieve actions.

Social actors utilize a shared system of interactional tools to accomplish these actions in orderly and mutually intelligible ways. CA is a micro-analytic tool that examines turn-by-turn how actors co-create an interaction. Characteristics of this system include one participant talking at a time, with one beat of silence in between turns (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). Each turn generally coheres with the conversation and contributes to the trajectory or goal of the communication. The words are selected with attention to intended recipients and the context in which the interaction occurs. Whereas social scientists generally treat hesitations, pauses, overlaps, and word selection as background noise, which must be extricated to uncover the 'truth' (Potter, 1997), in CA,

these linguistic devices have meaning in terms of the message conveyed to members of the interaction (ten Have, 1999). Although human talk-in-interaction is complex, people are generally able to communicate (ten Have, 1999). As long as people understand one another, the work they do to create a shared sense of meaning goes largely unnoticed. However, problems in understanding cause the process to become visible. Disruptions in the fluency of a conversation (e.g., overlapping talk, declined turns, and repair practices) can indicate that participants are not achieving a shared sense of meaning. ten Have describes these disruptions as deviant cases which are important in understanding normative processes. One can only see how a process functions routinely by examining what happens when it breaks down. In the current study, I examine regular patterns of talk-in-interaction, and focus in particular on where problems occur. In the next section, I describe in detail the program analyzed in the current study.

The Strong African American Families Program

Theoretical Foundations

The Strong African American Families (SAAF) program is a culturally competent preventive intervention for rural African American youth and their families. SAAF is the first systematic investigation of an empirically based program designed for rural African American families and was created based on Brody and Murry's program of longitudinal theoretical and empirical survey research in rural African American communities (Brody et al., 2004; Murry & Brody, 2004). Their program of research followed the competence model of family functioning (Waters & Lawrence, 1993), which highlights the practices of African American parents, such as racial socialization, that support their children's successful transition to adolescence, in spite of the challenging circumstances they

confront. An examination of Murry and Brody's longitudinal research clearly illustrate tenets of the resilience theory (Bogenschneider, 1996), which explains the heterogeneity of outcomes for families considered to be "at-risk." In their empirical research, Murry and Brody found that parents who engaged in positive general and racially-specific parenting behaviors during early adolescence protected children from the negative effects of living with racism and poverty. They designed the SAAF program under the premise that the strengths of families manifesting resilience might be shared with rural African American families confronting the tasks associated with preparing their children for the transition to adolescence.

Program Participants

African American primary caregivers with 11-year-old children were recruited from school rosters in nine counties in rural Georgia. These counties ranked amongst the highest for poverty in the country (Dalaker, 2001). From these rosters, 521 families were randomly invited to participate and 332 agreed to participate, resulting in a recruitment rate of 64%. Almost half (46.3%) of the participating families' household incomes were below the poverty threshold ($\underline{M}$ = $1,655 per month), in spite of having completed high school (78.7%) and working almost full time ($\underline{M}$ = 39.4 hours). These rates are representative of families in this area (Boatright & Bachtel, 2000).

Program Facilitators

Hiring criteria for program facilitators was being African American and prior experience in working with youth or families. In most cases, they were from the communities in which they were facilitating. They were able to choose whether they

wanted to facilitate the parent (leading individually) or youth sessions (leading in pairs). Facilitators were trained on the manualized curriculum over the course of two full weekends. During this training, they went through the program as participants, learned about the theory guiding the program, and practiced delivering the curriculum to their peers and supervisors. The same facilitator was with each group for all seven sessions. For the parent sessions included in the current study, ten facilitators led between one and three sessions. Eight facilitators were female and two were male. Multiple coders observed video recordings of the program sessions to assess the extent to which facilitators covered the points outlined in the material. These coders reached an interrater reliability of 80% and assessed fidelity to the program at 80%.

Program Curriculum

Families met for seven consecutive weekly sessions. During each meeting, youth and their caregivers separated to attend concurrent hour-long sessions. Topics such as involved, nurturant parenting and racial socialization were addressed in the parent sessions through videotaped vignettes and group discussions. Youth sessions addressed goal setting, norms of risk behavior, and peer pressure resistance steps through a variety of games, activities, and role-plays. Weekly topics were reinforced in the second hour during the family sessions, which consisted of family discussions and games.

SAAF Session 6: "Encouraging Racial Pride"

The curriculum promoted racial socialization and racial pride in many ways. Each parent, youth, and family session ended with the participants asserting in unison a creed specific to the respective group emphasizing racial pride. Throughout the sessions,

parents and children discussed concerns and strengths specific to African American families. The sixth meeting of the program was exclusively devoted to race and racial socialization. Youth discussed and role-played different ways to deal with situations where they were treated unfairly. Parents discussed their experiences with racism and considered the implications of different approaches to dealing with racism for their children. Families played a "Black Pride" board game in which they worked together to answer trivia questions about famous African Americans and name strengths of their community to reach the end.

The current study will focus on the implementation of one of these racial socialization activities, namely the Parent Session 6 activity, "Matching Views to Action," in which parents discuss three categories of responses to racism, the "Integrationist," the "Separatist," and the "Black Pride" viewpoints. The purpose of the activity was to familiarize the parents with these three different approaches to dealing with racism so that in the following activity they would be able to have a meaningful discussion about the consequences of different perspectives for their children. A video introduced the activity with two narrators explaining the viewpoints and parents discussing their perceptions of the merits and weaknesses of each. Next, facilitators read three posters describing each of these approaches aloud. Table 2.1 reproduces the text from these three posters. Next facilitators distributed cards that recounted four different vignettes depicting parents' experiences in racist situations (see Table 2.2). These vignettes reflected authentic situations that community members shared with SAAF's creators during focus groups conducted as part of the design phase of the program. The vignettes were followed by a brief description of a possible response by the primary

character to the situation. Each of the four vignettes had three possible responses that matched the definition of the Separatist, Integrationist, and Black Pride approaches to handling racism. This configuration resulted in a total of 12 unique situation cards. Not all were addressed in the time provided and they were not presented in the same order. In groups of two or three, participants discussed the situations and decided which of the three approaches matched the response on the card. Once the groups had made their decisions, they took turns reading their situation cards, sharing which approach their response fit into, and discussing the reasoning behind that decision.

A critical component of culturally competent programs is respect for participants' lived experiences. The curriculum states that all families have their own values by which they make decisions about what is best for their families. However, the literature on which the study is based shows a clear advantage for African Americans who demonstrate the 'Black Pride' view (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997). Without explicitly telling participants how they should react to racism, the curriculum is implicitly designed to provide the opportunity for parents to consider whether the Black Pride stance would be the best response for their families. Program designers formulated the curriculum to achieve this goal by clearly labeling and categorizing the viewpoints and encouraging parents to think about the consequences for children in vignettes. However, as with all program implementation, it is up to individual facilitators to implement the curriculum in the spirit in which it was created (Ringwalt et al., 2003; Ringwalt et al., 2004). Rough measures of fidelity allow for an understanding of whether the facilitator made the key points, but they do not demonstrate how facilitators responded to participants' comments and answers or asked questions that might allow for deeper

processing of the curriculum material. In the current study, I consider the question, how do facilitators in a culturally competent designed program present the curriculum and respond to parents in a way that respects the values and experiences of individual families?

Methods

Data

Sessions of SAAF were digitally videotaped for the purposes of conducting fidelity assessments. The current study used CA to analyze these recordings. As CA is a micro-level tool of analysis, what is gained in depth must be sacrificed in breadth. For the current paper, data are limited to include recordings and materials from Parent Session 6: "Encouraging Racial Pride," Activity 6.2: "Matching Views to Action." This activity was selected for analysis because of the very relevant, yet sensitive nature of the discussion of handling racism. While the curriculum was designed to be responsive to the values of participants, the goal of cultural competence requires that facilitators also use finesse so as not to alienate parents whose experiences result in responses to racism that may run contrary to the suggested approach. Being African American and living in the same communities may provide facilitators with a similar cultural frame of reference and experiences to draw from, however this does not guarantee sensitivity to others' points of view. Observations of this activity will allow for an examination of the strategies facilitators drew on to encourage processing of the program material in a way that respected families' lived experiences.

Across the first cohort of SAAF (N = 20 groups), the discussions surrounding the 91 vignettes from Activity 6.2 were selected from digital video recordings of program

sessions. Video recordings are a strength of this study and are a form of data that is becoming prevalent amongst conversation analysts for many reasons. Primarily, recordings are preferable to data sources such as field notes because data become part of the permanent record, available for verification by future researchers. Because reliability in qualitative research can be thought of as the extent to which another researcher would come to similar conclusions if the study was conducted again in the same way, this adds to the study's credibility and validity (Peräkylä, 2004). Second, much of CA depends on a "second-turn proof procedure," interpreting the meaning of a prior utterance by the way other participants respond to it. MacMartin and LeBaro (2006) suggest that this type of analysis is useful in the sense that it provides some indication about how other participants analyze the talk relative to their own agendas. With audio data, however, one must wait for a subsequent speaker to voice an opinion before understanding how the initial talk was taken up. Video data provides visual cues through which reactions to the initial talk can be studied concurrently. Third, video data also enhances analysis by allowing for the consideration of body language that, paired with utterances, may contribute to our understanding of the speaker's meaning, either adding clarity or ambiguity about what was said (MacMartin & LeBaro, 2006).

All 91 segments were downloaded to a laptop computer using Windows Movie Maker 5.1. All segments were of sufficient sound quality to be transcribed according to Jeffersonian Conventions (Psathas & Anderson, 1990). These conventions result in a much more fine-grained than do those conducted for a thematic analysis (see Appendix B). Because they are thought to convey meaning within interaction, CA transcripts capture the verbal, paralinguistic features of talk, such as repetitions, breaths, and

intonation, and if possible, the visual body gestures (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997), often neglected in traditional transcripts. Moreover, as video data is becoming more widely used within CA (Heath, 2004), transcription conventions are expanding to include physical interactions. The current study situated actions and physical descriptions (e.g., direction of gaze, the use of props, and gesturing) within the transcription where relevant. Transcriptions were conducted using tables in Word 2003 that included the line number, the speaker, the intended audience, the talk, and visual information, such as body language. Tables also included an analysis column for recording the characterization of actions accomplished during the talk. An undergraduate psychology student conducted initial transcriptions of half of the vignettes, which I refined to produce CA- quality transcripts. The remaining half was transcribed entirely by the primary author.

