LINKING RACIAL SOCIALIZATION AND PARENTING OF RURAL AFRICAN

AMERICAN SINGLE-MOTHERS' TO YOUTH ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

by

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(Under the Direction of Velma McBride Murry)

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the influence of single mothering on rural African American youth self-pride and academic engagement.  The purposes of this study were to: (a) determine the contributions of competence promoting parenting in predicting youths' academic engagement and (b) to ascertain the predictive utility of youth self-pride to youths' academic engagement. The subsample, N = 131, was selected from a longitudinal study of families participating in the "Rural African American Program for the Study of Competence in Children and Single-Mother Families" which consisted of African American single mothers who had a 13- to 16-year-old child. Positive parent-youth relationship quality was significantly linked to elevated self-esteem for girls while low incidences of arguing were significantly associated with elevated self-esteem for boys.  Youth self-esteem was significantly associated with academic engagement over and above the contribution of parenting.  Findings highlight the importance of competence promoting parenting on youth self-esteem and academic engagement.

INDEX WORDS: African American single mother-headed families, Parenting skills, African American youth self-pride and academic engagement

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Numerous African Americans take advantage of educational opportunities; nevertheless, African Americans, in general, perform significantly lower academically than do their European Americans counterparts (Cole, 2003; Miller, 1999).  While females across all races tend to outperform males, African American females are twice as likely to make better grades in school compared to their African American male counterparts (Saunders, Davis, Williams, & Williams 2004).  Although much attention has been given to identifying factors associated with school failure, it is important to examine both risk as well as protective factors that have implications for understanding African American youth educational success.

In terms of risk factors, several structural issues common in African American families are often viewed as the primary contributor to educational disparities of their youth (i.e., Li & Wojtkiewicz, 1992; Mulkey & Harrington, 1992; Moynihan, 1965; Sandefur et al., 1992; Wojtkiewicz, 1993).  In particular, raising children in poverty without the presence of a father is thought to somehow deprive youth of opportunities to do well in school.  This school of thought is not uniquely used to explain variation in academic performance across race, but also within race differences between males and females' academic performance (Mulkey & Harrington, 1992).  African American youth are disproportionately reared without residential fathers, as such the absent father explanation is more often used to explain the low academic performance of African American males.  It is thought that their education is more likely to be compromised because of a lack of male role models to guide their thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes about school and education.  This theoretical explanation sets the tone for a plethora of studies about

African American males' academic performance, highlighting the deleterious consequences of residing in a single-mother household for youth adjustment and development (i.e., Bankston et al., 1998, Dornbusch et al., 1985, Featherstone et al., 1992; Vanden-Kiernan, et al., 1995). In fact, the work of Bankston and associates clearly portrays this school of thought. In their efforts to examine the effects of family structure on racial inequalities in school achievement, Bankston et al., found that "… family structure is consistently the most important school-level predictor of academic achievement" (p. 721) and conclude that racial inequalities in school achievement exist because African American children are raised in single mother-headed families. Until recently, few attempts have been undertaken to challenge this theoretical proposition. Accordingly, McLoyd (1990), as well as Murry and associates (2001) argue that family formation in and of itself does not create negative consequences for youth, but the lack of income that occurs with the absence of an additional adult to contribute to family income. Lack of dual-earning adults in a household place families, as well as youth, at a disadvantage because not having enough income to make ends meet creates circumstances that heightens maternal depression and anxiety (Brody, Murry, Kim & Brown; 2002; Murry et al., 2000); compromised maternal psychological functioning has negative implications for single mothers' parenting practices (McLoyd, 1990). This position has been supported in more recent studies that note the centrality of economic stress in explaining the increased educational disparities between children reared in single-parent and two-parent families (Brody, Murry, Kim, & Brown, 2002; Hetherington & Henderson, 1997).

Considering the relevance of economic stress for academic performance of rural African American youth reared in single-mother households is especially pertinent, as these families often live under conditions of severe and chronic economic stress, where poverty and

unemployment rates are among the highest in the nation (Dalaker, 2001). Unlike urban African American mothers rearing children in impoverished conditions, rural single parents may have greater difficulty parenting because of increased lack of economic support, access to recreational outlets, and availability of other amenities that are commonly available in urban settings (Brody & Flor, 1998). These circumstances have facilitated greater consideration of the linkages among social systems to the everyday life experiences of African Americans families, and youth development and adjustment (i.e., Chapell & Overton, 2002; Murry, 2000; Sanders, 1997). As such, Murry and colleagues (2000; 2001) contend that models of African American families should acknowledge and include the daily hassles associated with simply being "Black" in America (Murry et al., 2000, 2001). In addition, McLoyd (1990) points out that studies of African American children should incorporate the unique history of the oppression experienced by their parents and ancestors.

A major historical and contextual factor that exists in the lives of African American families is racial discrimination. The atrocities and inhumane treatment committed against African Americans during slavery did not end once the institution of slavery was eradicated. The consequences of slavery, such as racism against African Americans continue to have adverse affects on the African American community. According to Collins (2004) while America's contemporary racism (labelled by Collins as the "new racism") is often guised; it operates under the same tenets of historical racist ideology. Indeed, racist ideology continues and is displayed in "institutional, scientific (Hilliard, 1974, 1985), and personal racism [and in turn leads] to continued inequalities between African Americans and other Americans" (Garwood, 1992 as cited in Carroll, 1998 p. 1). Further, Murry and colleagues (2001) contend that external stressors such as racism interfere with African Americans' life opportunities, in the form of disparities

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between African Americans and White Americans in economic and political power, civil rights, and accessibility to resources. Thus, the effect of these racial inequalities between African Americans and European Americans create challenges for African American families, and may have a spill-over effect in youths' future aspirations, including perceptions and actual attainment of educational success. Our understanding of the interplay among poverty, racism, racial inequalities, and education has been enhanced through the work of John Ogbu. A brief discussion of his work is provided in the following section and a more detailed discussion is provided in Chapter 2.

Ogbu is a major leader in understanding how historical racism impacts African American youth academic success (i.e., Ogbu, 1986, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997). This noted scholar argues that African American youth devalue education; labeled as *academic apathy*, because of its association with the dominant oppressive culture. He voiced concerns about African American youths' impression management, the fact that African American youth may camouflage their ability to do well in school in order to avoid criticism from their peers for "acting White" (Fries-Britt, 1998; Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998; Majors & Billson, 1993; Ogbu, 1992). Based on this argument, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) contend that in order to be academically successful in the American society, African American youth must adopt a "raceless persona" by disengaging from their Black identity. Yet, because of the wide societal acceptance that African American youth do not perform as well in school as their White counterparts (i.e., Bankston & Caldas, 1998; Rodgers & Rose, 2001; Signer, Beasley, & Bauer, 1997) few studies have been undertaken to fully understand ways in which parents' discourage the occurrence of academic apathy and use of impression management among their children, and in turn heighten their youth's school performance. Of importance is a greater understanding of ways in which families protect youth

from internalizing negative messages about African Americans and the implication of these parenting behaviors for youths' vulnerability to academic apathy and impression management. Studies that maybe informative of this process are those that have identified linkages among racial socialization, youth racial identity, self-esteem, and positive academic outcomes (Murry, Berkel, Miller et al., 2006).

Focusing on the contribution of parenting to youth academic outcome has heuristic value in that researchers, with expertise in studies of African American families, have consistently shown that parents have the ability to protect and buffer youth from negative societal messages; including messages from their peers that may devalue school (Brody, Kim, Murry, Brown, 2005; Murry & Brody, 2002). In particular, results from a within group comparison study (Connell et al., 1994) demonstrate that, for African American youth, family support, as well as youths' sense of control over success or failure in school, and feelings of self worth and heightened emotional security with others, were important predictors of youth academic achievement. The combination of these theoretical explanations and empirical findings informed the conceptualization of the current investigation. The purpose of the current study is five-fold: (1) to examine the association among parenting practices, specifically, monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization with youth self-pride, and academic engagement; (2) to explore the combined and unique contributions of parenting behaviors, including racial socialization in predicting rural African American youths' academic engagement (youth academic apathy and impression management); (3) to examine the predictive utility of youth self-pride in explaining variations in youths' that academic apathy and impression management; (4) to determine whether the combination of each of the independent variables have differential predictive utility for youth

academic apathy and impression management; and finally (5) to determine whether gender influences the predictive utility of the independent variables in explaining variations in youths' academic engagement. The conceptual model can be found in Chapter 2 in Figure 1.

This study has several implications to this field of research and educators. First, findings from the current investigation may enhance educators understanding of ways in which rural African American youth may manifest school disengagement. Such knowledge can in turn guide preventive interventions aimed at increasing school bonding. Secondly, the study aims to inform the field of ways in which parenting processes serve as a protective role in enhancing academic engagement among rural African American youth. Finally, while most studies examining risk and protective factors to youths' academic performance have focused on urban youth, the present study adds to the literature by including data on rural African American families.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter provides the literature regarding African American parenting and

youth academic outcomes.  Particular attention is given to examining how rural African

American parents protect and buffer youth from negative societal messages, including messages

from their peers that may devalue school and promote school bonding.  I begin by detailing

racial disparities in academic performance followed by an examination of historical experiences

of African American families in America that may contribute to African American parenting

practices and youth academic engagement.

*Racial Disparities in Academic Performance*

While numerous African American youth succeed academically, America's educational

system is ripe with racial inequalities (Cole & Omari, 2003; Miller & MacIntosh, 1999).  African

Americans, in general, perform significantly lower academically than do their European

American counterparts.  Plausible explanations for racial educational gaps include distal and

proximal variables to African American youth, such as family (i.e., single motherhood and

poverty) and school environment (i.e., negative school environment and low teacher perceptions)

(Brody et al., 2005; Ferguson, 2003; Murry et al., 1997; Rodriguez & Jackson, 2002; Roscigno,

2000; Taylor et al., 1995).

Understanding ways to increase academic development among African American youth

is of utmost importance, as school performance is a major determinant of multiple domains of

youth development and adjustment (Saunders et al., 2004; Roderick, 2003).  Low educational

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attainment has been linked to high school drop out (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000), early sexual onset, off-time pregnancy and parenthood (Ross, Smith & Casey 1997), as well as elevated incidences of alcohol and substance use (Crum, Ensminger, Jo, & McCord, 1998). Conversely, extant studies have linked high academic performance to future employment opportunities, financial stability, and deterrence from various externalizing behaviors (i.e., Gill & Reynolds, 1999; Sirin & Sirin, 2004). The work of Ogbu is commonly used to explain low academic performance of African American youth. A brief description of his work is provided in the next section, including a discussion of limitations of the theory that served at the basis for the current investigation.

*Ogbu Explanation of Educational Disparities*

The theoretical contribution of John Ogbu (1986, 1992, 1994, 1997) has been consistently utilized to frame studies attempting to explain the potential implications of inequalities in American schools for African American youth. According to Ogbu, African American youths' perceptions of school and, arguably, racial discrimination against African Americans create barriers to their academic success (1986, 1994, 1997). Ogbu positions his theoretical explanation of academic disparities between African Americans and European Americans to the involuntary immigration status of African Americans, which placed them in opposition to European American culture and institutions. Moreover, Ogbu maintains that unlike voluntary immigrants (European Americans and other international minorities), African Americans were *forced* to be members of American society. As a result, European Americans and African Americans share an oppressor and oppressed relationship; thus, one of the consequences of this involuntary and caste-like membership in America is that African Americans respond with distrust of American institutions, particularly the school system (Ogbu,

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1986, 1992, 1994, 1997).  A consequence of this distrust is disengagement from school, because

schools are viewed as White institutions.  Ogbu (1997) maintains,

> "…that a relationship riddled with conflict and suspicion makes it difficult for Blacks to
>
> accept and internalize the schools' goals, standards, and teaching and learning
>
> approaches, and this situation contributes to the poor school performance of Black
>
> children" (p. 246-7).

Moreover, in an earlier writing, both Fordham and Ogbu (1986) noted that:

> "Subordinate minorities like black Americans develop a sense of collective identity or
>
> sense of peoplehood in opposition to the social identity of white Americans because of
>
> the way white Americans treat them in economic, political, social, and psychological
>
> domains, including white exclusion of these groups from true assimilation.  Along with
>
> the formation of an oppositional social identity, subordinate minorities also develop an
>
> oppositional cultural frame of reference which includes devices for protecting their
>
> identity and for maintaining boundaries between them and white Americans" (p. 181).

Thus, in order to be academically successful in the American society, Fordham and Ogbu argue

that African American youth must adopt a raceless persona by disengaging from their Black

identity.  The process of disengagement from mainstream norms and mores creates a situation

whereby African American children are forced to assimilate into dominate European culture in

order to achieve academically (1986, 1994, 1997, 1998).  The notion that of viewing European

American and academic achievement as synonymous may be perpetuated by African American

youths' peer groups; who perceive doing well in the educational arena as "acting white".  Of

importance to the present study is that Ogbu's explanation for low academic achievement among

African Americans is void of considering more proximal contextual processes that greatly

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influence youth development.  Despite this simplistic explanation, the oppositional theory continues to be widely accepted.

