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Is Knowledge of (Normative) Racial Identity Development Necessary?:

White Transracial Adoptive Parents' Intentions to Promote Black Adoptees' Racial Identity

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Abstract

The prevalence of transracial adoptions of Black children by White parents in the United States is rapidly increasing, and currently the adoption of Black children by White parents is the most frequent transracial adoptee-parent combination (Lee, 2003; Marr, 2017). With the increase of transracial adoptions in the U.S., questions arise about White transracial adoptive parents' capability to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black child(ren), specifically with regard to their knowledge about how to promote the healthy racial-ethnic identity of racially diverse youth. The current study examined if White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of how racial-ethnic identity develops impacts their intentions to promote their adopted Black children's racial-ethnic identity in the context of the theory of planned behavior. Caucasian parents (both mothers and fathers) who have adopted, or were in the process of adopting, Black or African American child(ren) ($n = 199$) completed measures examining their factual knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development and their attitudes, perceived subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and intentions related to engaging in the racial-ethnic socialization process. Results revealed that parents' knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development was negatively correlated with their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child; however, parents' intentions were positively correlated with their attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren). Further, knowledge was not an incremental predictor of parents' intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process beyond the components of the theory of planned behavior. Finally, results revealed that parents who

perceived greater subjective norms for and greater behavioral control of racial-ethnic

socialization reported greater intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted

Black child(ren), and these relationships were particularly strong among parents with relatively

low knowledge. These findings demonstrate that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge

of racial-ethnic identity development may be neither necessary nor sufficient in predicting their

intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process. Rather, parents' attitudes toward,

subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of the racial-ethnic socialization process

are strong predictors of their intentions and, potentially, their actual behavior.

Is Knowledge of (Normative) Racial Identity Development Necessary?:

White Transracial Adoptive Parents' Intentions to Promote Black Adoptees' Racial Identity

Approximately 1 in 50 children in the United States (U.S.) are adopted, which reflects about 1.5 million children or 2% of the population (Kreider & Lofquist, 2014). Annually, upwards of 120,000 children are adopted in the U.S. (Johnston, 2017) with 21 to 24 percent of these adoptions classified as "transracial" (Marr, 2017). Transracial adoptions are those in which the race, ethnicity, or culture of origin of the adopted child differs from *both* of the parents (Vandivere et al., 2009). White parents' adoption of Black children has experienced rapid increases (2000: 11.7%, 2008: 23.4%, 2012: 36.9%), and currently, the adoption of Black children by White parents in the U.S. is the most frequent adoptee-parent combination (Marr, 2017). Although transracial adoptions were once an infrequent and highly controversial practice in the U.S. (with the first documented transracial adoption occurring in 1948), they are no longer infrequent. Although adoptions of Black children by White parents are now relatively common, there are fears that such placements compromise the children's ability to develop a racial-ethnic identity and, therefore, stunts their ability to develop effective coping skills to combat prejudice and discrimination in society (Dunbar et al., 2017).

The fears associated with White parents' transracial adoptions of Black children stem from concerns that White parents are unknowledgeable about how to promote the racial-ethnic identity of Black youth. Given these fears, research is needed to determine whether White parents' lack of knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development may negatively affect Black children's wellbeing. Currently, there is no research examining if White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of (i.e., accuracy of information about) how racial-ethnic identity develops impacts their intentions to promote their child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity. Consequently, the

current study examined the role of knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development on White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to ethnically and racially socialize their Black child(ren) through the lens of the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen et al., 2011).