Analysis

The first step of the analysis process was to review each transcript successively. A line-by-line analysis within each transcript allowed for the characterization of the actions accomplished in each actor's turn. Two parents who were unaffiliated with the SAAF program, but who had African American adolescent children, participated in data sessions, giving feedback about the primary author's analyses. Next, these characterizations were compiled into categories across transcripts. The outcome of this compilation was a visual presentation of recurring interactions within the program.

Results

Known-Information Questions

The activity was structured around known-information questions, referring to instances of questions where there is a single answer that would fit the primary actor's preformed notion of what the response should be (Mehan, 1979). Known-information questions are most often used in educational settings. In contrast to unknown-information questions, which seek the information asked for, known-information questions are often used to evaluate another actor's knowledge or invite discussion on that topic. In the current data, each participant was expected to answer two questions, the first being which of the three approaches defined by the curriculum (Separatist, Integrationist, or Black Pride) matches the response of the character in the vignette to the situation depicting racism. This is clearly a known-information question in the sense that there is a single answer designated by the curriculum. The second question was a follow-up to the first, in which facilitators asked participants to explain the reasoning behind the first question. This question is less clearly a known-information question in that there is no single response that would be marked as a correct answer, however, to some extent, facilitators expect that participants will refer to the definitions provided by the curriculum and compare those with the character's response to the situation. Previous literature using CA to analyze known-information questions has identified a common format known as Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) (Mehan, 1985). The structure of the current data allows for a comparison with the IRE model. Findings are presented below, structured in accordance with the IRE model.

Initiation

Mehan (1979) characterizes the initiation and response as two components of an adjacency pair. Adjacency pairs are a pattern of interaction identified by CA in which the first actor's utterance provides a space for the second actor to respond to that utterance (ten Have, 1999). The first utterance is thought to compel the second in the sense that if an answer is not provided, one option for the first speaker is to pursue an answer through additional prompts. To the extent that the desired response is not immediately produced, an extended sequence of clarification may follow. Thus, researchers using CA can make inferences about the clarity of the initiation through others' responses to that utterance (MacMartin & LeBaro, 2006).

Sources of Trouble: Program Vignettes

In the current study, participants' responses to the initiation provide insight into where instructions are unclear or incomplete. Across the transcripts, there were two common points of confusion as related to the instructions of the activity. The first was that participants demonstrated confusion about the vignettes. The twelve cards commenced with one of four possible situations. It was not immediately evident that cards that began with the same situation would have different outcomes, as in Excerpt 1. In general, facilitators avoided correcting these misunderstandings outright. Instead, as is evident in this example, facilitators often responded to participants' concerns by asking for clarification. Frequently, the participants resolved the confusion themselves, again as demonstrated in Excerpt 1. When this did not occur, facilitators offered to skip their turn or let them choose a new card.

Excerpt 1: Session 09P6, Activity Instructions

Line	Speaker	Talk	Action
57.	P1	and I've got the same thing↑	
58.	F	oh you do↑	leans over to read the two cards
59.	P1	wait a minute no I don't	
60.	F	no you don't	

Sources of Trouble: Actor

The second source of trouble within the talk was confusion about whose actions the activity was designed to evaluate. Each vignette related the actions of at least two people, a White person who was perpetrating a racist act and an African American parent who responded to that situation. Patterns in the data showed a trend for participants to think that they were evaluating the behavior of the character perpetrating the racism. In Excerpt 2, participants are discussing Jay's situation, in which she pulls up to the drive-through window at a fast food chain and the cashier throws the bag of food at her. Starting on Line 22 of Participant 1's utterance, she demonstrates the misunderstanding that they are addressing the White person's behavior. It was not the point of the program to say that racist behavior should not be examined, but to emphasize that those experiencing that situation can only be responsible for how they respond to the situation. On Line 25, Participant 1 seeks clarification about this point. Participant 7 takes the initiative to resolve this confusion where, on Line 27, she explains that they are discussing "the answer," referring to the second paragraph on the card, which contains the character's response to the situation. Program participants answering each other's questions was a quite common occurrence within this data.

Excerpt 2: Session 01P6, Vignette 1 (Jay-Integrationist)

Line	Speaker	Talk
22.	P1	I think it was Separatist because she
23.		threw the food↑
24.	P7	she not gonna get ()
25.	P1	but they're talking about the parent- the lady
26.		that made it that's not her you talking bout
27.	P7	the- the answer
28.	P1	aaahh-hunh

Response

The second part of the IRE model is the participants' response to facilitators' initiations, namely which approach to dealing with racism participants chose. Table 2.3 demonstrates how often a participant's response agreed with the curriculum's intended response. The talk surrounding these disagreements was analyzed across cases for a better understanding of what lead to the discrepancy between the participants' responses and the curriculum's intended answer.

Request for Clarification

Often a divergent response was followed by a participant's request for clarification about the instructions, as is exemplified in the passage in Excerpt 1. This pattern suggests that the reason for the disagreement might have been due to a misunderstanding about the nature of the activity. After clarification was provided, either by facilitators or by other participants, participants generally changed their responses such that they matched the curriculum, as is demonstrated in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3: Session 20P6, Vignette 1 (Jay-Black Pride)

Line	Speaker	Directed towards	Talk
15.	P5	F	Separatist↑ (.)
16.	P6	P5	separation↑
17.	F	P5	why you say Separatist↑
18.	P5	F	cuz↑ (.) it warn you
19.	P6	F	ar- let me ask a question
20.	F	P6	yes maam
21.	P6	F	are we talking about the the lady in the
22.			car or are we talking about the person
23.			that=
24.	F	P6	=how
25.			she handled the situation
26.	P6	F	how she handled it oh oh
27.	F	P6	how did she handle the situation did she
28.			handle it like a Separatist would↑ or a
29.			interg- intergrationist would↑ or [Black Pride
30.	P5	F	[Black Pride
31.			that was Black Pride

Terminology

In other instances, it appeared that participants were confused by the terminology. This was especially apparent in the Robert-Integrationist situation card (see Excerpt 4). Six out of the 12 disagreements for the Robert cards occurred when participants described the Robert-Integrationist approach as Separatist. In this vignette, the police forced Robert to leave a store where he and his friends were congregating, even though they were not doing anything wrong. Robert's parents responded by telling him to avoid going to the store in the future. Most participants with this card used a common sense understanding of the word "separate," meaning to stay apart from, and decided that the answer was Separatist. According to the common sense understanding of separatism, that answer was completely correct. On the other hand, the curriculum's definition of Separatism included a recognition of racism and an attempt to warn children that others

would treat them unfairly. In contrast, this vignette depicted parents who taught their child to ignore the racial undertones of this situation and to relinquish his right to frequent what may have been the only store in the community. Essentially, either answer could be considered, depending on which definition of Separatist was used.

Excerpt 4: Session 13P6, Vignette 2 (Robert-Integrationist)

Line	Speaker	Talk
11.	P4	we said it was ahs Separatist
12.	F	ok why
13.	P4	because she was trying to tell to separate and
14.		they just not go to that place and stuff
15.	F	ok
16.	P4	and just stay apart
17.	F	stay apart from other races
18.	P4	yeah
19.	F	the world is unfair (.) maybe you shouldn't hang
20.		around with them (.)ok↑

Disagreement with Curriculum

On the other hand, some participants simply did not agree with the curriculum's definition of what constituted Integrationist, Separatist, or Black Pride approaches. Again, Robert's card was particularly problematic. In some cases, participants responded to the Robert-Separatist card, which depicted Robert's father reacting aggressively to his son being harassed by police, as Black Pride. The same was true of Rosa's situation, although to a lesser extent. Examining other participants' responses to the activity allows for an analysis of the ways they "locally orient to and make use of the publicly available ways of displaying the delicacy of the topic" (Silverman & Peräkylä, 1990, p. 300). When participants identified the Robert and Rosa-Separatist cards as Black Pride, the situation always led to a debate amongst the group. Laughter has been identified in the

CA literature as one way to mark a delicate topic in institutional settings (Haakana, 2002). For example, Haakana (2001) found that in medical office visits there were two common places to engage in laughter. These were episodes when patients reported 'incredible' symptoms or admitted to going against doctor recommendations, each considered to be sharing delicate information. Similarly, these responses to racism may be thought of as delicate situations, as evidenced by the following passage from Excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5: Session 13P6, Vignette 3 (Robert-Separatist)

Line	Speaker	Directed towards		Action
13.	P3	G	"fifteen year old Robert come	Reading
14.			home tells his parents he	card
15.			police were harassing him and	
16.			his friends in front of a	
17.			neighborhood convenience store	
18.			(.) Robert says they were not	
19.			doing anything wrong (.) just	
20.			talking and having a good	
21.			time (.) but the police broke	
22.			up the group and made them	
23.			move on (.) Robert's father	
24.			says that racist son av a	
25.			bitch"	
26.	G		ha ha heh heh	
27.	P9	G	who	
28.	P3	G	"Whites are always out to get	Reading
29.			out ta get us and the police	card
30.			are the worst of the bunch (.)	
31.			I would like to punch him out"	
32.	P9	G	alright now=	
33.	F	P3	=ok which one	P3 standing by the "Black Pride" poster
34.	G&F		heh heh heh	
35.	F	P3	wha-	
36.		G	did [(.) P3 say Black Pride ha	Shakes
37.			ha ha	head, Smiles
38.	P9	F	[Black Pride	
39.	G		<animated, concurrent talking>	

40.	G		ha ha ha ha	
41.	P3	F	it was a judgment it was a	
42.			judgment call now	
43.	G		<animated, concurrent talking>	
44.	P9	G	shoot it was	
45.	F	P3	which one P3↑	
46.	P4	P9	shoot it was↓	
47.	P4	F	ahh Separatist	
48.	P9	F	Separatist	
49.	P3	F	Separatist Separatist	
50.	G		ha ha ha ha	
51.	F	P5	why	
52.	P3	F	why↑ (.) stand up for your	
53.			rights	
54.	P9	G	P3 still say Black Pride	
55.	G		ha ha heh heh heh	
56.	P3	G	stand up for your rights	Returns to seat
57.	P4	G	I say Black Pride too=	
58.	P3	P4	=uh-huh [uh-huh uh-huh it sure	
59.			is that	
60.	P9	P3	[you should still	
61.			stand up (.) and tell [why	
62.			you ( )	
63.	P6	F	[which one stands↑	
64.	F	P6	one can stand the one with the	
65.			card can stand and th the	
66.			other one can tell why they	
67.			chose it	
68.	P7	P6	fine by me go ahead	
69.	P3	G	I'll go over there	Returns to "Black Pride" poster
70.	P9	G	he still say [Black Pride	
71.	P5	F	[I said Black	shrugs
72.			Pride	
73.	F	G	he gon stay between em heh heh	
74.			heh	
75.	G		heh heh ha ha heh heh	
76.	P3	F	let me get in between both of	
77.			them both of these	

In this extended sequence, Parent 3 does not even finish reading the situation card before the laughter starts on Line 26. The group responds to his answer with an uproar of animated talking and laughing. In this way, they are marking it as problematic. On Line

41, Parent 3 defends himself by saying that it was a difficult choice. The facilitator asks him to reconsider his answer in Line 45 where she repeats her initial question. Parents 9 and 4 defend Parent 3, while Parent 4 goes on to demonstrate that he knows what answer the facilitator is looking for on Line 47. In Line 49, Parent 3 acknowledges Separatist as a response, but maintains his Black Pride response, reasoning that the situation is about standing up for one's rights, a component of both the Black Pride and Separatist approaches according to the curriculum. He literally stands firm by returning to the Black Pride poster on the wall and remaining there, even after the next pair makes repeated bids for their turn in the activity.