*Re-conceptualizing the Oppositional Cultural Theoretical Explanation*

Although several interpretations and modifications of Ogbu's theory have emerged since its inception, we still know little about how society shapes youths' perception and in turn influence school bonding.  For example, Steinberg et al. (2003) offered support for Ogbu's view by highlighting the inverse relationship between low racial identity and academic success.  On the other hand, Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998) questioned the factuality of the oppositional cultural explanation and suggest that because African Americans have historically held the belief that education is a mechanism for upward mobility, and by valuing education, their children, actually, manifest greater school bonding than do their European counterparts. Based on this explanation, it seems important to consider the relevance of contextual processes in explaining this phenomenon.  One significant assumption in Ogbu's theory is that society is more powerful in guiding the academic aspirations of African American youths and other aspects of their world, in particular parents.  In other words, Ogbu's theory does not consider the central role of African American parents in buffering their children from the potential negative effects of racial discrimination, that may include not only denigration of their children's sense of self but may also perpetuate images of academic failure.

Serving as the impetus the current study, was the unique and protective nature of parenting among African Americans for their children's development.  According to ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), as well as Waters and Lawrence's (1993) theory of competent family functioning, patterns occurring inside the family are often adaptive responses to challenging circumstances emerging from social contextual factors external to the family.

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Thus, in order to more fully explain African American youths' perception of and beliefs about

education and school, there is a need to recognize that the parenting of African Americans may

ameliorate the relations between risk; particularly messages from peers that devalue the

importance of school, and academic outcomes. Given this, the present study sought to explore

how parenting influences youths' academic engagement. A discussion of the literature that

informed the study purposes, as previously stated, is provided below. Before discussing related

literature, a brief overview of the various theories that informed the conceptualization of the

current study is provided.

*Conceptual Model*

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model. I hypothesize that competence promoting

parenting practices, including racial socialization, positive parent-youth relationship quality,

monitoring, consistent discipline and family communication patterns will enhance youth self-

pride (youth self-esteem and racial pride). I also predict that youth self-pride will elevate youth

school engagement, as evidenced by reduce use of impression management and reports of

academic apathy.

Figure 1. Heuristic Model
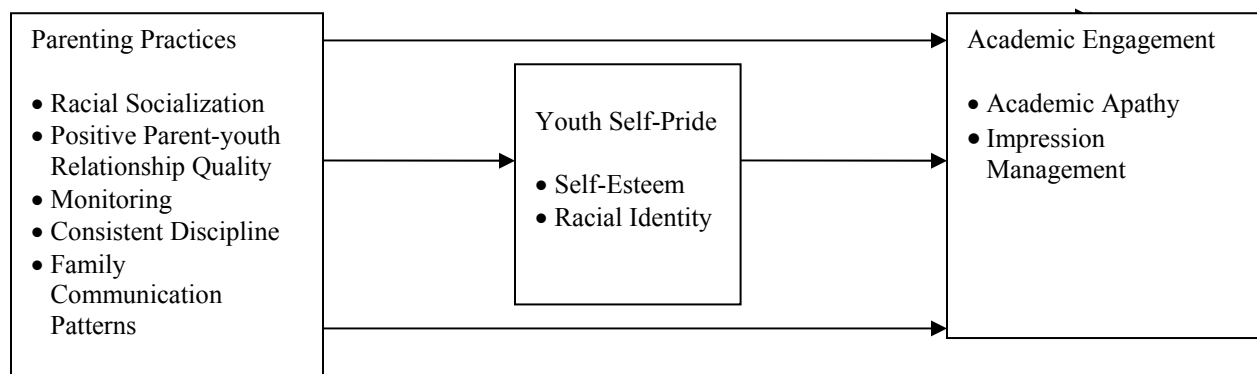
Several sources were used to guide the conceptualization of the present study. In particular, Brody and Murry's longitudinal prospective investigations of rural African American families were used to frame the current study. They argue that while most studies examining risk and protective factors that have implication for youth development have focused on urban youth, further investigation including rural youth is necessary because rural African American families may encounter diverse challenges and function differently than urban African American families (i.e., Brody, Kim, Murry, & Brown, 2003; Kim, Brody, Murry, 2003; Murry & Brody, 2004). Differences have been identified in several areas, including the lack of support and community facilities in rural areas, which may be available in an urban setting. Additionally, job opportunities for rural parents and adolescents can be significantly lower than in urban areas (Albrecht, 2000). In spite of these adversities, rural African American mothers exhibit characteristics that promote resilience and allow them to raise competent children and adolescents (Brody, Ge, et al., 2001; Brody, Murry, Kim, & Brown, 2002; Murry & Brody, 1999; Murry, Bynum, Brody, Willert, & Stephens, 2001). The works of Brody, Murry and colleagues, have served a major role in informing the field about the effects of parenting practices on youth competence (i.e., academic competence, self-regulation, self-worth, sexual self concepts) and in decreasing externalizing behavior (i.e., aggressive and delinquent behavior, academic performance) in youth.

The ecological risk/protection model of family functioning also guides this study, which contends that many factors, including single parenting and poverty, may be viewed as obstacles in child rearing (Bogenschneider, Wu, Raffaelli & Tsay, 1996). However, the parenting behaviors of African Americans offset social, economic, political, and environmental risks that in turn protect their children from the fallout that could compromise development and

adjustment.  This model is also useful because it allows investigators to study human

development by integrating components of ecological theory and resiliency perspectives and

clarifies the link between risk and protective processes on individual, family, and community

levels.  Moreover, this theoretical perspective is useful in explaining why some African

American youth do not succumb to adversity (i.e., racial discrimination) (Murry & Brody, 1999),

and why a vast majority of African American children at risk grow up to lead successful adult

lives (Brodsky, 1999).

In addition to framing the present study, this ecological risk/protection model theory has

heuristic value for informing preventive interventions, as it emphasizes the importance of

including both risk and protective processes, individual or environmental characteristics, in

studies designed to understand ways to enhance youths' and families' ability to resist stressful

events, that in turn promote adaptive coping and competence (Gramezy, 1983; Steinberg, 1991;

Werner, as sited in Bogenschneider, 1996).  As such, this theory encourages one to give

consideration to factors, behaviors and circumstances, including individual and family resources,

skills, and abilities that may engender one's ability to overcome adversity.  This

conceptualization is similar to the explanations offered by Murry and Brody (1999) in their

investigation of processes that African American parents engage in, to rear competent children.

The current study aims to contribute to this area of research by focusing on parenting

practices of rural African American single mothers, who are often rearing children in adverse

situations (Brody & Flor, 1998; Murry & Brody, 1999).  Studying rural African American single

mothers is particularly important because single mothers head more than half of rural African

American families with children, and half of these mothers live at or below the poverty line (U.S.

Bureau of the Census, 1996).  Collins (2004) argues that racism operates in gender-specific ways

and is often exacerbated in the lives of African American single mothers. As a result of the intersections of racism and sexism, African American single mothers earn considerably less than their European American counterparts and two-parent African American families, and the lack of financial resources have varying effects on African American youth (Brody & Flor, 1998). Nevertheless, while much is known about the deleterious consequences often associated with rearing children in low-income single-mother headed families, little is known about the parenting practices of single-mothers that increase the chances for their children's success (see Brody et al., 1999; 2002; Jackson & Schemes, 2005; Murry et al., 2001 for exceptions). Findings from Brody, Flor and Gibson (1999), Brody et al., (2002) and Murry et al., (2001) suggest that African American youth reared in these home environments tend to fare well developmentally. Therefore, despite the fact that a salient proportion of single, rural African American mothers are rearing children with little assistance in potentially stressful environments, parenting practices enlisted may foster opportunities for successful outcomes among rural African American youth. The present study was designed to future our understanding of the mechanism through which parenting behaviors of rural African American single-mothers forecast school engagement in their youth. Such knowledge has implications for explaining variations in African American youths' academic success. An overview of extant studies that informed the conceptualization and the development of study hypotheses are provided in the following section.

<center>Review of Related Literature</center>

In the following section, a review of extant studies that link protective parenting processes to youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride) and youth academic apathy and impression management are presented. Studies that informed the predicted association between youth self-pride and youth academic apathy and impression management are discussed. The

next session summarizes studies that illustrate the potential gender differences in rural African American youth academic apathy and impression management.

*Parenting Practices*

Parenting practices, specifically, monitoring, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization have been consistently linked to positive youth outcomes.

*Parenting practices and youth academic outcomes.* According to Brody, Kim, Murry and Brown (2005), competence promoting parents provide high levels of child monitoring, involvement, instrumental assistance, emotional support, and participate in frequent harmonious parent-child discussion in which both parents' and youths' viewpoints are considered. I contend that competence promoting parenting has a direct effect on youth self-pride and a direct and indirect effect on youth academic apathy and impression management.

The importance of doing well in school is central to the rubric of African American family life (Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001). For example, academic achievement is often considered to be an avenue to financial and social status in the African American community; and African American parents have historically sought to instil the importance of educational attainment in their children. As noted, earlier, Ogbu's explanation for low academic achievement, although informative, is void of considering the role of parenting in filtering negative societal messages that may compromise their children's development. Thus, some youth may camouflage their academic abilities to gain favorable peer endorsement, (i.e., impression management) and deemphasize the importance of the benefits of educational attainment (i.e., academic apathy). On the other hand, prior research has demonstrated that African American parents have the ability to protect and buffer youth from messages from their

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peers that may devalue school (Brody, Kim, Murry, Brown, 2005; Murry & Brody, 2002). For instance, Brody et al., (2005) performed a longitudinal study, which provides an insightful understanding of the role of competence promoting parenting in protecting youth from internalizing negative educational messages from peers and foster youth academic success. With a sample of 152 first- and second born African American siblings (means ages 12.7 and 10.2 years at the first wave of data collection), they found that youth who received competence promoting parenting were less likely to camouflage their academic ability, and demonstrated less preoccupation with peer group acceptance than youth who did not receive such parenting. Studies show that youths who do not receive instrumental and emotional parental support are less likely to internalize and assimilate to conventional values. Further, lack of parental support increases the likelihood that youth will reject parental values, become academically invested and are more prone to seek and conform to peers' values (Bogenschneider, Wu, Raffaelli, & Tsay, 1998; Brody, Flor, Hollett–Wright, & McCoy, 1998; Fuligni & Eccles, 1993; Steinberg, 1987). Thus competence promoting parenting processes support youth academic engagement by instilling in them the ability to withstand and avoid internalizing messages from peers that devalue academic pursuits.

Thus, relying on the work of previous family scientists, it seems apparent that involved, supportive, vigilant parents aid their children in withstanding less favorable messages from both peers and society at-large by promoting youth self-pride. Support for this hypothesis can be found in the work of Dekovic and Meeus (1997). Although not focusing specifically on the influence of peers on youths' academic beliefs and behaviors, with a sample of 508 families with 12-18 year-old youth, these scholars found that the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship affects the youths' self-pride, which in turn affects the adolescent's peer interactions. In addition,

a finding from Brody et al., (2005) show that adolescent's self-concept serves a mediating role in the relationship between competence promoting parenting and youth's involvement with peers. Parents who have high levels of involvement, instrumental assistance, emotional support, and participate in frequent harmonious parent-child discussion will promote self-pride in their children, which in turn lowers academic apathy and decreases the use of academic self-presentation among rural African American youth.

Although no studies have addressed the link between parents promotion of youth self-pride in promoting youth academic engagement, a study hypothesis can be derived from the broader literature. The present study argues that competence promoting parenting protects youth from developing peer relationships that devalue school achievement by promoting youth self-pride. I also argue that additional parenting practices, such as racial socialization, are linked to positive youths' academic promoting behaviors through youth self-pride. The significance of racial socialization for African American youth development is discussed in the following section.

*Racial socialization.* As members of a historically oppressed group, African American children will encounter racial discrimination (Murry, 2000). Hill (2001) identifies racial socialization as an essential protective factor for African American children in combating discrimination. Webster (2004) defines socialization as the communication of societal norms and values. Sharing the same purpose of communicating norms and values, Miller and MacIntosh (1999) define racial socialization as the process through which African American parents attempt to raise physically and emotionally healthy children who are African American in a society in which being Black has negative connotations (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Murry 2000). The present study conceptualized racial socialization as parents' messages that focus on

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management of prejudice and discrimination through communication regarding discrimination and communication emphasizing ethnic pride, heritage, and diversity.

*Linking racial socialization to youth self-esteem and racial pride.* Racial socialization has been linked to numerous positive youth outcomes; including, self-esteem, racial pride, and academic performance (i.e., Brody, Murry, McNair, Chen, Gibbons, Gerrard, Wills, 2005; Murry, Brody, McNair, Luo, Gibbons, Gerrard, Wills, 2005; Sanders, 1997; Sanders, Thompson & Vetta, 1994; Phinney, 1990).  The process by which racial socialization influences these outcomes has been sparsely discussed in previous studies.  As such, extant studies show that parental racial socialization encourages youth academic performance by promoting positive self-esteem and racial pride (i.e., Murry et al., 2005; Sanders, 1997; Sanders, Thompson, Vetta, 1994).  The influence of parent-youth interactions on youth identity development is further supported by Phinney's (1990) racial identity development theory, which suggests that heightened sense of racial awareness and self-acceptance occurs through positive interaction with others.

The work of Murry and Brody (1999) is important in examining rural single mothers' racial socialization practices and how parental messages about race protect African American youth from internalizing negative messages about their race and in turn foster positive self-esteem and racial pride.  With a sample of 156 single mothers with a 6- to 9-year-old child, results showed that exposure to messages that focus on Black culture were associated with increased self-worth among children.  Self-worth was also linked with other contextual processes including more financial resources and developmental goals aimed at encouraging children to do their best.