Racial-Ethnic Identity Development

An important part of a Black child's development is establishing a racial-ethnic identity (Loyd & Williams, 2017), and this may be particularly important for transracially adopted children. Although adolescence is considered to be an important period for identity development (Erikson, 1965 as cited in Jones et al., 2014), the foundation for this development, especially with regard to a racial-ethnic identity, begins in childhood, as early as 2 ½ years of age, and continues to develop throughout life (DeBerry et al., 1996). This is especially true for people of color whose identity development is further complicated by issues of race. Black youth, in particular, have the challenge of defining themselves while also considering their social status and the meaning of their racial and ethnic group to their identity (Brittian, 2012). As Black youth develop a racial-ethnic identity, several important milestones occur. As early as 3 years old, Black children typically become aware of their own race (Clark & Clark, 1958; Stevenson & Stevenson, 1960; Stevenson & Stewart, 1958), and by 5 years old, most children—Black and White alike—are aware of racial differences and can make racial discriminations (Hirschfeld, 2008; Katz, 2003; Kirn, 1973; Patterson & Bigler, 2006). Additionally, in early childhood around the ages of 5 to 6 years old, children typically develop the ability to identify racial labels based on skin color (e.g., Black or White; Swanson et al., 2009). As children age and learn about race and ethnicity within familial, communal, and societal contexts (i.e., experience racial-ethnic socialization), the basic skill of identifying their own and others' race become the foundation of their racial-ethnic identity.

Much research has been conducted to test theories of how racial-ethnic identity normally develops (Erikson, 1980, as cited in Jones et al., 2014; Brittian, 2012; Marcia, 1966; 1980 as cited in Yip et al., 2006; Phinney, 1995 as cited in Yip et al., 2006; Seaton et al., 2006) and results consistently reveal that developing a strong racial-ethnic identity is associated with more positive functioning, especially for African American youth. Specifically, developing a strong racial-ethnic identity has been associated with improved academic performance (Borrero & Yeh, 2011; DeBerry et al., 1996; Hughes et al., 2009; Sandoval et al., 1997; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014), more positive self-esteem (Yip et al., 2006), lower levels of depressive symptoms and externalizing behaviors (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Dunbar et al., 2017; Gaylord-Harden et al., 2007; Yip et al., 2006), and decreased involvement in risky behaviors, including drug and alcohol use in adolescents (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Although it is possible that the aforementioned findings are bidirectional or transactional in nature (e.g., higher self-esteem may promote the development of racial-ethnic identity), nonetheless, the psychosocial benefits of developing a racial-ethnic identity, especially for Black youth being raised in transracial adoptive families, is important for their wellbeing and positive functioning. Consequently, understanding the socialization practices that support the development of a child's racial-ethnic identity may help White transracial adoptive parents meaningfully promote their adopted Black child(ren)'s wellbeing.

Racial-Ethnic Socialization

Racial-ethnic socialization reflects children's exposure to messages about race and ethnicity in nearly every aspect of their lives (e.g., in the media, at school, in their community, and in their home), so they may learn what their race and ethnicity means to them. Specifically, Lesane-Brown (2006) defined racial socialization as, "specific verbal and non-verbal messages

transmitted to younger generations for the development of values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs regarding the meaning and significance of race and racial stratification, intergroup and intragroup relations, and personal and group identity" (p. 402). Ethnic socialization refers to messages transmitted to children regarding intragroup protocol and the meaning of being a part of a particular ethnic group (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). The teaching of cultural values (i.e., African American worldviews), cultural embeddedness (i.e., cultural literary works and artifacts), and cultural history (i.e., Black history), the celebration of cultural heritage, and the promotion of ethnic pride are all encompassed in ethnic socialization (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). Although race and ethnicity reflect distinct constructs, they are inextricably linked. Therefore, parental socialization of issues related to race and ethnicity occur simultaneously and reflect the broader construct of racial-ethnic socialization (a construct widely accepted in psychological science; Hughes et al., 2006).

Among the many ways that children experience racial-ethnic socialization, parental influence is believed to be particularly important in the development of children's racial-ethnic identity (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; DeBerry et al., 1996; Peck et al., 2014). Through a complex process, parents convey implicit and explicit messages about race, ethnicity, and culture to their children (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Such messages can be direct, verbal, and proactive (e.g., discussions about racial prejudice and discrimination) or indirect, non-verbal, and reactive (e.g., children's observations of a parent's inter-racial interactions; Stevenson, 1995).

Parental engagement in racial-ethnic socialization has been identified to have several components, including cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust (Grindal, 2017). Cultural socialization includes, but is not limited to, talking about important

cultural figures, reading culturally relevant books or films, celebrating cultural holidays, and encouraging children to speak in their family's native tongue (Hughes et al., 2006). Preparation for bias refers to parental messages and behaviors that teach children about the presence of racism and discrimination in society and culturally specific strategies to handle bias (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). Promotion of mistrust refers to parental practices that emphasize wariness in interracial interactions, which may occur explicitly or implicitly (e.g., body language, facial expressions; Hughes et al., 2006).