The reason behind Parent 3's assessment that this situation was "a judgment call" was never explicitly made clear. However, the fact that the facilitator and all of the participants were laughing suggests that they understood the conflict without it being said. Interactional problems like these are commonly dealt with in implicit ways (Haakana, 2001). In referring to laughter, Haakana suggested that "part of the power comes from its implicitness; it displays and remedies in a nonexplicit way" (p. 214). In this case, laughter allowed participants to implicitly acknowledge that even though they knew that while this approach to racism was not necessarily the most socially acceptable solution, they understood wanting to respond in this way. Other responses were more explicit about this conflict. For example, in Session 02P6, Vignette 6, Parent 4 acknowledged that Jay's assertive response to the sales clerk was "very Black Pride," however, she went on to say that personally, she "would have had to put that Black Pride aside." On more than one occasion, other participants felt the need to explain this

ambiguity as in Session 12P6, Vignette 6, where Parent 6 said "see a lot of folk have been treated so bad."

Evaluation

The final part of the IRE model is evaluation or feedback about the participant's response to the initiation. In contrast to educational research, it was rare for SAAF facilitators to provide an evaluation of participants' answers, especially when participants' answers disagreed with the curriculum-defined answer. Previous work on assessments has found that, on the whole, the subsequent action is an agreement with that assessment (Pomerantz, 1984). When disagreements are offered, they tend to follow extended pauses or turn prefaces, marking them as a dispreferred action compared to agreement which is generally accentuated and stated directly.

Relying on Participants

Facilitators employed a variety of strategies that allowed them to avoid explicitly disagreeing with participants' assessments. One strategy was to ask for consensus from the group, however, participants rarely voiced dissent in response to this request as exemplified in Excerpt 6.

Excerpt 6, Session 02P6, Vignette 7 (Robert-Black Pride)

Line	Speaker	Talk
1.	P4	innteegrationisst
2.	F	everybody agree with that↑
3.	P3	um-hmm
4.	F	alright↓

Another strategy which produced more discussion was giving the group space to respond to the question without facilitator interference (see Excerpt 7). In most sessions, participants were engaged not only in their own cards, but also in helping their peers work out the solutions to their situation cards. Moreover, there were frequent instances of participants pointing to a poster or calling out the name of the approach before the participant whose turn it was had finished reading the card.

Excerpt 7: Session 12P6, Vignette 6 (Rosa-Separatist)

Line	Speaker	Talk
13.	F	what do you think that is
14.	P2	Black Pride
15.	P1	mmm↑ mm↓ mmm↑ mm↓
16.	P6	I don't know about that one

In many cases, participants were able to reason out the situation together, at which point the facilitator often stepped in to bring closure, as in Excerpt 8 below. In this segment, Parent 9's assessment that the situation reflected Black Pride led to controversy on Line 19. She subsequently questioned herself on Line 20. The facilitator provided only a minimal response. Instead, she allowed Parent 2 to provide clarification, in which she explained that Rosa's belief that all White people would act in racist ways reflected the definition of separatism, even though Rosa was recognizing racism and standing up for herself.

Excerpt 8: Session 13P6, Vignette 5 (Rosa-Separatist)

Line	Speaker	Directed towards	Talk
18.	P9	G	Black Pride
19.	G		<animated, concurrent talking>
20.	P9	G	do you think she did the right
21.			thing because she knew she was
22.			gonna be treated this way because
23.			you White I knew you was gonna do
24.			this
25.	F	P9	ok
26.	P2	P9	by her sayin that (.) she knew she
27.			was goin do this she was sayin
28.			what
29.	P9	G	seeing the world as racist and
30.			unfair because she already done
31.			said that because she White she
32.			knew that she was goin to be
33.			treated unfair
34.	F	P9	so she was more of a Separatist
35.	P9	F	she was more of a Separatist

Contrasting Approaches

Another strategy facilitators commonly used to resolve disagreements was to contrast the different approaches to handling racism. Interestingly, while all facilitators used this device to some extent, contrasting the approaches to resolve confusion was handled most strategically by one facilitator who ranked among the lowest on the fidelity assessments (ranging from 51% to 71%). As presented in Excerpt 9, the first participant in Session 14P6 read the Jay-Separatist card and responded that it was Black Pride (see Excerpt 9). Instead of correcting her, the facilitator read the three definitions to allow her to make a comparison. He also invited responses from the other participants, which ruled out Integrationist as a possible solution, but Parent 1 and Parent 3 were still in conflict over whether the approach was Separatist or Black Pride.

Excerpt 9: Session 14P6, Vignette 1 (Jay-Separatist)

Line	Speaker	Directed towards	Talk	Action
12.	F	P1	oh kay	
13.	P1	F	Black Pride	
14.	F	P1	was that Black Pride↑	
15.	P1	F	yeah	
16.	F	P1	having pride in being	reading "Black
17.			African American	Pride" poster
18.			aware of racism and	
19.			discrim- act strong	
20.			assertive when	
21.			dealing with racism↑	
22.	P1	F	yes	
23.	F	P1	was↑ that↑ a	
24.			Separatist↑ warn your	reading
25.			children (.)about	"Separatist"
26.			other races↑ see that	poster
27.			the <u>whole</u> world is	
28.			unfair and racist↑	
29.			try to stay apart	
30.			from other races↑ or↑	
31.			teach children that	reading
32.			<u>all</u> people are	"Integrationist"
33.			basically the same↓	poster
34.			want to look and act	
35.			like mainstream	
36.			society↓ think others	
37.			may- make too big of	
38.			a deal (.) about	
39.			racism↓ which one you	
40.			think that was↓	
41.	P1	F	Black Pride	F points at P1
42.	P3	F	Separatist	F points at P3
43.	P2	F	it's hard to sayee	F points at P2
44.			hee hee hee	
45.	F	G	but you but we agree	
46.			that it's not	
47.			Integrationist	
48.	P1	F	definitely not	
49.	F	G	well put that down	
50.			(.) so you said its	
51.			between Black Pride	
52.			and Separatist	
53.			between these two	
54.			here	
55.	F	P2	ok↑ read yours	

The facilitator then called on the next participant to read another one of the Jay cards. This second scenario depicted Jay reacting to the situation using an Integrationist approach. Parent 2 recognized the situation as Integrationist immediately, but the facilitator repeated the process of reading the definitions. Parent 2 restated her response and the facilitator called on the next participant to read the final Jay scenario, the Black Pride response. After Parent 3 read Jay's approach to dealing with the situation, all agreed that this was in fact the Black Pride approach to handling the situation, as shown in Excerpt 10 (see Line 13). It appears that by demonstrating a strong, but more peaceful approach to dealing with the problem, the facilitator was able to clarify the disagreement from the first vignette. In Line 14, the facilitator went on to verbally identify the conflict that arises when encountering racism. At the beginning of the activity, he recited the line "arguments never help" and invited the participants to say it with him several times. This was an adaptation to the program, but served as a simple phrase to drive home the message that would be repeated throughout that evening's session, that racism must be addressed, but that it can be handled in a way that supports one's dignity and self-respect while deescalating conflict and the negative consequences that occur.

Excerpt 10: Session 14P6, Vignette 3 (Jay-Black Pride)

Line	Speaker	Directed towards	Talk
10.	F	P3	ok↑
11.	P3	F	Black Pride
12.	F	G	Black Pride↑=
13.	P1	G	=yeah thats Black Pride
14.	F	G	ok <u>all</u> of us are gonna encounter
15.			situations where we find it and we
16.			can call it what we <u>will</u> call it
17.			(.) but one thing that we do know↑
18.			what do we say↑
19.			ar[guments never help
20.	P1	F	[arguments never help

Discussion

The persistence of health disparities indicates that prevention efforts are ineffective in achieving parity. While our theories and methods of measuring mediational models of program impact on health disparities are improving, most of the research has given little attention to process evaluation beyond rudimentary fidelity assessments. The dearth of knowledge in this area is highly problematic because between the design of a program and its implementation by program facilitators, there is infinite room for adaptation. In the current article, I make the claim that despite their utility for producing some types of information, fidelity assessments afford a limited understanding of what actually occurred within a prevention program. New methods are needed to illuminate the complex processes that occur in this unique institutional setting. Excerpts 9 and 10 provide overwhelming evidence to support this perspective, with a demonstration of the artful implementation of one program activity by a facilitator who received poor scores in fidelity assessments.

The purpose of this paper was to demonstrate the use of conversation analysis as a form of process evaluation to complement fidelity assessments. These analyses garnered much useful information about the interactions between the participants, curriculum, and facilitators. Fundamentally, results served as a reminder of a well-known premise in education, that participants are not empty vessels (Galbraith, 1992). In fact, as compared to traditional classrooms, participants in the SAAF program demonstrated tremendous agency in terms of voicing their opinions and assisting their peers. Given the overlapping talk, it appears that they were highly invested in this particular activity characterized by sensitive yet provoking subject matter.

In terms of the curriculum, the conversation analytic approach provided insight about where confusion arose and how the program could be improved in future iterations. The two major stumbling blocks were present across sessions. The first was that each vignette had three possible endings reflecting different approaches to the situations, and the second was an ambiguity about whose actions were being discussed (the individual perpetrating the act of racism or the parent responding to it). Addressing the second problem first, it was not the intent of the curriculum to communicate that racist actions are above scrutiny. In fact, the first activity of the night was devoted to providing space for participants to discuss their personal experiences with racism. Rather, all of Parent Session 6 was designed to promote the awareness that the way parents deal with racism has implications for themselves and for their children. Making the point more clearly that people can only be responsible for their own behavior at the beginning of Activity 6.2 might serve to draw more attention to the approach to dealing with racism, rather than the racism itself.