Links between financial resources and African American adolescent prosocial behavior were supported in a study conducted by Brody and Flor (1997) as well. They found that African American children living in homes characterized by financial strain were less likely to achieve academically than those reared in more financially stable environments. Lack of adequate financial resources was associated with more depressive symptoms and lower self-esteem among mothers, which in turn impacted mothers' ability to consistently engage family routines and to provide a supportive relationship with their children. Parent involvement influenced youths' ability to self-regulate and in turn youths' academic success. Although a direct link between racial socialization and youth academic performance was not examined in the current study, these studies are informative to the current investigation because many of the families included in the present study experienced financial hardships. Conger and Elder (1994) work supports these findings; they found that economic stress impacts paternal psychological functioning, parent–child relational processes, and child outcomes. In sum, taken together, these studies suggest that financial resources and the extent to which parents have supportive relationships with their children influences how children perform academically.

Other studies have described ways in which contextual processes are informative for understanding the influence of racial socialization on youth development. For example, Sanders' (1997) contend that academically successful youths were more likely to report that racial socialization messages from their parents were an important factor in developing their racial pride. Students who performed well academically and who held high levels of racial pride were aware of racial discrimination and reported that educational attainment was an important factor in achieving their future goals. Further, these students were equipped to resist negative beliefs, attitudes, and practices that discard the importance of education. Given this, it appears that racial

socialization indirectly promotes youth's academic engagement through youth self pride. Nevertheless, varying racial socialization messages can differ in their ability to promote self-esteem and racial pride.

Constantine and Blackmon (2002) provide a clear understanding of how parental racial socialization messages can impact African American youths' self-esteem. These scholars developed five domains of racial socialization: cultural coping with antagonism, cultural pride reinforcement, cultural appreciation of legacy, cultural alertness to discrimination, and cultural endorsement of the mainstream, and examined the extent to which they were uniquely correlated with self-esteem. With a sample of 115 middle-school African American youth in a predominately African American school, they found youth self-esteem was largely determined by the type of racial socialization they received. They found that racial socialization messages that focused on cultural pride were significantly and positively associated with youth self-esteem. While racial socialization that focused on cultural endorsement of the mainstream was negatively associated with youth school self-esteem; meaning that racial socialization messages that focused on adopting more Eurocentric cultural values and behaviors (i.e., "acting white") may function as a deterrent to youth academic self-efficacy. Noteworthy is that Constantine and Blackmon emphasized the importance of parenting providing racial socialization messages that focus on cultural pride and awareness, as such socialization promotes not only racial pride but also facilitates elevated self-esteem in the school arena. This link between self-esteem and racial pride to academic apathy and impression management will be further discussed in a later section. The following section discusses how varying racial socialization messages can lead to differing youth academic feelings and beliefs about the importance of school to their future.

*Racial socialization and youth academic apathy.* Racial socialization has also been associated with African American youths' beliefs about the importance of academic performance (Fordham and Ogbu; 1986, Caughty et al., 2002; Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Frabutt 2002; Hughes & Chen 1997; Hughes & Johnson 2001; Miller 1999; Murry 2000; Murry & Brody, 2002; Peters, 1988; Sanders et al., 1994). Borrowing from previous research, I contend that racial socialization influences youth academics indirectly through youth self-pride (Brody et al., 2005; Murry et al., 2005). Of importance is that parents transmit messages to increase youths' belief in the benefits of doing well in school. The work of Ogbu (1997) and Fordham and Ogbu (1986) provide support for the role of parental racial socialization in developing youth academic apathy. Accordingly, Ogbu (1997) reports that parents' verbal and non-verbal communication about race can lead to African American children's' school disenchantment and writes:

> "On the one hand, parents expose [to their children] the need to work hard in school and obtain more education than they did. On the other hand, the same parents teach their children verbally and through their own life experiences about unemployment, underemployment, and other discrimination. Eventually, Black children become disillusioned and "give up," blaming "the system" for their school failure, just as their parents blame "the system" for their own failures" (p. 245).

It is Ogbu's argument that many African American youth believe that their race has a negative impact on their success regardless of their academic achievements. Other scholars support Ogbu's work and report that parental racial socialization messages that emphasized that discrimination is a barrier to success compromise youth academic performance (Hughes & Chen, 1997) by creating a sense of helplessness and hopelessness in ones' ability to influence outcomes through personal efforts. Similarly, Taylor, Chatters, Tucker and Lewis (1990) found that

African American children who received messages focusing on racism as a barrier to success were less likely to believe that doing well in school would lead to better outcomes than children who did not receive such messages.  Further, Steinberg (2002) reports,  "It is true that adolescents who believe that their opportunities for occupational success are unfairly constrained by society, achieve less in school than do peers who do not hold this belief" (p. 402). Nevertheless, parental racial socialization can promote positive youth feelings about the relevance of academic performance to their futures.

Positive racial messages from parents can promote positive academic outcomes.  Murry and Brody (2002) suggest that African American children exposed to messages about the victimization of African Americans may lead to a sense of helplessness and hopelessness. However African American children who are exposed to explicit messages about racial discrimination are more likely to reject stereotypic images of their race, exhibit high self-esteem, and experience academic success.

In summary, racial socialization can protect youth from internalizing negative messages about the effects of racism on African American children by allowing African American parents to create a social reality that cultivates African American youths sense of self-pride that in turn elevate their desire to engage in competent behaviors, including developing positive attitudes about educational attainment, and in turn a desire to perform well academically (Murry, 2000; Murry & Brody 2002).  Based on the work of Brody and Murry (2004) as well as Stevenson, (1996), adaptive racial socialization messages prove to be best in fostering emotionally healthy African American youth.  In the present study, I contend that academic engagement will emerge as a consequence of racial socialization processes and that youth self-esteem and racial pride will mediate this relationship.

Thus far, the present paper provides an examination of the protective nature and predictive utility of African American parenting practices on youth self-esteem, racial pride, academic apathy and impression management. It focuses on how parents circumvent the development of these two outcomes (academic apathy and impression management) by the way in which they rear their children. Outcomes were selected as a way of illustrating the process by which youth begin to manifest low school performance. It was hypothesized that parenting that is characterized as competence promoting and the use of adaptive racial socialization, would indirectly affect both academic apathy and impression management through the promotion of positive youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride). In the following section, I will further examine youth self-pride and its importance in predicting youth academic apathy and impression management.

*Youth Self-Pride*

    *Racial identity and self-esteem*. Although Fordham and Ogbu (1986) argue that a prerequisite to African American youth academic success is a raceless persona, which he later defines as "acting white," several scholars (i.e., Capell & Overton, 2002; Sanders, 1997; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001) have directly challenged this argument and suggest that heightened racial pride is pivotal to African American youth academic success. To substantiate this argument, Capell and Overton tested Fordham and Ogbu's (1986) racelessness persona theory with a sample of 330 African American students, and contrary to Ogbu's theory, they found that students who reported elevated racial pride had significantly *higher* academic scores than those students with less racial pride. Similarly, Sanders (1997) also observed that African American children can and do achieve well academically, while maintaining racial pride and awareness. Specifically, based on data obtained from a sample of 28 African American

urban 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, Sanders found that the majority of the high academic performing students were both aware of racial discrimination and demonstrated pride in their Black identity. Further, these high performing students reported that racial discrimination motivated them to succeed academically and that they responded to racial discrimination by performing twice as hard as non-Black students.  Concomitantly, Spencer and colleagues (2001) associated high academic achieving students with racial pride and heightened awareness of racism.  The work of Miller and MacIntosh (2002) may have theoretical significance for this hypothesis.  Based on results emerging from a study of protective factors that facilitate resilience among a sample of 131 urban African American youth, they reported that educational involvement was enhanced by the protective utility of racial socialization and positive racial identity.

Academic apathy and impression management may be manifestations of ineffective coping.  For instance, elevated self-pride may provide youth with the capacity to avoid distractions that interfere with their academic performance, while those without a strong sense of racial pride may not be able to respond to hassles with coping strategies that counteract the tendency to engage in such behaviors as academic apathy or may be more prone to affiliate with peers that devalue school.  An examination of the literature connecting African American youth self-pride to youth academic apathy and impression management is provided in the following section.

*Academic Apathy*

Academic apathy is a manifestation of youths' school bonding and was included as an outcome variable in the present study (See Figure 1).  Academic apathy is a precursor to understanding academic success because, while the literature suggests that self-esteem and racial identity predict youth academic outcomes (i.e., Ethier & Deaux, 1990; DuBois, Burk-Braxton, et

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al., 2002), Honora (2002) and Steinberg (2001) suggest that youths' academic apathy mediates this relationship.  Thus, in order to further understand the process through which racial socialization and youth self-pride are associated with youths' academic performance, it is important to consider the extent to which these factors effect youth's perception of school. Academic apathy is youths' perception of the importance of doing well in school to their future (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995) that may in turn be pivotal to understanding and predicting actual school performance.

It is suggested that African American youth under perform in school as a result of academic apathy.  Indeed, studies have shown that African American youth are more likely than European American students to believe that doing well in school *does not* lead to increased economic opportunities (Mickelson, 1990 & Ogbu, 1994).  Mickelson (1990) noted that lack of belief in the educational system may be more pervasive among African American youth because they see prejudicially imposed job ceilings on the career development of their own and other minority groups (i.e., Hispanic Americans and Native American).  The foundation for this belief is not without recognition; according to the U.S Department of Education (2002), African Americans earn less than European Americans having similar educational achievement and experience.  Nevertheless, in general there is a positive correlation between education and higher salaries (Gill & Reynolds 1999; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin 2004).  Thus, according to Nurmi (1991), it is important for African American youth to link doing well in school to tangible future payoffs in order to do well in school, and high self-esteem and racial pride equip African American youth to make the connection between academic success and future success (Ethier & Deaux, 1990;

DuBois, Burk-Braxton, et al., 2002). The present paper hypothesized that academic apathy would be less apparent among African American youth who report elevated self-pride. The following section examines impression management as the second outcome variable in the present study (See Figure 1).

*Impression Management*

As previously noted, impression management is the extent to which youth camouflaged their abilities in an attempt to make their peers' impression of them more favorable (Brody, Kim, Murry, Brown, 2005). It is suggested that if peers value negative behavior that youth will act negatively in order to fit in (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, Ogbu, 1992; Steinberg, Brown & Dornbusch, 1996); which includes camouflaging their academic abilities (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Cook & Ludwig, 1998; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Fuligni & Eccles, 1993; Ogbu, 1991, 1992; Steinberg et al., 1996). This is particularly important as African American youth seek to do well academically, because these findings suggest that African American youth devalue education because of its association with the dominant oppressive culture. So, in order to avoid criticism from their peers for "acting white" or to appear to be accepting the dominant oppressive culture, then African American youth must mask their ability to do well in school (Fries-Britt, 1998; Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998; Majors & Billson, 1993; Ogbu, 1992) and instead impress their peers who are less accepting of the mores of the dominant culture. Thus, this theory suggests that in order to achieve academically, African American youth must overcome messages from their peers that devalue school. This may be difficult for youth who are concerned about peer acceptation. Despite the plausibility of this explanation, Lundy (2003) challenges the oppositional cultural arguments and contends that cultural pride and academic success are not incompatible for African American youth. Further, African American youth can

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and do perform well academically while maintaining cultural pride and avoid camouflaging their academic abilities for peer acceptance. Lundy states (2003):

> "What the proponents of oppositional culture theory and acting white fail to perceive is that black students, in their rejection of white culture references, are embracing their own culture and asserting African agency. It is not rejection of academic success but rather a rejection of white cultural hegemony… black students rightfully yearn to be culturally centered (i.e., Afrocentric and academically successful). These two goals should not to be incompatible and indeed are not compatible (p. 463).

In summary, overviews of extant studies show inconsistencies in the use of Ogbu's oppositional theory to explain low academic performance of African American youth. As stated early, a major missing link in this study is the important role of family and socialization processes of African Americans that have historically buffered youth from the negative effects of racism. The present study aims to address this gap by examining the relationship and predictive utility of two parenting domains and youth self-pride on academic apathy and impression management. I view youth self-pride as pivotal in understanding the link between parenting and both academic apathy and impression management.

A second goal of the current study was to examine the extent to which gender forecast differences in African American youths' academic apathy and impression management. The literature that informed the position of inquiry is provided in the following section.

*Gender Educational Disparities and Potential Gender Differences in Academic Engagement*

Gender comparison studies have shown wider gaps between males and females, with females academically outperforming males (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992; Bankston & Caldas, 1998). In general, European American females are positioned at the top, followed by

European American males, then African American females, with African American males'

performance at the lowest level (Cokley, 2001; Saunders, et al., 2004). Further, gender disparity

is more pronounced amongst African American males and females (Steinberg, Dornbusch, &

Brown, 1992; Bankston & Caldas, 1998). In fact, African American females are twice as likely

to make better grades in school as their African American male counterparts (Saunders, Davis,

Williams & Williams, 2004).

In an attempt to explain these gender differences, some scholars argue that females hold

higher limited future outlooks than males (i.e., Greene, Sapp & Chissom, 1990; Greene &

Wheatley, 1992; Sundbergy, Poole, & Tyler, 1983). However, Honora (2002) refutes this claim

and argues that these findings may not be reflective of *all* youth because the data are primarily

based on European American samples; in addition, most studies have not adequately examined

the intersection of race and gender in understanding future outlooks of African Americans. To

address this deficit, Honora conducted a within-group study of African American students and

found that African American females reported more favorable academic attitudes than African

American males; and that these girls not only had higher educational goals but also anticipated

obtaining gainful employment, marrying, and reported having more family oriented goals than

did boys. Boys, on the other hand, held goals more related to sports and leisure. Cokley (2001)

found similarly results studying the psychosocial development of 258 African American

undergraduates. Accordingly, while African American males and females reported similar racial

pride, African American females generally were more motivated about being in college than

were the male students. African American girls reported that they needed to work harder

because of "being Black and being a woman" (p. 90).