In addition, the strategy of using contrasts used by all facilitators, but especially by the one in Session 14 (see Excerpts 9-10), might alleviate both of these sources of confusion. In the original design of the activity, facilitators dispensed the cards to participants randomly. As a result, some participant pairs dealt with different approaches to handling the same vignette, while others worked together on different approaches to different vignettes. It may be advantageous to modify the activity to incorporate the facilitator in Session 14's strategy of having all members of a group work together on a single vignette, such that each small group would have three participants, each with one of the three responses to dealing with the vignette. This format might alleviate confusion

in two ways. First, the variable that changes across participants' cards would be the approach to dealing with the situation. This might draw attention to the parent's approach within the situation. Second, it would allow for the strategy of contrasting to occur within the small groups. Participants tended to use contrasting to the same extent as the facilitators and demonstrated their competence in assisting their peers. In this way, the curriculum could draw on the strengths of its participants to help one another derive the best answer.

Another finding related to the curriculum was that, in general, participants knew what response would represent a sense of Black Pride. However, there was often conflict between what they believed someone "should" do in a situation, and what they would "actually" do. Evidence for this was demonstrated in many places through this article, but may be characterized best by the participant who said "I would have had to put that Black Pride aside." It has long been recognized that knowledge is a limited predictor of risk behavior (Reitman et al., 1996). Several of the facilitators formulated short expressions that parents could say to themselves when tempted to engage in approaches that would be characterized by the curriculum as Separatist. An example was repeating "arguments never help" in Excerpt 10. Other facilitators recommended calling on a higher power, including Dr. King or the Bible, to get through that temptation. In the youth sessions, the curriculum provided an opportunity for adolescents to practice "self-talk," short expressions they created themselves that would help them circumvent the enticement of many risk behaviors. It may be that parents need to find similar strategies to help them respond to racism assertively.

Finally, CA provided information about the ways that facilitators are implementing the program. One conclusion that can be drawn is that, at least to some extent, facilitators did in fact share worldviews with participants. Evidence for this assertion was presented in Excerpt 5. Despite the fact that the reason for the conflict between Separatism and Black Pride was never explicitly said, the participants and facilitator implicitly indicated that they had a shared understanding of this conflict through their laughter in reaction to Parent 3's response. It is difficult to imagine that a similar interaction would have taken place with a White facilitator, providing support for the argument for racial matching.

Across situations, facilitators also demonstrated reluctance to correct any participant. This finding may frustrate program designers depending on their goals for the activity. It is unlikely that participants would add the terms Integrationist, Separatist, and Black Pride to their everyday vocabulary. However, it is likely that they came away from the program with the understanding that there are different ways to handle experiences with racism. Moreover, African American parents are inundated with messages from society that they are in some way deficient (Murry et al., 2004). Programs that reiterate this message will certainly not be effective in engaging participants or providing the kind of support that they need. In this way, the strategies employed by facilitators in this study appear to be culturally competent in responding to the context of the communities they serve. Here I must acknowledge a few limitations of this form of analysis through several caveats. Through CA, I cannot attempt to make definitive claims that certain strategies are culturally competent and others are not. As Silverman and Peräkylä (1990) affirm, there is no right or wrong way to respond to a participant because each interaction is

locally devised. Simply put, understanding the rules guiding any interaction depends on a deep understanding of the context and its constituents.

Second, I can only draw conclusions about what the facilitators did in this single activity. Participants and facilitators have had a history of five sessions together. The temporality of their relationship can get lost when only examining one time point (Peräkylä, 2004) and this history unquestionably influences the current activity. The depth provided by conversation analysis is also an inherent weakness in the sense that using it to evaluate the entire program would be excessively time consuming and labor intensive. This study is also not meant to discredit fidelity. Fidelity assessments are easily conducted and while they do not provide a complete assessment of interactions, they do offer information that is easily compared across groups. Furthermore, facilitators should strive for high fidelity ratings because verifying, to the extent possible, that participants are being exposed to similar content is essential for making claims about the efficacy of a program. However, used selectively to complement fidelity assessments, the current study demonstrates that CA is a tool that can provide invaluable information, such as factors that may interfere with learning and development or alternatively, facilitators' use of innovations in implementing the curriculum.

Table 2.1. *Approaches to Confronting Racism*

	Integrationist	Separatist	Black Pride
Response type	Passive	Aggressive	Assertive
	Teach children that all people are basically the same	Warn their children about other races	Have pride in being African American
	Want to look and act like mainstream society	See the whole world as racist and unfair	Aware of racism and discrimination
	Think others make too big of a deal about racism	Try to stay apart from other races	Act strong and assertive when dealing with racism

Table 2.2. *Responses to Racism Vignettes*

Situation	Response		
	Integrationist	Separatist	Black Pride
Jay was waiting in her car in the line at the drive-through with her two children at a fast food chain. After she had paid for her food, the cashier, who was White, threw the sack of food at Jay and it fell onto the ground.	Jay was upset but she told her children that the cashier was probably just having a bad day and she didn't want to make a fuss. She picked up the bag and drove off.	Jay picked up the sack, parked her car, and took her children into the fast food restaurant. She went behind the counter into the area where the cashier was and gave her a piece of her mind. When the cashier tried to explain, Jay turned to the manager and started calling him names.	Jay picked up the sack, parked her car, and took her children into the fast food restaurant. She asked to speak to the person who had thrown the food at her but that person was disrespectful and rude and would not listen to her. Next, she asked to speak to the manager.
Rosa was browsing in a department store looking for a shirt when the sales person came up and asked her if she needed help. When Rosa said she was just looking, the sales person, who was White, stayed in the same area and watched every move she made, following her from one rack to the other.	Rosa was uncomfortable but she was afraid to say anything. She figured the sales person was just doing her job.	Rosa stopped dead in her tracks and told the clerk, "Get out of my face, bitch. I should have expected to be treated this way by a person like you."	Rosa turned to the clerk and said, "when I need your help I will find you. Until then, I am <u>just</u> looking."
15-year-old Robert comes home to tell his parents that the police were harassing him and his friends in front of the neighborhood convenience store. Robert says that they were not doing anything wrong, just talking and having a good time, but the police broke up the group and made them move on.	Robert's parents tell him that it's probably not a good idea to hang out with his friends at that place – that he should probably just avoid going to that store.	Robert's father says, "That racist son-of-a-bitch. Whites are always out to get us and the police are the worst of the bunch. I'd like to punch him out."	Robert's parents tell him that sometimes police do treat African Americans unfairly and talk with him about what he could do next time in a similar situation.
12-year-old Keisha came home very upset because of an incident that happened at school. The teacher had accused her of stealing some carnival tickets from her desk. Keisha told her mama that she had nothing to do with it and, in fact, she had seen one of the other kids, who was White, take the tickets.	Mama told her, "Well you have to understand how busy teachers are. They have so much to deal with and I'm sure she didn't mean anything by it."	Mama said, "That's just like those White teachers to accuse a Black child. This is what you expect. Stay away from those Whites whenever you can. I'm going to give her a piece of my mind!"	Keisha's mama asked her for some more details about what happened and told Keisha she would got to the school tomorrow to meet with the teacher and the principal.

Table 2.3. *Participants' responses to vignettes*

	Jay	Rosa	Robert	Keisha	Total
Agreement	15	16	14	15	60
Disagreement	7	5	12	7	31
Total	22	21	26	22	91

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 2: THE STRONG AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES PROGRAM: LONGITUDINAL PATHWAYS TO SEXUAL RISK REDUCTION

Abstract: The purpose of the current study was to identify the mechanisms through which a family-based preventative intervention reduced sexual risk behavior among rural African American adolescents across a 29-month period. African American families (N = 284) with 11-year-old children in 9 rural Georgia counties participated in the 7-week Strong African American Families (SAAF) project. Counties were randomly assigned to intervention or control conditions. The program was evaluated via pretest, posttest, and long-term follow-up interview data collected in the families' homes. Structural Equation Modeling was used to detect the pathways by which increases in universal and racially specific intervention-targeted parenting behaviors led to reduced sexual risk at the long-term follow-up assessment 29 months after pretest. Participation in the SAAF program was associated with positive parenting behaviors at the posttest, after with initial levels were controlled. The increase in targeted parenting behaviors was associated indirectly with sexual risk behavior through adolescent self-pride, peer orientation, and sexual intent. Culturally competent programs, developed through empirical and theoretical research within the targeted communities, can have a long-term effect on adolescent sexual risk behavior by fostering adaptive universal and racially specific parenting.

Introduction

HIV infection is among the most critical issues facing rural African American youth. Disparities in HIV rates continue to grow. Of the 43,704 AIDS cases reported to the CDC in 2003, 48% occurred among African Americans, who account for 13% of the United States population (CDC, 2006). This disparity is even higher among youth under age 15, with African Americans representing 66% of new male cases and 72% of new female cases in this age group. Efforts to reduce this disparity have focused mainly on urban areas, with few attempts to slow transmission in rural areas (Levine & Coupey, 2003). Rural youth, however, are as likely to engage in sexual risk behaviors as are their urban counterparts. Furthermore, because of high poverty and low population densities, rural areas lack the services and resources available in urban communities, placing their constituents at particular risk.

The Strong African American Families (SAAF) program, a preventive intervention for rural African American youth and caregivers, was designed to deter sexual risk taking among rural African American adolescents (Brody et al., 2004; Murry et al., 2005). The program's conceptualization and content were informed by the authors' longitudinal, developmental research with rural African American families. Their findings demonstrate that powerful factors protecting children and adolescents from risky behaviors originate in the family, particularly in caregivers' parenting practices. These practices play a pivotal role in positive youth development, fostering self-regulation, academic competence, psychological adjustment, delayed sexual onset, and reduced substance use.