Honora (2002) attributed these gender differences to varying experiences of African American males and females and suggests that these gender differences are a result of negative societal stereotypes of African American males that constrain their beliefs about their future options. In support, Anderson (1999) argues that African American boys are often alienated from the school arena and in turn connect this school separation to their experiences of alienation in society. This suggests that African American boys are more vulnerable to racism that in turn compromises their self-pride. This then may lead to higher academic apathy and impression management in African American boys than girls. In spite of these circumstances, African American parents can mediate this path through protective practices (competence promoting parenting and racial socialization) that promote self-pride in African American youth that in turn influences youth academic apathy and impression management.

In spite of societal constraints of future opportunities for African American males, many African American males resist these messages and succeed academically. High academically achieving African American children in Sanders' work (1997) not only demonstrated an awareness of the intersection of race and gender in discrimination but also were aware of how racism could potentially affect their future. An African American boy reported the additional challenges he believed he would encounter:

> "Racism makes me strive harder. I see Black men everywhere. They are there, making it, regardless of what people say, and I see getting there as a challenge… I know that it is going to be hard because boys and girls have the same dreams inside, but boys have more pressure because people believe that if you have seen one Black man you have seen them all. (Kenneth, 13 years old, 3.3 GPA) " (p. 90).

African American males can overcome societal messages and do well in school. This overcoming ability can be attributed to parental racial socialization that promote self-pride and equip African American youth to prevail in the presence of racial discrimination. Although academic apathy and impression management may be lower for African American girls than boys, racial socialization and competence promoting parenting both promote self-pride that in turn leads to low academic apathy and impression management for African American youth.

*Research Goals*

Research goals of the present study were to identify factors that explain variations in reports of academic apathy and impression management among rural African American youth reared by single-mothers. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the predictive utility of parenting processes on youth self-pride, academic apathy and impression management. This study targets rural African American families because their unique circumstances may increase youths' pessimistic view of their future, including questioning the benefits of school performance for future opportunities. Specifically, many of these children are reared in neighborhoods characterized by chronic economic stress, few community services, and a lack of educational opportunities (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996).

Based on extant studies, the following hypotheses were posited and tested in the current study:

*Hypotheses*

1. Parenting practices, specifically, monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride).

2. Heightened youth self-pride will elevate youth academic engagement as evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy.

3. Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of parenting (adaptive racial socialization and competence promoting parenting) on youth academic apathy and impression management.

Chapter 3

METHOD

To test the proposed hypotheses, secondary data analyses was performed on the eighth

wave of data from a longitudinal project, Rural African American Program for the Study of

Competence in Children and Single-Mother Families.  The decision to select the eighth wave, as

oppose to other waves, was based on the match between the heuristic model guiding the study

and the availability of measures.  While measures for parent-youth relationship quality and youth

academic engagement were consistent across waves, measures for racial socialization,

monitoring, consistent discipline, family communication patterns and youth self-esteem and

racial identity were added during the eight wave.  The purpose of this larger study is to examine

the links among family processes, parenting, and psychosocial competence of children who live

in economically stressed families.  Participants were recruited from nonmetropolitan counties in

Georgia (See Brody & Flor, 1997) for a detailed description of the larger study).  A description

of the recruitment and data collection procedures of the larger project is provided below.

Families were recruited through community contacts.  An African American staff

member contacted African American community members, such as pastors and teachers, and

explained the research project to them.  After community members understood the purposes of

the project and developed trusting relationships with the staff member, the community members

contacted prospective participant families and informed them about the purposes of the project.

Each community contact gave to the research staff member the names of families who expressed

interest in *the* project, and the staff member contacted the families.  Only counties in which at

least 25% of the population is African American were sampled to ensure that viable African American community existed. Each family was paid $100 at each wave of data collection for their participation in the study.

To enhance rapport and cultural understanding, African American students and community members served as home visitors to collect data from the families. Prior to data collection, the visitors received one month of training in administering the protocol. The instruments and procedures were developed and refined with the help of a focus group of 40 African American community members who were representative of the population from which our sample was drawn. This focus group process has been described in detail elsewhere (Brody & Flor, 1997, 1998; Brody & Stoneman, 1992).

*Procedure*

Field researchers made two home visits to each family as close to a week apart as the families' schedules allowed. Self-reports and observational data were collected during the visits, each of which lasted about 2 hours. African American university students and community members served as field researchers, and they received one month of training in administering the self- report instruments and in observational procedures. During the first visit, the mother gave informed consent to her own and her child's participation in the study, and the child assented to his or her own participation.

At both home visits, self-report questionnaires were administered to the mother and the target child in an interview format. Each was interviewed privately, without other family members present or able to overhear the conversation. At no time during the presentation of the instruments did the field researchers assume that a family member could read. This literacy concern was one reason for adopting an interview format. When responses to a Likert-type scale

were required, participants were shown a card with a series of graduated dots whose size corresponded to the range in magnitude of responses from which to choose, and they were asked to indicate their feelings using the dots on the card.

*Sample Description of the Current Study*

The present study includes 131 African American single mothers who had a 13- to 16-year-old child at the time of data collection and who reside in rural Georgia.  The mothers were, on average 39 years (*SD* =7.18).  Youth were on average 14 years (*SD*=.82) with 55.7% male and 44.3% female.  In terms of education, 37.9% of mothers had graduated from high school or obtained a GED, 26.5% completed grades 9 through 11, and 32.6% were educated beyond high school.  The majority of mothers were employed (75%).  On average 2.72 children were in the household.  Average monthly income was $1,483 (range = $99 - $6,016 monthly mean income).  The majority of participants (59%) rented their residences, 52% were homeowners, and the remaining participants either lived in public housing (n=7), with a parent (n=4), or reported "other" living arrangements (n=6).  Table 1 includes descriptive statistics on the study sample.

*Measures*

Each of the measures selected for the study reflects mothers' and youths' self-report.  These measures assessed mothers' parenting practices.  Youths' self-pride, academic apathy and impression management were also assessed.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographic Characteristics for Mother's Report (N = 131)*

|  | N | Percent | M | SD | Range |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mother's age (years) |  |  | 39.24 | 7.18 | 29-68 |
| Education[a] |  |  | 2.19 | 1.19 | 1-4 |
| % Employed |  | 75 |  |  |  |
| Number of children in home |  |  | 2.72 | 1.26 | 1-6 |
| Per Capita Income |  |  | 1482.71 | 989.59 | 99-6015.60 |
| Youth's age (years) |  |  | 14.23 | .818 | 13-16 |
| Male | 73 | 55.7 | 55.3 |  |  |
| Female | 58 | 44.3 | 44.7 |  |  |

Note. [a]: 1 = less than high school, 2 = high school or GED, 3 = high school + post-secondary, 4 = college or better.

*Mother's Reports*

*Parenting Practices.* Parenting practices were measured by parent-youth relationship quality, monitoring, consistent discipline, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization. Parent-youth relationship was assessed using mothers' responses to the Interactive Behavior Questionnaire ($\alpha$ =.86) (IBQ; Prinz, Foster, Kent, & O'Leary, 1979). The Interactive Behavior Questionnaire includes 20 true-false items include statements such as "You listen when your child needs somebody to talk to," "You understand your child, you know where he or she is coming from," "You enjoy spending time with your child," and "You think you and your child get along well." Child monitoring and consistent discipline was assessed using mothers'

responses to the General Child Management subscale's child monitoring ($\alpha$ =.78) and consistent

discipline ($\alpha$ =.71) subscales (Conger, 1989). The child monitoring subscale includes 5 items on

a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*) and includes statements such as "How often

do you know who your child is with when he/she is away from home?" The consistent discipline

subscale includes 4 items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*) and includes

statements such as "Once a discipline has been decided, how often can your child get out of it?"

Family communication patterns was assessed using mothers' responses to the Family Process

subscale's conversation has to be careful ($\alpha$ =.60) and extent of arguing ($\alpha$ =.85) subscales. The

conversation has to be careful subscale includes 7 items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*I*

*usually do most of the talking and often I catch myself just telling my child what to do or believe*)

to 4 (*We usually talk about it openly and we each share our side of the issue*) and includes

statements such as "When you and your child talk about his/her school work, how does the

conversation go?" The ineffective arguing subscale includes 8 items on a Likert scale ranging

from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*always/nearly every time*) and includes statements such as "When you and

your child talk about his/her choice of friends, how often do you end up arguing?" Adaptive

racial socialization was assessed using the Racial Socialization Scale ($\alpha$ =.89) (Hughes &

Johnson, 2001). All items are presented on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 3 (*three to*

*five times*). The stem for each question starts with, "How often in the past month have you ..."

with the stem followed by specific racial socialization behaviors. This scale assessed mother's

messages that focused on African American race and included items such as "talked to your

child about discrimination or prejudice against your racial group," and "encouraged your child to

keep his/her distance from kids of a different race or ethnicity than yours? This scale also

assessed mother's messages that focused on other racial African American groups and included

items such as "Warned you to be careful around kids or adults of a different race or ethnicity than yours?"

*Mediating Effects*

*Youth's Reports*

 *Youth self-pride.* Youth self-pride was measured using youth self-esteem reports on the Rosenberg Self-esteem Questionnaire ($\alpha$ =.79) (Rosenberg, 1965) and youth racial pride reports on the Centrality-Black Pride subscale of the Inventory of Black Identity ($\alpha$ =.61) (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997; Smith, & Brookins, 1997).  The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale includes ten items that are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from *completely false* to *completely true*.  A sample of the items includes: "I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others," "I take a positive attitude towards myself," and "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself."  The Centrality-Black Pride subscale is composed of 8 items presented on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and includes statements such as "Most of my close friends are Black" and "Being Black is an important part of my self-image".

*Dependent Variable*

 *Youth academic engagement.* Two measures were selected to assess youth academic outcomes using two subscales of the Raclessness Questionnaire (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995).  All items are presented on a true/false Likert scale ranging from 1 (*untrue*) to 5 (*very true*).  The Academic Apathy subscale ($\alpha$ =.66) consisted of 8 items that assessed youths' perception of the importance of school to their future and included statements such as "I feel my future is limited" and "The things you are taught in school are pretty useless once you graduate from high school".  The Impression Management subscale ($\alpha$ =.58) consisted of 4 items that assessed the extent to

which youth camouflaged their abilities in an attempt to make their peers' impression of them more favorable. It included items such as "I feel I must act less intelligent than I am so other students will not make fun of me" and "I could probably do better in school, but I don't try because I don't want to be labeled a 'braniniac' or a 'nerd'".

*Data Analyses*

Bivariate correlational analyses were conducted on all study variables. Pearson *r* was conducted to test the following two hypotheses.

1. Heightened parenting practices specifically, monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride).

2. Heightened youth self-pride will elevate youth academic engagement as evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy.

Multiple regressions were used to test the following hypothesis.

3. Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of parenting (competence promoting parenting and adaptive racial socialization) on youth academic apathy and impression management.

To test hypothesis 3, two hierarchical regression analyses were executed to examine the unique contribution of parenting and youth self-pride on youth academic apathy and impression management. Parenting practices were entered first and youth self-pride was entered second because it further adds to African American youth's since of self. Partial *F*s were used to determine whether youth self-pride contributed significantly beyond the variables entered previously.

Because previous literature suggests gender differences in academic apathy and impression management, the model also examined for gender differences.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter highlights the major findings related to each study hypothesis and specifies

the extent to which the proposed hypotheses were supported.  Hierarchical multiple regression

analyses were used to examine the hypothesized associations.  Selected analytical procedures

include the use of Pearson product moment correlation to examine the bivariate relationships of

all study variables, particularly the relationship of mothers' report of competence promoting

parenting with youth self-pride and academic engagement.  Hierarchical regression analysis was

used to identify factors that significantly predict youth academic apathy and impression

management for rural African American youths.  A two step process was used to create a

parsimonious model based on criterion of selection.  The first step added variables to the model

based on theoretical assumptions.  The second step tested the validity of the parsimonious model

created by statistical package with theoretical reasons for variable selection.  High concurrence

was found between statistical package and theory; theoretical paths were supported by statistical

findings.  Results are reflective of those two steps.

*Descriptive Statistics*

Data for the present study reflects reports from parents and youth of the eight wave of a

longitudinal project, Rural African American Program for the Study of Competence in Children

and Single-Mother Families (Brody & Murry, 2003).  The decision to select the eighth wave, as

oppose to other waves, was based on the match between the heuristic model guiding the study

and the availability of measures.  Measures for parent-youth relationship quality and youth

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academic engagement were consistent across waves; however, measures for racial socialization, monitoring, consistent discipline, family communication patterns and youth self-esteem and racial identity were added during the eight wave. The present study includes 131 African American single mothers who had a 13- to 16-year-old child at the time of data collection and who reside in rural Georgia. The mothers were, on average 39 years ($SD$ =7.18). Youth were, on average, 14 years ($SD$ =.82), with 55.7% male and 44.3% female. In terms of education, 37.9% of mothers had graduated from high school or obtained a GED, 26.5% completed grades 9 through 11, and 32.6% were educated beyond high school. The majority of mothers were employed (75%). On average, 2.72 children were in the household. Average monthly income was $1,483 (range = $99 - $6,016 monthly mean income). The majority of participants (45%) rented their residences, 42% were homeowners, and the remaining participants either lived in public housing (n = 7), with a parent (n = 4), or reported "other" living arrangements (n=6). Table 1 presents descriptive data of the study sample.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographic Characteristics for Mother's Report (N = 131)*

|  | N | Percent | *M* | *SD* | *Range* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mother's age (years) |  |  | 39.24 | 7.18 | 29-68 |
| Education[a] |  |  | 2.19 | 1.19 | 1-4 |
| % Employed |  | 75 |  |  |  |
| Number of children in home |  |  | 2.72 | 1.26 | 1-6 |
| Per Capita Income |  |  | 1482.71 | 989.59 | 99-6015.60 |
| Youth's age (years) |  |  | 14.23 | .818 | 13-16 |
| Male | 73 | 55.3 |  |  |  |
| Female | 58 | 44.7 |  |  |  |

Note. ª: 1 = less than high school, 2 = high school or GED, 3 = high school + post-secondary, 4 = college or better

*Mean Comparison of Study Variables*

Results of mean comparison of the selected study variables are presented in Table 2.  In terms of parent-child relationship quality, mothers reported having a "very" good relationship with their child ($M = 16.40$, $SD = 2.27$), and indicated that they were vigilant with regards to monitoring the whereabouts of their children.  Their reports of monitoring ranged from 15 to 25 summed scores on this measure.

In terms of mother's consistent discipline, there was also a range in composite responses from 6 to 20 which indicates that on most occasions, mothers were consistent in disciplining their child.  Scores on arguing, based on mothers' response, revealed limited disagreements between mother and youth ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 4.31$).  A more detailed examination of their reports revealed that most of the time mothers have low incidences of poor discussion quality with their child.  In terms of racial socialization, mothers' reported moderate levels of racial socialization ($M = 23.51$, $SD = 5.09$).  Thus most mothers participated in adaptive racial socialization practices with their child at least one or two times per month.  For youth reports, most youth reported positive self-esteem ($M = 41.67$, $SD = 5.73$).  Most youth also reported low academic apathy ($M = 10.54$, $SD = 2.27$) and impression management ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.21$).

Table 2

*Mean, Standard Deviation, and Ranges of All Study Variables*

|  | *M* | *SD* | *Range* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Parenting |  |  |  |
| Parent-Youth Relationship Quality [a] | 16.40 | 2.27 | 2-20 |
| Monitoring [b] | 21.68 | 2.51 | 15-25 |
| Consistent Discipline [b] | 15.38 | 2.98 | 6-20 |
| Family Communication Patterns Arguing [c] | 4.31 | 4.19 | 0-17 |
| Poor Discussion Quality [d] | .63 | 1.084 | 0-6 |
| Racial Socialization [e] | 23.51 | 5.09 | 15-40 |
| Youth Self-Pride |  |  |  |
| Self-Esteem [f] | 41.67 | 5.73 | 27-50 |
| Racial Pride [g] | 32.26 | 5.24 | 17-40 |
| Academic Engagement |  |  |  |
| Academic Apathy [g] | 10.54 | 2.27 | 8-17 |
| Impression Management [g] | 4.92 | 1.21 | 4-10 |

Note    [a]: 0 = false, 1 - true
       [b]: 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always
       [c]: 0 = never, 1 = not very often, 2 = sometimes, 3 = more often than not, 4 = always
       [d]: 1 = I usually do most of the talking and often I catch myself just telling my child what
         to do or believe, 2 = We usually talk about it in a way where we have to watch what we say
         because someone may get upset, 3 = We usually talk about it openly and we each share our side
         of the issue
       [e]: 0 = never, 1 = one or two times, 2 = three to five times
       [f]: 1 = completely false, 2 = mainly false, 3 = partly true and partly false, 4 = mainly true,
         5 = completely true
       [g]: 1 = untrue, 2 = sort of true, 3 =very true

In summary, based on descriptive statistics presented, most of the mothers' report having

a good relationship with their youth, often participated in monitoring, frequently engaged in

consistent discipline, positive communication patterns (low incidences of arguing and low

incidents of poor discussion quality) and moderate use of racial socialization practices.  Most

youth reported positive self-esteem and racial pride.  The majority of youth also reported low academic apathy and impression management.

*Hypothesis 1: Correlates of Parenting Practices and Youth Self-Pride*

*Hypothesis 1: Parenting practices, specifically, monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride).*  To test this hypothesis, correlations between each of the outcome variables (self-esteem and racial pride) and each independent variable (monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization) were conducted.  Results are presented in Table 3.  In particular, results of Pearson product moment correlations indicate the relation between mother's report of arguing was inversely related to youth self-esteem ($r = -.20$, $p < .05$) and racial pride ($r = -.17$, $p < .05$).  Youth were more likely to report having elevated self-esteem and racial pride when their mothers reported low incidences of arguing with their youth.  Based upon these results, Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported.  As hypothesized, low incidences of arguing enhanced youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride).  However, other parenting practices (i.e., monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization) did not enhance youth self-pride.

*Hypothesis 2: Correlates of Youth Self-Pride and Academic Engagement*

*Hypothesis 2: Heightened youth self-pride will elevate youth academic engagement as evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy.*  To test this hypothesis, correlations between each of the outcome variables (academic apathy and impression management) and each indicator of youth self-pride (self-esteem and racial pride)

were performed.  Results are presented in Table 3, which indicate that youth self-esteem was

inversely related to youths' reports of both academic apathy ($r = -.50, p < .01$) and impression

management ($r = -.44, p < .01$).  Racial pride, however, was inversely related to youth academic

apathy (r = -.21, p < .05).  The relationship between racial pride and impression management did

not reach statistical significance.  Based upon these results, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

As hypothesized, heightened youth self-esteem elevated youth academic engagement as

evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy; however,

there was no significant relationship between racial pride and academic outcomes.

Table 3

*Intercorrelation of Parenting Practices, and Youth Outcomes (N = 131)*

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Parenting* | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Monitoring | .16 | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Consistent Discipline | .30** | .15 | -- | | | | | | | |
| Family Communication Patterns | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Arguing | -.54** | -.26** | -.33** | -- | | | | | | |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | -.11 | -.06 | -.10 | .09 | -- | | | | | |
| 6. Racial Socialization | -.19* | -.05 | -.18* | .16 | -.02 | -- | | | | |
| *Youth Self-Pride* | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Self-Esteem | .15 | .06 | -.13 | -.20* | -.13 | .05 | -- | | | |
| 8. Racial Pride | .12 | -.05 | -.02 | -.17* | -.15 | .06 | .47** | -- | | |
| *Academic Engagement* | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9. Academic Apathy | -.20* | -.31** | -.11 | .11 | .07 | .10 | -.50** | -.21* | -- | |
| 10. Impression Management | -.11 | -.29** | -.11 | .06 | .04 | .04 | -.44** | -.14 | .78** | -- |

** p ≤ .01    * p ≤ .05

*Hypothesis 3: Hierarchical Regression Predicting Youth Self-Pride and Academic Engagement*

  *Hypothesis 3: Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of competence promoting parenting on youth academic apathy and impression management.* Table 4 presents the parsimonious models that emerged from hierarchical analyses. To test the mediational effect of youth self-pride on the targeted outcomes, variables were entered in blocks with parenting variables entered first followed by youth self-pride.

  *Academic Apathy.* The results of this analysis indicated that parenting was a significant predictor of the variability in youths' academic apathy, explaining 10.5% of the variance [Adjusted $R^2$ = .105, $F(6,124)$ = 3.55, $p < .01$]. Of the parenting variables, however, only monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of youth academic apathy ($\beta = -.27$, $p \le .01$). Based on the beta coefficient, results revealed that elevated monitoring decreased youth's tendency to engage in academic apathy. An additional analysis was performed to examine the extent to which youth self-pride mediated the link between academic apathy. Results from this analyses revealed that youth self-pride did significantly predicted academic apathy over and above the contribution of parenting. Indeed, self-pride accounted for a significant proportion of academic apathy variance after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F(8,122)$ = 9.99, $p < .001$, explaining 25% of the variance as indicated by $R^{2-}$change from the first to second model (See Table 4). The combination of parenting and youth self-pride explained for 36% of the variance in youth academic apathy. Examination of parenting beta coefficients when self-pride is entered in the second model, revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring ($\beta= -.26$, $p \le .01$), youth self-esteem ($\beta= -.21$, $p \le .01$), followed by arguing ($\beta= -.11$, $p \le .05$).

  *Impression Management.* Factors predicting impression management are included in Table 4. The results of this analysis indicated that parenting was a significant predictor of

variation in youths' reports of impression management, explaining 7.5% of the variability [Adjusted $R^2$ = .075, $F$ (6,124) = 2.76, $p$ < .05].  Similar to predictors of academic apathy, of the parenting variables, only monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of youth impression management ($\beta$= -.14, p ≤ .01); elevated monitoring decreased youths the likelihood that youth would endorse the use of impression management.  An additional mediational analysis was performed to determine the unique contribution of youth self-pride in explaining variations in impression management over and over and above the contribution of parenting.  Indeed, youth self-pride accounted for a significant proportion of variance in impression management after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F$ (8,122) = 7.60, $p$ < .001.  There was a 22% change in the amount of variance from the first to second model.  The combination of parenting and youth self-pride explained for 29% of the variance in youth impression management.  Examination of parenting beta coefficients when self-pride is entered in the second model, revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring $\beta$= -.13, p ≤ .01), youth self-esteem $\beta$= -.11, p ≤ .01), followed by arguing $\beta$= -.06, p ≤ .05).  Based upon these results, Hypothesis 3 was partially supported.  While  As hypothesized, youth self-esteem mediated the effect of two parenting practices (high monitoring and low incidences of arguing) on youth academic apathy and impression management, other parenting practices (i.e., consistent discipline, poor discussion quality, and parent-youth relationship) were not significant.

Previous literature suggests gender differences in youth self-pride and academic engagement. Thus, to better understand the possible moderating effect of gender, I examined the hypothesis by youth's gender.  Findings are presented separately for boys and girls.

Table 4

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Youth Self-Pride and Academic*

*Engagement (N = 131)*

|  | Academic Apathy | | Impression Management | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 |
| *Parenting* | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -.083 | -.050 | -.016 | .000 |
| 2. Monitoring | -.268** | -.257** | -.139** | -.131** |
| 3. Consistent Discipline | -.013 | -.104 | -.019 | -.064 |
| Family Communication Patterns 4. Arguing | -.054 | -.113* | -.032 | -.059* |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | .342 | .302 | .124 | .104 |
| 6. Racial Socialization | -.020 | .037 | .026 | -.034 |
| *Self-Pride* | | | | |
| 1. Self-Esteem | | -.208** | | -.107** |
| 2. Racial Pride | | .000 | | .011 |
| *Adjusted R$^2$* | .105** | .356** | .075* | .289** |
| *F* | 3.55 | 9.99 | 2.76 | 7.60 |
| *df* | 6, 124 | 8, 122 | 6, 124 | 8, 122 |
| *R$^2$ change* | -- | .249** | -- | .215** |

** $p \leq .01$     * $p \leq .05$

*Hypotheses:  Results by Gender*

*Boys*

Hypothesis 1: Heightened competence promoting parenting will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride). To test this hypothesis for boys, correlations between each of the outcome variables (self-esteem and racial pride) and each independent variable (relationship quality, monitoring, consistent discipline, arguing, poor discussion quality, and racial socialization) were conducted. Results are presented in Table 5. Results of Pearson product moment correlations indicate that arguing was inversely related to youth self-esteem ($r = -.27$, $p < .05$) and racial pride ($r = -.30$, $p < .01$). Boys were more likely to report having elevated self-esteem and racial pride when their mothers reported low incidences of arguing with their sons. Based upon these results, Hypothesis 1 was only partially supported for boys. As hypothesized, low incidences of arguing enhanced sons' self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride). However, other parenting practices (i.e., monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization) did not enhance sons self-pride.

Hypothesis 2: Heightened youth self-pride will elevate youth academic engagement as evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy. To test this hypothesis, correlations between each of the outcome variables (academic apathy and impression management) and each independent variable (self-esteem and racial pride) were conducted for boys. Results are presented in Table 5. Results of Pearson product moment correlations indicate that youth self-esteem was inversely related to youth academic apathy ($r = -.47$, $p < .01$) and impression management ($r = -.38$, $p < .01$). Based upon these results, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported for boys. As hypothesized, high self-esteem lowered youth

academic apathy and impression management; however, this relationship was not significant for youth racial pride.