SAAF was hypothesized to protect rural African American youths from early sexual onset and alcohol use through these parenting processes. To test this hypothesis, the investigators used a randomized control group design with multi-informant, longitudinal data. This design allows researchers to construct hypothetical structural equation models through which to evaluate both the program's outcomes and its underlying theory. Murry and colleagues (2005) conducted a preliminary study evaluating SAAF with pretest and posttest data. They hypothesized that SAAF would foster parents' involvement, communication, and racial socialization, which in turn would promote positive identity development in their children. Murry found that at posttest, parents participating in SAAF increased their use of these parenting strategies, which were associated with enhancement of positive identity, including self-esteem, racial identity, and body image. Because youth were only 12-years-old at the posttest, there was not enough variation in sexual activity to detect differences between control and intervention groups. Consequently, Murry conceived of these aspects of identity as mediators of sexual behavior and employed them as a proxy for sexual outcomes until future waves of data could be collected. We now have access to the third wave of follow-up data, collected 29 months after the program's conclusion. In the current study, we extend Murry and colleagues' model to examine SAAF's longitudinal effects on sexual risk behaviors, including sexual activity, number of partners, and condom use. In the following section, we review previous research that contributed to the development of our hypothesized model of program effects (see Figure 3.1).

Literature Review

Upchurch (1999) noted that, although African American adolescents are at elevated risk for contracting HIV, social processes are better predictors of risk behavior than are race or SES. Despite the risk that poverty and racism pose to African American youth, many grow up to lead healthy and productive lives (Bogenschneider, 1996). Rural African Americans direct their parenting processes toward enhancing their children's resilience, enabling them to withstand the challenges associated with "growing up Black in America" (Peters & Massey, 1983). Prevention researchers must consider ways to harness African American families' protective capacities. SAAF targets four parenting processes that have implications for adolescents' positive development: involvement, including nurturance, monitoring, and consistent discipline; communication about both the biological aspects of sex, and clearly articulated family norms and expectations; and racial socialization.

Universal Parenting: Involvement and Parent-Child Communication

Prior research has demonstrated the importance of parental involvement and communication in reducing adolescent sexual risk behavior across many racial groups (Perkins, Luster, Villarruel, & Small, 1998). This connection between parenting and sexual outcomes may be mediated through youth identity development. Prior nonexperimental studies demonstrated that instrumental and emotional support from parents buffered youths from stressful life events by fostering positive self-perceptions (McCreary, Slavin, & Berry, 1996). Moreover, a supportive, communicative family environment, in which expectations and norms regarding risk are clearly articulated, encourages adolescents to internalize their parents' values and norms, and in turn avoid

risky behaviors (Brody, Ge, Katz, & Arias, 2000). Such a family climate may also create an atmosphere of comfort that encourages adolescents to disclose feelings, beliefs, and experiences that have implications for successful identity development.

Racially-Specific Parenting: Racial Socialization

Unlike racial majority parents, African American parents have the added responsibility of teaching their children how to cope with experiences in a society in which they and their parents are often devalued (Murry & Brody, 2002). Optimally, African American parents' messages about race prepare their children for encounters with discrimination while emphasizing pride in being African American and knowledge about their cultural heritage (Hughes & Chen, 1997). Murry and colleagues (2005) noted that African American parents emphasize self-acceptance and racial pride to their children by transmitting messages that African Americans are "strong, beautiful, people with a rich history." These messages appear to enhance youth development and increase the likelihood that adolescents will reject stereotypic images about their group. Adaptive racial socialization is associated with high self-esteem and positive racial identity during adolescence (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002), which has been shown to protect youth from involvement in risky sexual behavior (Beadnell et al., 2003).

Youth Mediators: Self-Pride and Peer Orientation

Faryna and Morales (2000) found race to be more strongly associated with sexual risk behavior than self-efficacy, knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs. In light of these findings, they stress that the development of theory related to adolescent sexual risk behavior requires the incorporation of culture and racial identity. This and other elements

of self-pride, including self-esteem and body image, are important protective factors associated with reduced sexual risk during adolescence (Salazar et al., 2004). The mechanisms linking positive identity with healthy outcomes, however, are not well understood (Faryna & Morales, 2000).

Youth often feel pressure from peers to engage in sexual activity, even when peers' actual engagement in sexual behavior is much less than what youth perceive (Herrmann & McWhirter, 1997). Peer acceptance is highly salient during adolescence. Youth often invest highly in peer groups and depend on friends for validation of self-worth. Moderate peer orientation is normative and helps adolescents establish autonomy as they make the transition to adulthood (Murry, 1994). On the other hand, some become excessively peer oriented, to the extent that youth abandon their families' values and their own strengths to gain popularity with peers (Bogenschneider, Wu, Raffaelli, & Tsay, 1998). Because young people value sexual activity as a sign of maturity (Murry, 1994), peer orientation may be a particularly powerful source of risk in this domain. Indeed, previous research has found peer orientation to be associated with risky sexual attitudes and behavior (Langer, Zimmerman, Warheit, & Duncan, 1993). Although a connection between self-pride and peer orientation has not been established in the literature, we hypothesize that a strong self-image will render adolescents less likely to conform to perceived peer norms by adopting risky sexual attitudes and behaviors. Taken together, parenting and adolescent protective processes make adolescents less likely to compromise on their attitudes and values to gain popularity (Langer et al., 1993).

The Current Study

In summary, the extant literature suggests connections among parenting, youth identity and sexual relationships; however, these mechanisms are not clearly understood. Furthermore, much of the research on parenting is correlational, obscuring directionality of effects. On the other hand, studies of parent training programs with experimental designs provide opportunities to make stronger conclusions about direction of influence. Most of these studies, however, only include data on program outcomes. Without mediational data, no conclusions can be drawn about the program's underlying theory. The current study joins the strengths of these two research designs by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to evaluate SAAF's effect on identified mediators and, in turn, their effect on program outcomes. This method allows conclusions to be made about both the efficacy of the program and the validity of the theory. Specifically (see Figure 3.1), the current study examined the contributions of universal (involvement and communication) and racially-specific (racial socialization) parenting to youths' development of self-pride, and the ways in which such parenting may protect youth from sexual risk behavior. Using a longitudinal design, we hypothesized that adaptive universal and racially-specific parenting would influence the development of self-pride over time, reducing sexual risk by forestalling excessive peer orientation.

Methods

Sample

Eight county-units were selected for participation based on their proximity to the Center for Family Research, African American population density, and rurality. These counties were representative of rural areas in terms of low population density, declining

agrarian economy, and limited access to public transportation and health services. All county-units were similar in poverty rates and proportions of African Americans residents. County-units were randomly assigned to the intervention condition (participation in SAAF) and control condition (receiving printed educational materials about adolescent health and development). We recognize the ethical issues associated with not providing services to all families in areas of high need. However, because the SAAF program is the first to be designed for rural African American populations, having a control group was necessary to make conclusions about program efficacy. Moreover, because the program was designed to be a primary preventive intervention, it was essential to follow the youth in the program for many years to detect differences in risk behavior, precluding a delayed control group design.

African American families with 11-year-old youth were eligible for participation. Families of all structures were included in the sampling pool and multiple caregivers were invited to attend the program. Twenty-nine of the fathers attended at least one session; fathers' mean attendance was 3.5 sessions (SD = 2.08). The public middle schools in the sampled counties provided African American staff at the Center with rosters of fifth-grade students to be used as recruitment lists. The Center was able to obtain these lists from schools because of the credibility earned through the primary investigators' long-standing relationship with the counties' residents, developed during their program of basic research. From the 521 families randomly selected from these lists, 332 agreed to participate, a recruitment rate of 64%; 284 families provided data at all three time points. Participation rates were similar for intervention and control counties. Demographic information is presented in Table 3.1.

Intervention Design

SAAF was designed to foster positive parenting that would protect youth from engaging in sexual risk behavior during middle adolescence, when many young people initiate sexual activity. A culturally competent program must fit the participants' unique ecological niche, taking into account both the strengths of families and communities, as well as their specific needs. As SAAF is the first empirically based program designed for rural African American families, much effort went into designing a program that would be relevant for this underserved population. Information guiding the development of the program came from theory, research, and community stakeholders.

Before designing the program, Murry and Brody conducted more than a decade of empirical research in the rural African American communities participating in SAAF (Brody et al., 2004; Murry et al., 2005). Their research was guided by the resilience perspective, as many youth at risk for negative developmental trajectories because of racism and economic uncertainty nevertheless grow into competent adults (Bogenschneider, 1996). The competence model of family functioning (Waters & Lawrence, 1993) points to adaptive parenting practices as important contributors to resilience. Murry and Brody's findings are consistent with this perspective, indicating that youth whose parents monitored them, used consistent discipline, and communicated openly with them protected them from involvement in risk behavior.

Development of the SAAF program also drew on Gerrard and Gibbons' (1998) cognitive model of adolescent health risk behavior. Gerrard and Gibbons found that, to the extent that adolescents perceive themselves as being dissimilar from those who engage in risk behaviors, they are less likely to engage in those behaviors themselves.

Moreover, they found that youth often overestimate the number of their peers who are engaged in risk behaviors. Adolescents who believe that "everyone else is doing it" were more likely to initiate such behaviors.

Focus groups were also held in which parents of young adolescents who were not part of the sampling pool shared information about their experiences with rearing their youth in rural communities. They discussed their concerns for their youth, which included the possibility of substance use and high-risk sexual behavior. Group members also shared their families' and communities' strengths, which were related specifically to racial socialization and involvement with the African American church.

Drawing on these resources, Murry, Brody, and colleagues (2004) designed a theoretical model that included modifiable mediators related to youth risk behavior. Separate sets of curriculum topics for caregivers and youths were identified (see Table 3.2 for curriculum details). Interactive games, discussions, role plays, and other activities were created through which the curriculum material was taught. These techniques were similar to those used in other family strengthening programs (Spoth et al., 1998), but their content reflected the unique context identified in the theoretical model.

Intervention Implementation

Families met for seven weekly sessions at local community centers. During each meeting, youth and caregivers attended separate, concurrent 1-hour sessions, followed by a 1-hour joint session in which families practiced the skills they had learned in their separate sessions by participating together in discussions and games. Trained African American facilitators with previous experience in teaching or working with families and youth led all sessions. The facilitators were trained on program content and delivery over

the course of two full weekends in which they learned about the program's theoretical underpinnings, went through the program as participants, and practiced delivering the program with their peers and supervisors. Program sessions were videotaped and coded to assess the extent to which facilitators adhered to the instructions in the manual. A group of coders, whose interrater reliability was consistently above 80%, assessed program fidelity at 80%.

During program implementation, extensive measures were taken to facilitate families' attendance. Transportation and childcare for siblings were provided as needed, and a catered meal was served at the beginning of each meeting to enhance family and group rapport. Weekly postcards and community liaisons also encouraged attendance (Murry & Brody, 2004). As a result, attendance was high, with 65.6% of the families attending at least five of the seven sessions.