Table 5

*Intercorrelation of Parenting Practices, and Youth Outcomes for Boys (N = 73)*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Parenting* | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Monitoring | .12 | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Consistent Discipline Family Communication Patterns | .35** | .15 | -- | | | | | | | |
| 4. Arguing | -.44** | -.30* | -.32** | -- | | | | | | |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | -.241* | .02 | -.07 | .17 | -- | | | | | |
| 6. Racial Socialization | -.14 | .04 | -.14 | .17 | .16 | -- | | | | |
| *Youth Self-Pride* 7. Self-Esteem | .04 | -.05 | .08 | -.27* | -.14 | .17 | -- | | | |
| 8. Racial Pride | .17 | -.03 | .08 | -.30** | -.22 | .03 | .51** | -- | | |
| *Academic Engagement* 9. Academic Apathy | -.25* | -.18 | -.27* | .16 | .33** | -.02 | -.47** | -.19 | -- | |
| 10. Impression Management | -.15 | -.11 | -.28* | .15 | .28* | .06 | -.38** | -.09 | .73** | -- |

** $p \leq .01$    * $p \leq .05$

*Hypothesis 3: Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of competence promoting parenting on youth academic apathy and impression management.*

*Academic Apathy.* The results of this analysis indicated that parenting was a significant contributor to the amount of variability in sons' academic apathy, explaining 14.2% of the variance [Adjusted $R^2$ = .14, $F (6,66)$ = 2.98, $p < .05$].  Results are presented in Table 6.  Of the parenting variables, poor discussion quality emerged as a significant predictor of sons' academic apathy ($\beta$= .81, p $\leq$ .01); low incidences of poor discussion quality decreased son's tendency to engage in academic apathy.  An additional analysis was performed to examine the extent to which youth self-pride mediated the link between academic apathy.  Results from this analyses revealed that youth self-pride significantly predicted academic apathy over and above the

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contribution of parenting. Indeed, self-pride accounted for a significant proportion of academic apathy variance after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F(8, 64) = 5.72$, $p < .001$, explaining 20.4% of the variance as indicated by $R^{2}$ change from the first to second model. The combination of parenting and youth self-pride explained for 34% of the variance in youth academic apathy. Examination of parenting beta coefficients when self-pride is entered in the second model, revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from poor discussion quality ($\beta$= .68, p ≤ .01), son's self-esteem ($\beta$= -.23, p ≤ .01), followed by monitoring ($\beta$= -.19, p ≤ .01).

*Impression Management.* The results of this analysis indicated that parenting did not contribute to a significant amount of variability in son's impression management, Adjusted $R^{2}$ = .077, $F(6, 66) = 2$, $p > .05$. An additional analysis was performed to examine the extent to which youth self-pride mediated the link between impression management. Results from this analyses revealed that youth self-pride accounted for a significant proportion of impression management variance after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F(8, 64) = 3.53$, $p < .001$. There was a 15% change in variance from the first to second model. The combination of parenting and youth self-pride explained for 22% of the variance in youth impression management. Examination of parenting beta coefficients revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from poor discussion quality ($\beta$= .32, p ≤ .05), son's self-esteem ($\beta$= -.11, p ≤ .01) followed by consistent discipline ($\beta$= -.10, p ≤ .05).

In summary, while findings for boys were primarily consistent with the total population, there were areas of variation. For instance, like the total population, boys were more likely to report having elevated self-esteem and racial pride when their mothers reported low incidences of arguing and boy's self-esteem was inversely related to youth academic apathy and impression management. In a few areas, results for boy varied from findings from the total sample. For

example, while, monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of academic apathy for the total sample, poor discussion quality emerged as the only significant predictor of sons' academic apathy. However, again resembling the total sample, sons self-pride significantly predicted academic apathy and impression management over and above the contribution of parenting. When boys self-pride was entered for academic apathy, the greatest contribution emerged from poor discussion quality, son's self-esteem, followed by monitoring. Nevertheless, when self-pride was entered is entered for the total population, the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring, youth self-esteem, followed by arguing. Surprisingly, differing from the total sample parenting did not contribute to a significant amount of variability in son's impression management.

*Girls*

*Hypothesis 1: Heightened competence promoting parenting will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride).* To test this hypothesis for girls, correlations between each of the outcome variables (self-esteem and racial pride) and each independent variable (parent-youth relationship quality, monitoring, consistent discipline, family communication patterns (arguing and poor discussion quality) and racial socialization) were conducted. Results are presented in Table 7. Results of Pearson product moment correlations indicate that parent-youth relationship quality ($r = .26$, $p < .05$) was related to youth self-esteem. Based upon these results, hypothesis 1 was only partially supported for girls. As hypothesized, positive parent-youth relationship enhanced daughter's self-esteem. However, other parenting practices (i.e., monitoring, consistent discipline, arguing, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization) did not enhance girls self-pride and none of the parenting practices were significantly related to girl's racial pride.

Table 6

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Youth Self-Pride and Academic*

*Engagement for Boys (N = 73)*

| | Academic Apathy | | Impression Management | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 |
| *Parenting* | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -.069 | -.109 | .006 | -.013 |
| 2. Monitoring | -.130 | -.194* | -.036 | -.059 |
| 3. Consistent Discipline | -.181 | -.160 | -.109* | -.099* |
| Family Communication Patterns | -.021 | -.111 | .004 | -.029 |
| 4. Arguing | | | | |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | .811** | .679** | .361* | .322* |
| 6. Racial Socialization | -.043 | .007 | -.004 | -.017 |
| *Self-Pride* | | | | |
| 1. Self-Esteem | | -.230** | | -.105** |
| 2. Racial Pride | | .053 | | .045 |
| *Adjusted R$^2$* | .142* | .344** | .077 | .219** |
| *F* | 2.98 | 5.72 | 2.00 | 3.53 |
| *df* | 6, 66 | 8, 64 | 6, 66 | 8, 64 |
| *R$^2$ change* | -- | .204** | -- | .152** |

** p ≤ .01     * p ≤ .05

*Hypothesis 2: Heightened youth self-pride will elevate youth academic engagement as*

*evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy.* To test

this hypothesis, correlations between each of the outcome variables (academic apathy and

impression management) and each independent variable (self-esteem and racial pride) were conducted for girls. Results are presented in Table 7. Results of Pearson product moment correlations indicate that youth self-esteem was inversely related to youth academic apathy ($r = -.53$, $p < .01$) and impression management ($r = -.48$, $p < .05$). Based upon these results, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported for girls. As hypothesized, high self-esteem lowered youth academic apathy and impression management; however, this relationship was not significant for youth racial pride.

*Hypothesis 3: Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of competence promoting parenting on youth academic apathy and impression management.*

   *Academic Apathy.* The results of this analysis indicated that parenting was a significant contributor to the amount of variability in daughters' academic apathy, explaining 20.1% of the variance [Adjusted $R^2 = .20$, $F (6, 51) = 3.39$, $p < .01$]. Results are presented in Table 8. Of the parenting variables, only monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of daughters' academic apathy ($\beta = -.40$, $p \le .01$); evaluated monitoring decreased daughters tendency to engage in academic apathy. An additional analysis was performed to examine the extent to which girls self-pride mediated the link between academic apathy. Results from this analyses revealed that youth self-pride significantly predicted academic apathy over and above the contribution of parenting. Indeed, self-pride accounted for a significant proportion of academic apathy variance after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F (8, 49) = 5.78$, $p < .001$. The combination of parenting and youth self-pride explained for 40% of the variance in daughters' academic apathy. Examination of parenting beta coefficients when self-pride is entered in the second model, revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring ($\beta = -.134$, $p \le .01$), followed by daughters' self-esteem ($\beta = .16$, $p \le .01$).

Table 7

*Intercorrelation of Parenting Practices, and Youth Outcomes for Girls (N = 58)*

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Parenting* | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Monitoring | .23 | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Consistent Discipline | .27* | .17 | -- | | | | | | | |
| Family Communication Patterns | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Arguing | -.65** | -.17 | .36** | -- | | | | | | |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | -.33* | -.12 | -.23 | .38** | -- | | | | | |
| 6. Racial Socialization | -.26 | -.23 | -.24 | .16 | .10 | -- | | | | |
| *Youth Self-Pride* | .26* | .16 | -.30* | -.10 | -.05 | -.11 | -- | | | |
| 7. Self-Esteem | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8. Racial Pride | .07 | -.07 | -.12 | -.03 | .07 | .10 | .44** | -- | | |
| *Academic Engagement* | -.14 | -.45** | .04 | .01 | .11 | .30* | -.53** | -.24 | -- | |
| 9. Academic Apathy | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10. Impression Management | -.06 | -.48** | .03 | -.10 | .03 | .30* | -.48* | -.20 | .76** | -- |

** $p \leq .01$    * $p \leq .05$

*Impression management.* The results of this analysis indicated that parenting accounted for a significant contributor to the amount of variability in daughters' impression management, explaining 24.3% of the variance [Adjusted $R^2 = .24$, $F (6,51) = 4.06$, $p < .01$]. Results are presented in Table 8. Of the parenting variables, only monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of daughters' impression management ($\beta = -.14$, $p \leq .01$); evaluated monitoring decreased daughters tendency to engage impression management. An additional analysis was performed to examine the extent to which youth self-pride mediated the link between impression management. Results from this analyses revealed that girls self-pride predicted impression management over and above the contribution of parenting. Indeed, self-pride accounted for a

significant proportion of impression management variance after controlling for the effects of parenting, $F(8,49) = 6.02$, $p < .001$, explaining 40% of the variance as indicated by $R^2$ change from the first to second model.  Examination of parenting beta coefficients revealed that the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring ($\beta = -.13$, $p \leq .01$), arguing ($\beta = -.06$, $p \leq .05$), and daughters' self-esteem ($\beta = -.11$, $p \leq .01$).  There was a change of 17% from the first to second model.  This suggests that monitoring along with self-esteem is important in lowering daughters' impression management.

In summary, girls reported elevated self-esteem when their mothers reported positive parent-youth relationship quality; however, for the total sample, mothers reported low incidences of arguing were significant related to high self-esteem and racial pride.  In several areas, results for girls were consistent with findings from the total sample.  For instance, like the total sample, girl's self-esteem was inversely related to youth academic apathy and impression management, and monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of academic apathy and impression management.  In addition, girls self-pride significantly predicted academic apathy and impression management over and above the contribution of parenting; specifically, the greatest contribution emerged from monitoring and self-esteem for academic apathy while monitoring, arguing, and self-esteem interacted to predict girl's impression management.

.

Table 8

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Youth Self-Pride and Academic*

*Engagement for Girls (N = 58)*

|  | Academic Apathy | | Impression Management | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | M1 | M2 | M1 | M2 |
| *Parenting* | | | | |
| 1. Parent-Youth Relationship Quality | -.041 | .043 | -.016 | .000 |
| 2. Monitoring | -.396** | -.341** | -.139** | -.131** |
| 3. Consistent Discipline | .113 | -.027 | -.019 | -.064 |
| Family Communication Patterns | -.065 | -.070 | -.032 | -.059* |
| 4. Arguing | | | | |
| 5. Poor Discussion Quality | .168 | .175 | .124 | .104 |
| 6. Racial Socialization | .114 | .099 | .026 | -.034 |
| *Self-Pride* | | | | |
| 1. Self-Esteem | | -.160** | | -.107** |
| 2. Racial Pride | | -046 | | .011 |
| *Adjusted R²* | .201** | .402** | .243** | .413** |
| *F* | 3.39 | 5.78 | 4.06 | 6.022 |
| *df* | 6, 51 | 8, 49 | 6, 51 | 8, 49 |
| *R² change* | -- | .201** | -- | .173** |

** p ≤ .01    * p ≤ .05

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONLUSIONS

The present study investigated the influence of single African American mothering on rural African American youth self-pride and academic engagement, operationalized as academic apathy and impression management. Focusing on the protective utility of African American parenting, the present study examined the extent to which racial socialization combined with other domains of effective parenting would forecast rural African American youths willingness to reject the tendency to be apathetic about school and to engage in behaviors that camouflage their ability to do well in school in order to avoid criticism from their peers for "acting White"; labeled as impression management (Fries-Britt, 1998; Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998; Majors & Billson, 1993; Ogbu, 1992).

In this endeavor, the associations among parenting practices, (e.g., monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization) youth self-pride, and academic engagement were examined to determine whether the combination of the independent variables would have differential predictive utility for youth academic apathy and impression management. In the current study, heightened youth self-pride was conceptualized as pivotal in understanding the process through which parents influence youths' academic engagement. In support, of this conjecture, the following hypotheses were posed and tested: 1) Parenting practices, specifically, monitoring, consistent discipline, parent-youth relationship quality, family communication patterns, and adaptive racial socialization will enhance youth self-pride (i.e., self-esteem and racial pride); 2) Heightened youth self-pride will

elevate youth academic engagement as evidenced by reduced use of impression management and reports of academic apathy; and 3) Youth self-pride will mediate the effect of competence promoting parenting on youth academic apathy and impression management.

In addition, comparison studies have identified the vast gap in academic performance of African American males and females, with females academically outperforming males (i.e., Bankston & Caldas, 1998; Honora, 2002; Saunders, Davis, Williams & Williams, 2004; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992).  In an attempt to explain gender differences, Honora (2002) found that African American females report more favorable academic attitudes than African American males.  Given these considerations, gender effects with regards to youths' academic engagement were also examined.

Several noteworthy findings emerged the present study and particular attention will be given to the following results: (1) In general youth reared in rural single-mother families are faring well, as evidenced by mothers having a good relationship with their children and youth having low academic apathy and impression management.  (2) Parents are effectively fostering school engagement in youth, but these patterns occur indirectly through engaging in parenting practices that elevate youth self-esteem.  Self-esteem and not racial pride was significant in fostering youth academic engagement.  (3) Competence promoting parenting practices varied in their ability to promote youth self-esteem and academic engagement for African American boys and girls.  In addition, some parenting and youth behaviors and feelings that are commonly associated with positive youth development were found to inverse effects on outcomes. Particularly, consistent discipline was associated with low self-pride with girls.  Finally, the following sections integrate these findings with extant studies, illustrating how findings support or extend extant studies.

*Health Functioning within Rural African American Single-Mother Families*

Census data indicate that single mothers head more than half of the African American families with children in the rural South, and half of these mothers live at or below the poverty line (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Poverty, one of the greatest challenges confronting single mothers in general and African Americans in particular, has detrimental effects on families and children (Murry, Brody, Brown, Wisenbaker, Cutrona, & Simons, 2002). It not only creates problems directly associated with limited income, but it can also occasion psychological distress that negatively affect parenting practices, and impedes children's social, emotional, and intellectual development (Brody, Flor, & Gibson, 1999; Sampson & Laub, 1994). Moreover, residing in rural single-mother households is often linked to negative youth adjustment and development; particularly, African American youth academic engagement (i.e., Bankston et al., 1998, Dalaker, 2001, Dornbusch et al., 1985, Featherstone et al., 1992; Vanden-Kiernan, et al., 1995). On the contrary, the present study dispels myths about the detriment of rearing children in economically poor, single parent families**.** Thus, results from the present study adds to the limited body of research pertaining to the healthy functioning of children reared in single parent families (i.e., Brody, Flor & Gibson, 1999; Brody et al., 2002; Murry et al., 2001) and offer support for the works of Brody et al. (2002) and Murry et al. (2001) who contend that African American youth reared in economically stressed, single-mother home environments tend to fare well developmentally.

Despite residing in communities where poverty rates are among its highest, the single-mothers and their children included in the present study reported healthy family functioning. Specifically, most mothers' reported having a "very" good relationship with their child, and indicated that they were vigilant with regards to monitoring the whereabouts of their children.

On most occasions, mothers reported consistency in disciplining their child. On average, mothers also reported positive communication patterns (low incidences of arguing and low incidents of poor discussion quality). In terms of racial socialization, mothers' reported moderate levels of racial socialization; most mothers participated in adaptive racial socialization practices with their child at least one or two times per month. Based on youth reports, most reported positive self-esteem, decrease endorsement of academic apathy and impression management. Thus, most of the families are doing well. The present study also identified specific parenting practices of single-mothers that were predictive of elevated youths' self-pride and academic engagement

*Linking Competence Promoting Parenting to Youth Academic Engagement through Youth Self-Esteem*

Study results demonstrate a direct relationship between competence promoting parenting and youth academic engagement; however, findings illustrate the central role of youth self-pride; specifically youth self-esteem in this relationship. The significant association between youth self-pride and academic engagement was a major finding in the present study; however, unexpectantly, self-esteem and not racial pride was significantly associated with youth academic engagement as evidenced by low academic apathy and impression management. The lack of importance of racial pride in the present study will be examined in a subsequent section. First, the significance of self-esteem will be discussed.

Results in the present study revealed that parents can effectively foster school engagement in youth, but these patterns occur indirectly through engaging in parenting practices that elevate youth self-esteem. This finding extends the limited research on parenting and academic engagement. Reasons for these patterns are unclear and no studies known to current

investigator addresses youth self-pride; self-esteem or racial pride, as the link between parenting practices and youth academic engagement.  A recent study by Brody and colleagues (2005), however, may be informative.  Considering the role of youth presentation to peers (i.e., impression management) in fostering cognitive competence, Brody et al. (2005) identified parenting practices as a significant predictor of rural African American siblings impression management; however, these authors again, did not examine youth self-pride as a mediator in this relationship.  Instead, they extended outcomes and examined impression management as the link between parenting and youth academic competence.  Thus, they primarily illustrated the influence of parenting practices in fostering youth academic engagement.  The present study focused more specifically on identifying the extent to which competence promoting parenting practices was associated with self-esteem in African American youth that predicted to, in turn, to be related to youth academic engagement.  Although the cause and effect of this process was not considered in the current study, it seems reasonable to assume that by engaging in competence promoting parenting practices that encourage their child's self-esteem, parents may also indirectly transmit messages about the importance of academic success to their children's self-worth.  Linking self-worth and academic success may in turn encourage school bonding in their children.  These explanations, however, warrant further empirical testing.

*Racial Pride and Youth Academic Engagement*

While several scholars highlight the importance of both youth self-esteem and racial pride for youth academic engagement (i.e., Capell & Overton, 2002; Ethier & Deaux, 1990; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Sanders, 1997; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001); racial pride was not significant in the present study.  This was an unexpected finding, as it was predicted that both youth self-esteem and racial pride would forecast academic engagement.  The

work of Phinney and Chavira (1995) may offer some insight into the reason for these findings. According to these scholars, self-esteem buffers youth from the negative effects of racism. This suggests that youth self-esteem may function uniquely different from racial pride in models examining academic engagement. The explanation offered by Phinney and Chavira (1995) implies that racial pride may serve as a mediator between self-esteem and academic outcomes. These scholars contend that African American youth who had high self-esteem were able to proactively cope with stereotypes and discrimination, including viewing themselves as individuals and rejecting negative messages about themselves and their ability to achieve; whereas youth with low self-esteem were more likely to use maladaptive, less effective coping. The present study examined racial pride and self-esteem as components of self-pride; however, future studies should consider testing a separate mediational model for racial pride and self-esteem. This methodology would control for their combined effects in the present, thus providing a greater understanding of their individual influence by extracting the contribution of each on youth academic engagement.

Another plausible explanation is that the salience of racial pride may not have been as prominent in youth's self-perception because mothers in the present study reported limited use of racial socialization. The importance of racial socialization and racial pride has been well-documented (Brody, Murry et al., 2005; Murry, Brody et al., 2005). Moreover, Sanders (1997) identifies racial socialization as major contributors of youth racial pride and in turn youth academic success. Thus, low occurrence of this parenting domain in the current study may have implications for the non-significant contribution of racial pride for youth academic engagement. It is important to note that reasons for low frequency of conversations about race related issues in these families are unclear. It may be that these parents do not perceive these messages to be

germane to the life circumstances of their children. Many of our families reside in racially homogenous communities, with limited contact with racial minorities, and are therefore, less likely to experience racial discrimination, therefore they may delay discussing racism until they are older and enter high school. This conclusion can be supported by Hughes and Johnson's (2001) study, in which they find that parent's use of racial socialization often depended upon the degree of racial discriminatory encounters.

Mothers' experiences with racism and their racial self-perceptions may too explain the low frequency of conversations about race related issues found in the present study. Murry and Brody (2002) examined the ways in which single African American mothers' experiences with and perceptions of race and racism influenced their racial socialization practices. Their findings highlight the importance of contextual factors in understanding mothers' racial socialization approaches. Thus, in regards to the present study, it may be beneficial to explore personal and contextual factors that bolster or even undermine parental racial socialization.

*Gender Differences in Influence of Competence Promoting Parenting Practices*

The present study examined protective factors that have implications for understanding African American youth self-pride and educational success and discovered that parenting practices varied in their ability to promote youth self-pride; particularly youth self-esteem, and academic engagement for African American boys and girls. While for girls, parental monitoring emerged as a significant predictor of both academic apathy and impression management, parenting variables varied in their ability to predict boys' academic apathy and impression management. Girls whose mothers' reported consistent monitoring were less likely to endorse low academic apathy and impression management. However, for boys, communication patterns with their mother forecasted academic apathy: poor discussion quality increased engagement in

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academic apathy; however, when these poor communication patterns were infrequent boys were less likely to endorse academic apathy.

Gender differences also emerged in predictability of parenting practices for youth self-esteem and youth academic engagement. The relevance of self-esteem in predicting academic engagement occurred above the contribution of parenting. Understanding the processes through which mothers foster youth self-esteem is of critical importance in addressing the educational divide between minority and majority youth. Further, mothering patterns have a differential effect on boys compared to girls. In particular, communication patterns between mothers and sons are central in predicting self-esteem, and in turn important in explaining their sons' school bonding. Conversely, parent-youth relationship quality and consistent discipline were significantly associated with girls' self-esteem. Mothers' who reported having good relationships with their daughters were likely to have daughters' with higher self-esteem. However, consistent parental discipline was associated with low self-esteem for girls. Thus girls' whose mothers' reported consistent disciplines were more likely to report low self-esteem. Some plausible reasons for these patterns are discussed below.

I rely on the literature that emphasizes the role of family composition in explaining the gender patterns emerging in the current study. One could argue that single African American mother headed households create unique dynamics for the boys and girls reared in these families. For example, the present study demonstrated that in order to foster youth academic engagement for boys, it was most beneficial for mothers' to build their sons' self-esteems by engaging in low incidences of arguing with them. In the absence of fathers from the home, African American sons often take on male leadership responsibilities (Badaines, 1976; Greif, Hrabowski, & Maton, 2000). In examining the beliefs of mothers with academically successful sons, Greif,

Hrabowski, and Maton (2000) found that these mothers valued male domestic leadership. For these mothers, it was important for males to be accountable and protective of the family. Subsequently, ineffective arguing between mothers and sons may be a result of mothers' dissatisfaction with the extent to which sons are effectively performing their family role. This can be supported by the items in the ineffective arguing measure. These items asked how often mother and child argued about school and school work, alcohol, drugs, who he/she is dating, music, clothes, and sex. It is also possible that mothers are transferring negative feelings about men in their lives onto their sons, and that sons' are consequently realizing how their mothers feel about men. These negative feelings may foster repetitive arguments that foster negative internal models in sons; feelings of son's inability to fulfill or maintain the male gender role as a leader in the household, and this may result in low self-esteem for boys. The significance of family composition can also be applicable to the understanding of how mothers foster self-esteem in their daughters.

Single African American mothers function as central role models for their daughters and their relationships are vital to their daughters' self-esteem (Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin; 2002). The present study demonstrated that mothers' who reported good relationships with their daughters had daughters who reported high self-esteem and in turn were academically engaged. However, unexpectantly consistent discipline was associated with low youth self-pride for girls. In examining the roles African American mothers play in assisting their daughters in reaching their future academic and career goals. Kerpelman et al., (2002) found that daughters not only valued good relationships with their mothers, but academically successful daughters tended to have mothers who viewed them as strong, competent young women. Although studies have consistently shown that consistent discipline has positive consequences for youth (i.e.,

Pinderhughes, Nix & Foster, 2001; Sharma, Saraswathi & Gir, 1981), the context of this disciplinary strategy is often not considered. For example, the use of consistent discipline with their daughters may be reactive to subsequent behavior of the daughter, or proactive to dissuade unwanted behavior. Prior research by Hill (2001) may also be informative in explaining these gender effects.

According to Hill (2001) gender differences association with racial socialization may emerge as a result of varying concerns mothers have for their children and the varying societal experiences African American youth will encounter as a result of being male or female. Hill (2001) contends that,

> "Child-rearing strategies are based on parental perceptions of the opportunities, risks, and barriers their children are likely to confront in the larger society. African American parents may have higher expectations for daughters because they view them as having a greater opportunity to survive and succeed in mainstream society" (p. 504).

She further notes that the possibility that African American parents feel that their daughters have better chances for survival, as young African American men face many obstacles and dangers in expressing their masculinity, may give rise to indulgent practices with their sons (Hill, 2001). Results from her study, actually provided empirical evidence to support this theory: African American parents generally have higher expectations for their daughters than for their sons (Hill 1999, 2001). Reasons for this differential treatment were related to elevated concerns among parents of their daughters' happiness and self-esteem, and the belief that the future of families rest in their daughters. As such, efforts were concentrated on ensuring that their daughters developed a sense of strength, love for family, and recognition of the importance of being a good provider and disciplinarian as future mothers. Parents of sons, however, emphasized respect and

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obedience as core values, including an emphasis on future orientation, with regard to getting a good education and a good job. Also highlighted by parents of sons was the centrality of him being a teacher and developing skills to provide guidance and to serve as a role model as future fathers (Hill, 1999). Finally, results from Hill's study revealed that African American parents supported competence and self-reliance more in daughters than in sons, and that they were more protective of sons, and less likely to discipline them. Although many of these processes were not examined in the current study, they do provide insight into plausible explanations of why and how mothers can contribute to gender differences in self-pride and academic engagement.

The association between consistent discipline and youth self-pride for girls was an unexpected finding that will be discussed in the following section, nevertheless, the significant association between parent-youth relationship quality and daughter's self-esteem and extent of arguing for boys' self-esteem can be explained by Ackard, Neumark-Sztainer, Story, and Perry (2006). These researchers found that constructive interaction and communication patterns with mothers were important in fostering youth self-esteem. Of youth who felt unable to talk to their mother, over half were girls and only one third were boys. In support of present study findings, Ackard et al. found that parental relationship quality was more important in fostering girls' (47.15%) rather than boys' (24.56%) self-esteem. In addition, the association between poor parent-child relationship quality and low self-esteem was more apparent for boys than girls. These findings may be informative in explaining patterns emerging in the present study findings; specifically, those that highlight the importance of low incidence of ineffective arguing in promoting boys' self-esteem. For instance, the presence, rather than absence of ineffective arguing may be more important in lowering boys' self-pride. High incidences of ineffective arguing may be manifestations of conflict that may be occasioned by autonomy seeking

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behaviors of sons during a time when their mothers may have heighten awareness of the danger

commonly experienced by African American males. The causal relationships were not examined

in the current study. It is therefore unclear whether the conflictual communication patterns

between mothers and sons were reactive or proactive. A lack of clear explanations for these

findings warrants further investigations.