Data Collection

Interviews were conducted by African Americans who had received 27 hours of training in the administration of the computer-based research protocol. Pretesting occurred 1 month before the sessions began, before families were informed of their assignment to the intervention (n = 157) or control (n = 127) condition. Posttesting began 3 months after the sessions ended, producing a 7-month interval between pretest and posttest. A long-term follow-up assessment was conducted 29 months later. Primary caregivers provided informed consent for themselves and for the youth at each assessment. Youth also assented to their own participation. Pretest, posttest and long-term follow-up interviews were conducted with youth and caregivers in the families' homes. Each interview lasted approximately 2 hours. To eliminate literacy concerns, interviewers

read aloud self-report questionnaires that were displayed, one item at a time, on laptop computers that both the interviewer and the participant could see. Interviewers read each item aloud, then entered the participant's response into the computer. Interviews were conducted privately with no other family members able to overhear responses. Families were compensated $100 at each data collection point. These procedures were approved in 1995 by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Georgia. Table 3.3 presents information about the measures used in the study.

Results

Group Equivalence

Family sociodemographic characteristics and all study variables were examined for equivalence across prevention and control groups. HLM was used to determine pretest equivalence because of the hierarchically nested structure of the data (participants nested within counties). The means and *t* values for the family sociodemographic variables at pretest indicated that the data were equivalent across the prevention and control conditions. For the study variables, pretest scores for parents' reports of communication about sex were higher in the control group than in the prevention group. Accordingly, all pretest scores were controlled in the SEM analyses of prevention effects and indirect effects (Aiken, Stein, & Bentler, 1994). As mentioned previously, attrition was minimal in both groups and no differential attrition effects were detected.

Clustering Effects

Ideally, we would have conducted multilevel SEM analysis because the families were nested in counties. The procedure for executing multilevel SEM that Muthén and

Muthén (1998) suggested could not be implemented, however, because the families were nested in a small number of counties. Multilevel SEM analyses with small numbers of clusters yield under-identified models. Before conducting the SEM analyses to test the study hypotheses, therefore, we executed an analysis that Heck (2001) recommended to determine whether SEM could be used to analyze multilevel data. We calculated an intra-class correlation that Heck devised to determine the proportion of total variability that can be attributed to variability between counties. This intra-class correlation should be 0 when the data are independent; the larger the intra-class correlation, the larger the distortion in parameter estimation that results from cluster-level effects. When the intra-class correlation is less than .05, indicating little, if any, significant variability between clusters, Heck demonstrated that a non-multilevel SEM yields accurate estimates of the parameters and standard errors. The intra-class correlation for the intervention-targeted parenting behaviors and youth outcomes at the latent construct level were computed using Heck's formula:

$$p = \sigma_b^2/(\sigma_b^2 + \sigma_w^2)$$

where σ_b^2 is between-county variability, σ_w^2 is within-county variability, and p is the proportion of the total variability that can be attributed to between-county variability. The intra-class correlations were less than .05 for all of the assessments, indicating that SEM could be used to analyze the data without biasing any parameter estimates.

Test of Prevention Effects

Table 3.4 presents the correlations, means, and standard deviations for all study variables. Group assignment was dummy coded (Control = 0, Intervention =1) and the hypothetical model (see Figure 3.1) was analyzed via SEM using the AMOS 5 software

(Arbuckle, 2003). Figure 3.2 presents the results of the SEM analyses. Overall, the model fit the data adequately: χ^2 (df = 159, p = .061) = 187.41; χ^2/df = 1.18. The following fit indices also supported adequate model fit: Comparative Fit Index = .97; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation = .03 (90% Confidence Interval .00; .04).

All indicators loaded significantly on their latent constructs, supporting measurement adequacy. The structural coefficients represent tests of our hypotheses about the relations among the theoretical constructs and supported study hypotheses. Participation in SAAF was associated with an increase across time in the use of intervention-targeted parenting practices (β = .34 p < .01) with pretest levels of parenting practices controlled. This increase in parenting practices, in turn, was associated with an increase in adolescents' self-pride (β = .25 p < .01) with pretest levels of self-pride controlled. The increase in self-pride was associated with a reduction across time in peer orientation (β = -.54, p < .01). The reduction in peer orientation, in turn, was associated with a reduction across time in youths' intentions to engage in sexual activity (β = -.28, p < .01). Finally, intention reduction was associated with a reduced likelihood of having engaged in sexual risk behavior at the time of the long-term follow-up assessment (β = -.31, p < .01). Thus, consistent with the mediational hypothesis, reductions across 29 months in peer orientation, sexual risk intentions, and sexual risk behavior among youth participating in SAAF was mediated by program-induced changes in parenting and self-pride from pretest to posttest.

Discussion

In response to rural African American youths' risk for HIV infection, the SAAF program was developed as an empirically-based preventive intervention tailored to this

population's unique context, addressing relevant stressors and strengths of the community. Combining the strengths of traditional correlational family process and experimental prevention research designs, the current evaluation of a large-scale intervention program, both identified the ways in which program participation was linked to positive youth outcomes and tested the theory on which the program was based. Our findings are consistent with the resilience (Bogenschneider, 1996) and competence (Waters & Lawrence, 1993) perspectives, in that parenting was found to be important in protecting African American youth from the deleterious effects of racism. This study contributes to developmental literature by examining longitudinal links from parenting to youth identity across the transition to adolescence, an important period in identity development. The results suggest the importance of rural African American parents exposing their children to adaptive racial socialization messages before youth transition into adolescence. In doing so, parents lay the foundations for the development of self-pride, which was pivotal in buffering youth against early sexual initiation during middle adolescence.

The current study also contributes to the prevention literature by identifying a pathway linking identify formation with positive youth outcomes. African American adolescents who have positive racial identity, self-esteem, and body images are less likely to use sex as a way to gain peer acceptance. This strong sense of self predicts sexual intent and consequent sexual behavior by forestalling excessive peers orientation and reducing the tendency to conform to perceived peer norms.

Limitations

Limitations of this study must be noted, one of which concerns families' participation in the prevention program. Many families experienced constraints on their time from competing demands. Transportation, childcare, and meals were provided to reduce barriers to attendance, and SAAF attendance was relatively high compared with other family-based programs. However, one problem with the use of the group meeting format typical of family-based programs is that the families in this area have sporadic employment in which they have multiple part-time jobs without consistent schedules. During the recruitment phase, staff solicited feedback about the best day for families to meet and tried to schedule convenient meeting times. Sporadic work schedules, however, mean that the best day for families to meet was likely to change each week. Prevention researchers should begin to investigate systemically more flexible delivery formats to increase participation.

Additionally, although secondary caregivers were invited, few participated. Fathers' lack of attendance was a particular concern because they are underrepresented across parenting programs (Costigan & Cox, 2001). After the posttest, we interviewed the fathers who participated in SAAF to develop a better understanding of their experiences with the program and to learn how we could make the program more appealing for other fathers. A common response was a preference for male program facilitators. Thus, family-based programs may need to be tailored to fit the participating caregivers' characteristics.

Implications for Future Programs

Coard and colleagues (2004) concluded from a literature review that prevention programs that are effective for middle-class European Americans are less effective for participants from other racial and economic groups, supporting the premise on which SAAF was founded: preventive interventions must be designed to fit the ecological context in which they will be offered. The results of the SAAF program show that designing a program specifically for rural African American families is effective in promoting their well-being. To the extent that the data are available, program designers should rely on research conducted with groups as similar as possible to the focal populations when identifying targets for intervention. Working with community members to identify the issues that are relevant to them is also essential. In designing SAAF, our solicitation of feedback from community members revealed the importance of racial socialization in buffering their children from the negative effects of racism. The current study's results, which indicate that racial socialization played an essential role in positive identity development and reduction in sexual risk behavior over time, empirically supports their perceptions.

In conclusion, evaluating SAAF through SEM not only demonstrated that SAAF was able to reduce sexual risk behaviors in African American youth as they made the transition to adolescence, but also illuminated how the program worked and provided support for the competence perspective, finding that parents do indeed make a difference in youths' lives. Parents who communicated messages about their values, history, and strengths were able to increase positive identity in youth and, as a result, reduce their participation in risk behavior. In addition, the current study focuses on African American

families in predominantly low-income communities in the rural Southeast. The uniqueness of the group is important because they constitute an underserved population. The strategies highlighted in the current paper can guide others in creating culturally competent programs for underserved populations.