*Limitations of the Present Study*

Although the present study contributed to the growing body of literature detailing African

American youth academic engagement, and extends this body of research to include focus on

ways in which rural, single, African American mothers engage in competence promoting

parenting practices that forecast positive youth self-pride, which was hypothesized to predict low

endorsement of academic apathy and impression management, several limitations of the present

study should be noted. First, data for the present study included only one wave of data

collection. Although the paths between variables in the present study imply causality, at this

point it is possible only to test the extent to which the observed variables can be predicted

without respect to direction of effects. Further research should include longitudinal assessments

to build on the present results.

Another methodological limitation study is the lack of a wide distribution in youth

responses to their academic engagement. Fortunately, most youth in the present study did not

endorse in academic apathy and impression management. Nevertheless, the lack of a wide

distribution makes it difficult to predict that an event is unlikely to occur.

Another potential limitation of the present study is the age range of African American

youth from 13 to 16 years-old. This presents the possibility of varying developmental stages.

The developmental stage of youth could impact their parents' ability to foster their self-pride and

in turn academic engagement. The majority of youth in the present study are 14 years-old and age effects were not analysed. Further research should assess youth academic engagement at varying developmental stages. For instance, while parents remain socialization agents throughout their children's lives, peer influence increases with age (Bogenschneider et al., 1998). In addition, Stiles and Raney (2004) suggest that the need for peer acceptance also heightens as youth get older. Thus, future studies should examine whether parent's ability to influence youth academic outcomes diminishes as their children get older.

The present study only examined the protective utility of single African American mothers; however, an inclusion of fathers could yield differing results. For instance, Miller, Murry and Brody (2005) find that fathers parenting practices are a major contributor of African American youths' social withdrawal in school. They found that this influence was especially true for sons. Inclusion of fathers in the present study may extend our understanding of the processes through which fathers influence sons and daughters with regard to academics and school bonding. This may be of great importance in understanding how fathers or father figures impact children reared in single-mother families. Thus, future research should further examine how both mothers and fathers buffer youth for negative societal messages about devaluing school.

Finally, the present study did not consider the school context as a socialization source that could potentially contribute to study outcomes. School racial composition, for example, may account for some of the variability in African American youth academic engagement. Some studies have shown that African American students and students in general report increase self-esteem, academic engagement, and success when they attend schools in which they are the majority (Arunkumar & Midgley, 1996; Gray-Little & Carels, 1997; Hudley, 1995). Future

studies should also consider the contributions of teachers in predicting the selected outcomes of the current study, as teachers are influential in enhancing youth academic achievement (Blum & Rinehart, 2000; Phillips, 1997; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998).

*Implications*

The present study has several implications to this field of research and educators. First, findings from the current investigation may enhance educators understanding of ways in which rural African American youth may manifest school disengagement. Parenting coupled with youth self-esteem is important in fostering constructive youth academic engagement. Such knowledge can in turn guide preventive interventions aimed at increasing school bonding. Secondly, the study informs the field of ways in which parenting processes serve as a protective role in enhancing academic engagement among rural African American youth. Early intervention on these two outcomes by parents may prevent the adoption of academic apathy and youths' reliance on impressing others to gain acceptance by peers who devalue academics. Intervention could also include the potential benefits of varying parenting strategies by child gender. Finally, while most studies examining risk and protective factors to youth academic performance have focused on urban youth, the present study adds to the literature by including data on rural African American families.

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Appendix A

Family Process Questions

Conversation has to be Careful Subscale

Please answer these questions about discussions that take place between you and your child.

1.  When you and your child talk about his/her school and school work, how does the conversation go?

    1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
    2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
    3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

2.  When you and your child talk about alcohol, how does the conversation go?

    1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
    2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
    3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

3.  When you and your child talk about drugs, how does the conversation go?

    1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
    2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
    3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

4.  When you and your child talk about who he/she is dating, how does the conversation go?

    1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
    2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
    3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

5. When you and your child talk about what music he/she listens to, how does the conversation go?

   1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
   2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
   3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

6. When you and your child talk about what clothes he/she wears, how does the conversation go?

   1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
   2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
   3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

7. When you and your child talk about sex, how does the conversation go?

   1=I USUALLY DO MOST OF THE TALKING AND OFTEN I CATCH MYSELF JUST TELLING MY CHILD WHAT TO DO OR BELIEVE
   2=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT IN A WAY WHERE WE HAVE TO WATCH WHAT WE SAY BECAUSE SOMEONE MAY GET UPSET
   3=WE USUALLY TALK ABOUT IT OPENLY AND WE EACH SHARE OUR SIDE OF THE ISSUE

Extent of Arguing Subscale

Please answer these questions about discussions that take place between you and your child.

1. When you and your child talk about his/her choice of friends, how often do you end up arguing?

   0=NEVER
   1=NOT VERY OFTEN
   2=SOMETIMES
   3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
   4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

2. When you and your child talk about his/her school and school work, how often do you end up arguing?

       0=NEVER
       1=NOT VERY OFTEN
       2=SOMETIMES
       3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
       4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

3. When you and your child talk about alcohol, how often do you end up arguing?

       0=NEVER
       1=NOT VERY OFTEN
       2=SOMETIMES
       3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
       4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

4. When you and your child talk about drugs, how often do you end up arguing?

       0=NEVER
       1=NOT VERY OFTEN
       2=SOMETIMES
       3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
       4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

5. When you and your child talk about who he/she is dating, how often do you end up arguing?

       0=NEVER
       1=NOT VERY OFTEN
       2=SOMETIMES
       3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
       4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

6. When you and your child talk about what music he/she listens to, how often do you end up arguing?

       0=NEVER
       1=NOT VERY OFTEN
       2=SOMETIMES
       3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
       4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

7. When you and your child talk about what clothes he/she wears, how often do you end up arguing?

        0=NEVER
        1=NOT VERY OFTEN
        2=SOMETIMES
        3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
        4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME


8. When you and your child talk about sex, how often do you end up arguing?

        0=NEVER
        1=NOT VERY OFTEN
        2=SOMETIMES
        3=MORE OFTEN THAN NOT
        4=ALWAYS/NEARLY EVERY TIME

Appendix B

General Child Management

Consistent Discipline Subscale (1-4 reverse coded)

1. How often do you give up when you ask your child to do something and he/she doesn't do it?

 1=NEVER
 2=SELDOM
 3=SOMETIMES
 4=OFTEN
 5=ALWAYS

2. Once a discipline has been decided, how often can your child get out of it?

 1=NEVER
 2=SELDOM
 3=SOMETIMES
 4=OFTEN
 5=ALWAYS

3. How often do you discipline your child for something at one time, and then at other times, not discipline him/her for the same thing?

 1=NEVER
 2=SELDOM
 3=SOMETIMES
 4=OFTEN
 5=ALWAYS

6. When you discipline your child, how often does the kind of discipline you use depend on your mood?

 1=NEVER
 2=SELDOM
 3=SOMETIMES
 4=OFTEN
 5=ALWAYS

Child Monitoring Subscale

1. In the course of a day, how often do you know where your child is?

     1=NEVER
     2=SELDOM
     3=SOMETIMES
     4=OFTEN
     5=ALWAYS

2. How often do you know who your child is with when he/she is away from home?

     1=NEVER
     2=SELDOM
     3=SOMETIMES
     4=OFTEN
     5=ALWAYS

3. How often do you know when your child does something really well at school or someplace else away from home?

     1=NEVER
     2=SELDOM
     3=SOMETIMES
     4=OFTEN
     5=ALWAYS

4. How often do you know when your child gets in trouble at school or someplace else away from home?

     1=NEVER
     2=SELDOM
     3=SOMETIMES
     4=OFTEN
     5=ALWAYS

5. How often do you know when your child does not do the things you have asked him/her to do?

     1=NEVER
     2=SELDOM
     3=SOMETIMES
     4=OFTEN
     5=ALWAYS

Appendix C

Interaction Behavior Questionnaire

I am going to read sentences that have to do with you and target child. As you think back over the last several weeks at home, tell me how true or false you think each statement is.

1. Target child is easy to get along with.

> 0 = False
> 1 = True

2. Target child is well behaved in your discussions [talks] with him/her.

> 0=FALSE
> 1 = True

3. Target child listens when you correct her/him.

> 0 = False
> 1 = True

4. For the most part, target child likes to talk to you.

> 0 = False
> 1 = True

5. You and target child almost NEVER seem to agree.

> 0 = False
> 1 = True

6. Target child usually listens to what you tell her/him.

> 0 = False
> 1 = True

7. At least three times a week, you and target child get at each other [annoy, get on each others nerves].

        0 = False
        1 = True


8. Target child says that you have no consideration or respect for his/her feelings.

        0 = False
        1 = True


9. You and target child reach an agreement when you disagree about something.

        0 = False
        1 = True


10. Target child often doesn't do what you ask.

        0 = False
        1 = True


11. The talks you and target child have are frustrating.

        0 = False
        1 = True


12. Target child often seems angry at you.

        0 = False
        1 = True


13. Target child acts impatient when you talk.

        0 = False
        1 = True

14. In general, you don't think you and target child get along very well.

        0 = False
        1 = True

15. Target child almost NEVER understands your side of an argument.

    0 = False
    1 = True

16. Target child and you have big arguments about little things.

    0 = False
    1 = True

17. Target child is defensive or doesn't listen to what you say.

    0 = False
    1 = True

18. Target child thinks your opinions or ideas don't count.

    0 = False
    1 = True

19. You and target child argue a lot about rules.

    0 = False
    1 = True

20. Target child tells you s/he thinks you are unfair.

    0 = False
    1 = True

Appendix D

Racial Socialization Scale

The following questions ask about lessons or messages that you may have given your child.

1. How often in the past month have you...

told your child that people might try to limit him/her because of his/her race.

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

2. How often in the past month have you...

talked with your child about the possibility that some people might treat him/her

badly or unfairly because of his/her race.

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

3. How often in the past month have you...

told your child that he/she must be better than White kids to get the same rewards

because of his/her race.

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

4. How often in the past month have you...

  talked to your child about discrimination or prejudice against your racial group.

  0=NEVER
  1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
  2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

5. How often in the past month have you…

  explained to your child something saw on TV that showed poor treatment of your

  racial group.

  0=NEVER
  1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
  2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

6. How often in the past month have you...

  talked to someone else about discrimination or prejudice against your racial group

  when your child was around and could hear.

  0=NEVER
  1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
  2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

7. How often in the past month have you...

  celebrated cultural holidays of your racial group?

  0=NEVER
  1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
  2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

8. How often in the past month have you...

talked to your child about important people or events in the history of your racial

group?

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

9. How often in the past month have you...

taken your child to places or events that reflect racial heritage?

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

10. How often in the past month have you...

encouraged your child to read books concerning the history or traditions of your

racial group?

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

11. How often in the past month have you...

done or said things to encourage your child to do other things to learn about the

history or Traditions of your racial group?

0=NEVER
1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

12. How often in the past month have you...

       told your child not to trust kids from other  racial or ethnic groups?

             0=NEVER
             1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
             2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

13. How often in the past month have you...

       encouraged your child to keep his/her distance from kids of a different race or

       ethnicity than yours?

             0=NEVER
             1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
             2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

14. How often in the past month have you...

       warned your child to be careful around kids or adults of a different race or

       ethnicity than yours?

             0=NEVER
             1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
             2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

15. How often in the past month have you...

       talked to your child about the negative qualities Of people of different races or

       ethnicities than yours?

             0=NEVER
             1=ONE OR TWO TIMES
             2=THREE TO FIVE TIMES

Appendix E

Rosenberg Self-esteem Questionnaire (*Reverse coded: 3, 5, 8-10)*

People have different feelings about themselves. I will read some statements about how you

might feel about yourself. Tell me how true each statement is:

1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.

       1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
       2 = MAINLY FALSE
       3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
       4 = MAINLY TRUE
       5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

       1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
       2 = MAINLY FALSE
       3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
       4 = MAINLY TRUE
       5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

       1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
       2 = MAINLY FALSE
       3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
       4 = MAINLY TRUE
       5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

       1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
       2 = MAINLY FALSE
       3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
       4 = MAINLY TRUE
       5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE


6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE


7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE


8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE


9. I certainly feel useless at times.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

        1 = COMPLETELY FALSE
        2 = MAINLY FALSE
        3 = PARTLY TRUE AND PARTLY FALSE
        4 = MAINLY TRUE
        5 = COMPLETELY TRUE

Appendix F

Racelessness Scale

The following statements are about what you think of school. For each statement, please choose

the response that best describes how you feel or think.

Academic Apathy Subscale

1. I feel my future is limited.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

2. The things you are taught in school are pretty useless once you graduate from high school.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

3. There are better things to do with my time than to spend it on school work.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

4. Trying hard in school is a waste of time.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

5. I never let my friends know when I get good grades in school.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

6. I feel I must act less intelligent than I am so other students will not make fun of me.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

7. I sometimes do things I really don't like just so other students will like me.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

8. I could probably do better in school, but I don't' try because I don't want to be labeled a "brainiac" or a "nerd".

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

Impression Management Subscale

1. I never let my friends know when I get good grades in school.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

2. I feel I must act less intelligent than I am so other students will not make fun of me.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

3. I sometimes do things I really don't like just so other students will like me.

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE

4. I could probably do better in school, but I don't' try because I don't want to be labeled a "brainiac" or a "nerd".

> 1 = UNTRUE
> 2 = SORT OF TRUE
> 3 = VERY TRUE