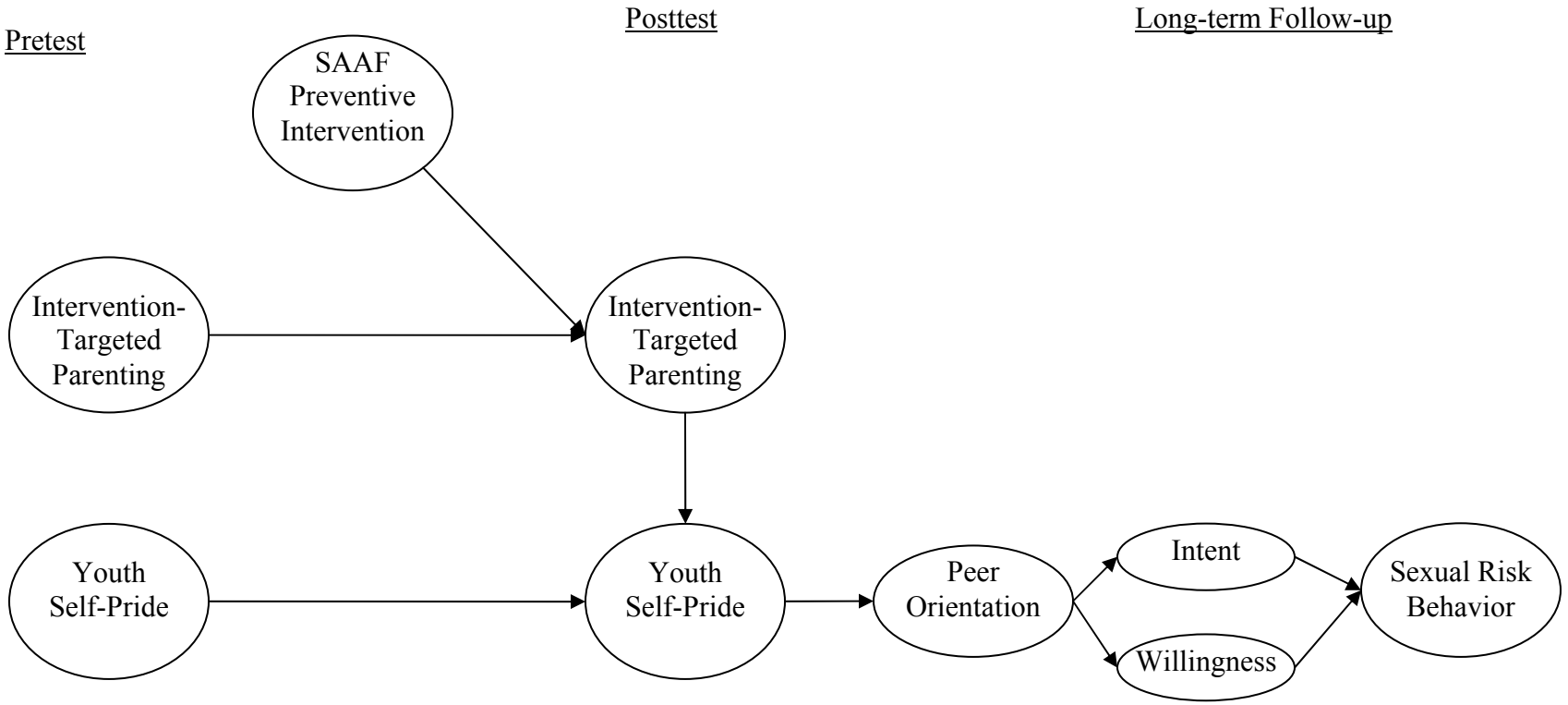

Figure 3.1. *Hypothetical Model*

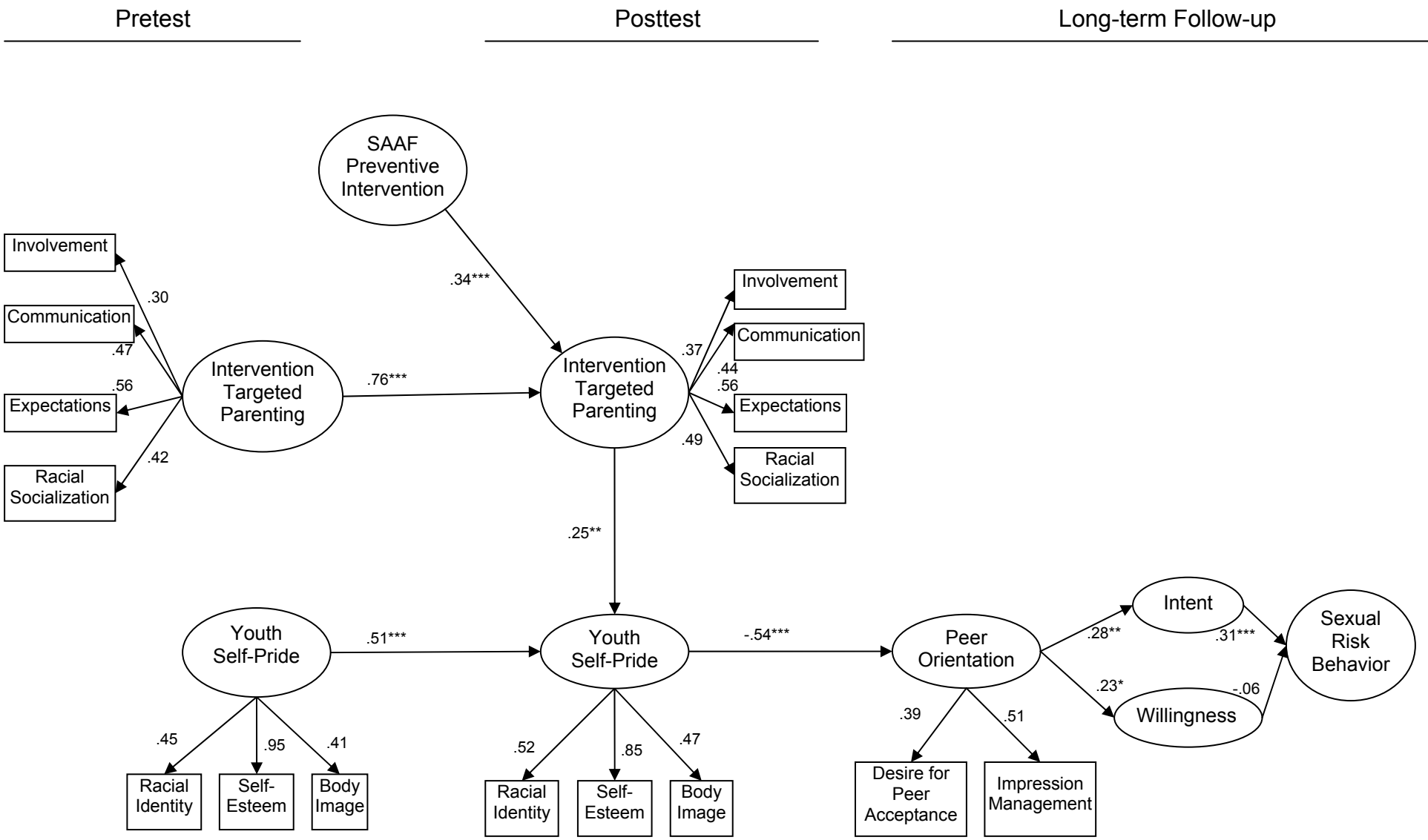

Figure 3.2. *Structural Model*
$\chi^2(df = 159) = 187.41$, $p = .06$; RMSEA = .03 (.00, .04) *p<.05; **p<.01; *** p<.001

Table 3.1. *Demographic Information by Intervention Group*

	SAAF Families (*n* = 157)	Control Families (*n* = 127)
Target child		
Gender (% female)	51.0	54.3
Age (*M, SD*)	11.06, 0.28	11.28, 0.45
Primary caregiver		
Number of children in home (*M, SD*)	2.85, 1.34	2.61, 1.11
Primary caregiver age (*M, SD*)	38.06, 7.94	38.07, 6.78
Completed high school (%)	77.3	85.2
Receiving public assistance (%)	41.4	48.0
Married/cohabiting (%)	45.2	31.5

Table 3.2. *SAAF Program Curriculum: Program and Targeted Behaviors*

Session	Parent Program Component	Parent Targeted Behaviors	Youth Program Component	Youth Targeted Behavior	Family Program Component	Family Targeted Behavior
1	Goals and Fears about Maturing Youth	Developmentally appropriate goals and fears about youth; Support youths' goals and dreams	Dreams and Goals	Goals for future	Positive Relationship	Building nurturing, supportive relationships; Enhancing parental involvement
2	Household Rules; Discipline	Value of having specified rules; Strategies for monitoring and discipline according to severity of behavior	Positive and Negative Images: Substance Use	Identifying positive self-qualities; Differentiating self from others who use substances; Changing perceptions that "all youth use substance"	Family Values	Developing shared understanding of family rules, family values; Creating a list of values to shield youth from risk
3	Family Routines Praise & Rewards	Value of everyday routines; Developmentally and contextually appropriate youth autonomy; Encourage good behavior	Normative Development; Sexual Temptations	Reasons why youth become sexually active; Developing approaches that foster resistance efficacy	Supporting Youth	Sharing views about how to reward and praise; Developing open communication about sexuality; Developing empathy for parental stress
4	Success in School	Benefits of involvement in school; Fostering youth success; Developing academic advocacy skills	Risky Situations	Identifying risk enhanced situations; Developing peer pressure resistance efficacy skills	Understanding Each Other	Identifying stress relievers; Helping each other meet family goals
5	Approachable Parents	Prevalence of risk behaviors among youth; Effective monitoring; Being an approachable parent	Peer Pressure; Parents' Concerns about Peer Affiliation	Developing peer pressure resistance efficacy skills (cont.); Understanding and appreciating parents	Working Together	Developing family plan for handling peer pressure and temptation; Sharing expectations and values about risk and friendship

6	Encouraging Racial Pride	Ways of handling discrimination; Building positive racial pride	Assertive Behaviors	Difference between passive, aggressive, and assertive behavior; Being assertive in difficult situations, such as racism	Strengths of Black Families	Identifying ways to handle difficult situations; Identifying strengths of African American families; Building strong racial pride in the family
7	Spending Time Together; Community Support	Maintaining family closeness as children become older; Avoiding conflict and negativity in response to youth's irritability; Drawing on community resources	Qualities of Good Friends	Qualities of good friends; Supporting friends; Talking with positive adolescent role models	Family Strengths	Family strengths; Establishing a family creed that reflects strength, growth, and competence

Table 3.3. *Study Measures*

Measure	No. of Items	Scale	Example of Items	Reporter	α
Participation in SAAF	1	0 = control, 1 = intervention	na	Random Assignment	na
Intervention-targeted parenting					
Involvement (5)	18	1 (*never*) –5 (*always*)	How often do you know where your child is when he/she is away from home?	Primary Caregiver *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .70
Communication about sex (34)	9	0 (*no*) – 2 (*yes, quite a bit*)	Have you ever talked to your child about HIV/AIDS?	Primary Caregiver *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .80
Clear expectations (35)	2	0 (*not true*) –2 (*very true or often true*)	I have told my child exactly what I feel about alcohol and drugs	Primary Caregiver *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .51
Racial socialization (17)	15	1 (*never*) – 3 (*3-5 times*)	How often in the past month have you talked to your child about important people or events in the history of your racial group?	Primary Caregiver *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .75
Youth self-pride					
Racial identity (36)	3	1 (*strongly disagree*) – 5 (*strongly agree*)	I am happy that I am Black	Adolescent *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .65
Self-esteem (37)	10	1 (*completely false*) – 5 (*completely true*)	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	Adolescent *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .60
Body image (38)	8	1 (*does not describe me at all*) – 4 (*describes me very well*)	I am proud of my body	Adolescent *(pretest & posttest)*	≥ .57
Peer orientation					
Desire for peer group acceptance (39)	8	1 (*a lot like me*) – 3 (*not like me*)	I am afraid to do things my friends won't approve of	Adolescent *(long-term follow-up)*	.64
Impression management (40)	4	1 (*untrue*) – 3 (*very true*)	I sometimes do things I really don't like just so other students will like me	Adolescent *(long-term follow-up)*	.45
Sexual intention (30)	4	1 (*definitely not*) – 4 (*definitely yes*)	Do you intend to have sex without a condom in the next year?	Adolescent *(long-term follow-up)*	.77
Sexual willingness (30)	1	1 (*not at all*) – 4 (*very*)	How willing would you be to have sex? (in response to vignette)	Adolescent *(long-term follow-up)*	na
Sexual behavior	9	0 (*no*) – 1 (*yes*)	The last time you had sex, did you use a condom?	Adolescent *(long-term follow-up)*	.67

Table 3.4. *Intercorrelations, Means, and Standard Deviations for All Study Variables*

Study Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Pretest: Parenting																			
1. Involvement	-	.16	.09	.19	.65	.01	.10	.06	.11	.16	.07	.17	.22	.13	-.33	-.15	.07	.01	.07
2. Communication about sex	.15	-	.21	.22	.16	.51	.18	.11	-.11	.03	-.08	.01	.11	.07	.08	.20	-.01	-.07	.09
3. Clear expectations	.19	.30	-	.27	.14	.29	.54	.23	.00	.05	.08	-.08	-.03	.08	.06	.14	.01	-.03	.13
4. Racial socialization	.10	.18	.20	-	.19	.16	.14	.51	.05	.17	.11	.13	.13	.14	-.09	-.15	-.01	-.03	.06
Posttest: Parenting																			
5. Involvement	.66	.08	.12	.10	-	.08	.22	.10	.01	.22	.01	.17	.33	.12	-.26	-.07	.04	.06	.01
6. Communication about sex	.18	.58	.21	.09	.20	-	.23	.07	-.05	.01	-.06	.02	-.08	.07	.15	.11	-.02	-.23	.31
7. Clear expectations	.11	.13	.25	.22	.22	.24	-	.20	-.10	.02	-.13	-.05	.01	.01	-.05	.04	.00	.06	-.06
8. Racial socialization	.08	.24	.30	.50	.16	.25	.30	-	.02	.07	-.11	.16	.10	.16	-.05	.03	.03	-.08	.04
Pretest: Self-Pride																			
9. Racial identity	.09	-.06	-.12	.01	-.02	-.08	-.03	-.01	-	.46	.15	.36	.14	.15	-.08	-.11	.04	.06	-.13
10. Self-esteem	.08	-.05	-.05	-.06	.03	.09	-.01	-.02	.39	-	.31	.28	.40	.21	-.17	-.36	-.03	.16	-.09
11. Body image	.07	.02	-.02	.12	.10	.04	.08	.05	.18	.42	-	.14	.25	.25	.04	-.05	-.02	.00	.04
Posttest: Self-Pride																			
12. Racial identity	.10	.12	.03	.05	.06	.06	.00	.10	.12	.21	.00	-	.35	.37	-.10	-.14	.14	.06	.02
13. Self-esteem	.19	.15	.06	.14	.14	.14	.10	.17	.14	.43	.23	.51	-	.44	-.36	-.22	.17	.28	-.08
14. Body image	.05	.16	.08	.13	.06	.14	.15	.11	.04	.22	.44	.13	.39	-	-.25	-.10	.05	.12	-.02
LTFU: Peer Orientation																			
15. Desire for peer acceptance	-.17	.15	.15	.10	-.23	.01	-.02	.06	-.11	-.15	.05	-.11	-.02	.03	-	.30	-.05	-.11	.09
16. Impression management	-.04	.02	.16	.05	-.03	.07	.15	.11	-.08	-.15	.04	-.15	-.25	-.08	.16	-	-.04	-.16	.05
LTFU: Sexual Risk																			
17. Intent	.05	.06	-.08	.00	-.06	-.05	-.10	-.07	.01	-.06	-.04	.09	.04	.03	-.03	.17	-	-.23	.00
18. Willingness	.17	-.07	.04	.11	.07	-.09	-.05	.03	.05	.01	.03	.04	.01	.02	-.01	.10	.16	-	.50
19. Behavior	.03	.09	.03	-.10	-.06	.08	-.21	.05	.12	.06	-.03	-.02	-.04	-.06	.03	.05	.01	.11	-
Intervention *M*	67.03	5.08	3.20	23.37	67.92	7.04	3.68	25.51	11.68	41.28	27.66	12.55	42.23	27.96	11.40	6.71	1.11	23.36	0.71
Intervention *SD*	6.82	3.00	1.09	5.57	7.18	3.09	0.66	5.81	2.92	6.85	3.67	2.40	6.23	3.70	3.26	1.59	0.43	1.30	2.41
Control *M*	67.56	5.68	3.32	24.17	67.09	6.43	3.35	24.24	12.13	43.09	28.50	12.43	42.19	28.15	11.25	6.44	1.13	23.19	0.68
Control *SD*	6.51	2.90	1.05	5.16	7.32	3.22	.98	5.81	2.81	6.05	3.62	2.40	6.02	3.75	3.69	1.40	0.51	1.62	2.36

Note: Correlations for the intervention group (n = 157) are below the diagonal; those for the control group (n = 127) are above the diagonal.
LTFU=Long-Term Follow-Up

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

As disparities continue to plague the field of prevention, it is clear that we are in dire need of strategies to make programs more culturally competent for effected populations. According to Cross' (1989) definition of cultural competence, this means that the program matches the ecological niche of the community; community members serve as experts in the development of the program; that the program incorporates community strengths in addition to stressors; and that respect for participants' lived experiences must be recognized. Also part of this perspective is the rejection of the notion of universal programs. Each community is characterized by a unique interaction of cultural categories. A program can only be culturally competent to the extent that it matches that unique context. Conceptual developments are being made ways to tailor programs to unique groups. However, program evaluation methodology has not kept pace with conceptual developments.

The two studies comprising this work contribute to the state of the art of the field of prevention, with methodologies that meet the challenges presented by conceptual advances in the development of culturally competent programs. The Strong African American Families program was designed to match the unique ecological niche of its participants, buffering rural African American youth from the negative effects of racism and poverty by fostering strengths of families and communities. Targeted outcomes and the design of the implementation were guided by a collaboration between communities

and researchers, which included more than a decade of basic research and direct input from community members. Through this collaboration, unique ecological stressors were identified as were strengths that families and communities relied on to buffer their children from these stressors. In addition, rather than having didactic goals, the philosophy behind program activities was to equip parents with information about the consequences of different caregiving practices and allow space for them to process which practices would be most appropriate for their family context. In this sense, the program was designed to demonstrate respect for families' lived experiences. Thus, the cultural competence perspective informed the development of the SAAF in many respects. The intent of the current project was to assess the extent to which implementation matched this perspective.

Examining the outcome evaluation in Study 2 provides for an assessment as to whether SAAF's targeted constructs were in fact important for positive youth development. Evidence emerged that the stressors and strengths targeted did in fact fit the ecological niche. Specifically, if racism was not an important stressor in this context, racial socialization and racial identity would not have been relevant and factor loadings would have shown that they did not hang with the other parenting and identity constructs. In contrast, I found that racial socialization did occur within the context of involved, communicative parenting and that racial identity was an important component of positive identity. However, it cannot be assumed that these findings are transferable to other contexts. Because the stressors and strengths will differ for each community, program designers must conduct an in depth assessment of stressors and strengths before the development of any program to ensure that it matches the ecological niche. Nonetheless,

given the widespread recognition of the negative effect of racism in the literature, its potential impact should always be investigated when creating programs for African American communities. In addition, the methodology in the current study should be used across contexts to assess the pathways of program effects and the extent to which programs match ecological niches as identified.

The process evaluation in Study 1 allows for an assessment of the implementation of SAAF activities. Evidence from the first paper demonstrates extensive use of strategies that appear to be culturally competent for this population. First, facilitators in the SAAF program acknowledged community members as experts in the sense that they extensively relied on the expertise of other members to assist each other in working out confusion as related to program activities. In addition, findings suggest that facilitators were indeed acting in ways that were respectful of the lived experience of participants. They were reluctant to negate participants when there were disagreements with answers as defined by the program curriculum. Instead, they frequently made use of strategies to contrast the different approaches. Facilitators also demonstrated similar life experiences and worldviews in the way that they responded to the conflict that arose between dealing with racism in assertive or aggressive ways. They responded to this conflict by acknowledging the ambiguity and providing strategies that parents could use to avoid responding in ways that might have negative consequences for themselves or their families. Finally, the laughing, animated talking, debating, and those issues that appeared to need no explanation surrounding these vignettes indicated engagement with the subject matter and the relevance of the program's content, suggesting that SAAF matched the ecological niche of the participants. These results support the use of racial matching of participants

and facilitators in the sense that this discussion would probably have developed very differently if led by a White facilitator.

Thus, CA proved to be very useful in providing a rich picture of what was happening in the program as well as ways that the program might be improved in the future. Again, these findings may not apply to other contexts. For instance, while racial matching seemed to be important in the current context, it may be less relevant in others. In a program designed to reduce HIV transmission to partners, for example, HIV positive concordance on serostatus may be more relevant than race. In addition, while laughter in this program seemed to indicate solidarity and cohesion, in a middle school sex education class, it might indicate embarrassment. However, they do point to certain strategies (i.e., the use of contrasting, relying on participants) that may be transferable to other settings. Thus, the findings from the current study provide a platform to begin to discuss the use these techniques for other programs. In conclusion, the current study focuses on African American families in predominantly low-income communities in the rural Southeast. The uniqueness of the group is important in that they are an underserved population. It is hoped that the strategies highlighted in the current paper used to make this program accessible and relevant for this population will provide an example for others who are trying to create culturally competent programs for underserved populations.

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Appendix A. *Fidelity Assessment Form for SAAF Activity 6.2*

Activity 6.2 - Matching Views to Action		Time for Activity 11:00	
Did Workshop Leader:		Begin ___:___	End ___:___
		No	Yes
1.	Put up three posters, **Views on Handling Racism**, on separate tables or taped to the wall?	0	1
2.	Have parents divide into pairs and each draw a Situation Card to discuss with their partner?	0	1
3.	Call the group back and ask one of member of each pair to read situations and stand by the Views card their situation matches? (give full credit even if parent does not stand by Views card)	0	1
4.	Have parents explain why they think their situation goes with that particular view?	0	1

Appendix B. *Transcription Conventions*

Symbol	Meaning
F	Facilitator
P1 (etc.)	Parent 1 (etc.)
G	whole group
( )	inaudible words spoken
< >	transcriber's description
(.)	pause
heh heh ha hah	laughter
underlining	emphasis
↑	upward intonation
↓	downward intonation
°soft°	softly spoken
[	overlapping speech
[	
=	no pause between turns