In research demonstrating the impact of the three components of racial-ethnic socialization on Black transracial adoptees' ($N = 88$) outcomes, DeBerry et al. (1996) revealed that parents who actively promoted their children's race (e.g., taught about African American heritage; cultural socialization), had children with more positive racial-ethnic identities and, consequently, more positive psychological adjustment than parents who did not actively promote their children's race. Additional evidence supporting the components of racial-ethnic socialization is demonstrated in research by Constantine and Blackmon (2002), which revealed that Black adolescents who had greater experience with cultural socialization demonstrated higher self-esteem at home and with peers, whereas greater preparation for bias was associated with higher self-esteem at home. These findings demonstrate the importance of parental involvement in racial-ethnic socialization as it demonstrates Black youth's development of self-esteem in different contexts. Given the history of privilege that White transracial adoptive parents, often unknowingly, bring to the child rearing process, engaging in racial-ethnic socialization practices (if they choose to engage) may be particularly challenging.

Racial-Ethnic Socialization of Transracial Adoptees

Despite the growing number of transracial adoptions in the U.S., the transracial adoption of Black children by White parents remains controversial. Concerns that White parents are ill-equipped to or unknowledgeable about how to promote the racial-ethnic identity of racially diverse youth, as a result of their lack of first-hand experience being a racial-ethnic minority in society, predominate amongst both Black and White people (Lee, 2003). Consequently, the racial-ethnic socialization process for Black transracial adoptees who are being raised by White parents is inevitably more complex compared to that of children who are adopted by parents of their same race. Thus, it is important to understand the unique experience of Black transracial adoptees' development of a racial-ethnic identity as it compares to Black youth raised by Black parents.

Empirical research consistently shows that transracial adoptees have more difficulties developing a strong racial-ethnic identity when compared to their peers who are not adopted or adopted into same-race families (Goar et al., 2017). Research has demonstrated that the strategies White transracial adoptive parents use to address race and ethnicity with their adopted child(ren) impacts the extent to which the child(ren) develop a racial-ethnic identity. For example, Goar et al. (2017) revealed that a majority (66%) of White transracial adoptive parents ($N = 56$) utilize parenting strategies that reflect fluid movement between race conscious and colorblind attitudes. However, the presence of any colorblind attitudes suggests that White transracial adoptive parents' experiences with race-related issues are constrained and/or limited, which likely affects their intentions to promote their adopted Black child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity through racial-ethnic socialization practices.

The approach that White transracial adoptive parents use to promote their child's racial-ethnic identity is important because transracial adoptees are susceptible to negative outcomes and poor adjustment as a result of a variety of factors such as their adoptive placement (e.g., transracial versus same-race), their race, and the presence of racial prejudice within society. For example, in a study examining the adjustment of transracially adopted adolescents from minority backgrounds being raised by White parents in Sweden ($N = 11,320$), results revealed that adoptees were at least 2 to 3 times more likely to experience psychiatric and social maladjustment problems than their White siblings and the general population (Hjern et al., 2002). These findings suggest that children's outcomes are influenced by their experience being raised by parents whose race differs from their own, as well as additional factors such as race and discrimination (Hjern et al., 2002; Lee, 2003).

Because transracially adopted youth may experience heightened susceptibility for psychiatric and social maladjustment problems relative to their White counterparts, it is particularly important for White transracial adoptive parents to promote the development of a strong racial-ethnic identity in their children. The heightened susceptibility for psychiatric and social maladjustment problems may, in part, be explained by Black transracial adoptees' difficulties understanding their sense of self (i.e., racial-ethnic identity) as a result of perceiving themselves as racially and culturally different than family members, peers, and community members (Smith et al., 2011).

Although there is evidence suggesting that racial-ethnic socialization and racial-ethnic identity development are complicated by transracial adoption, the literature (although limited and fairly outdated) also suggests that adoptees can thrive within mixed race, or transracial adoptive families (Goar et al., 2017). Transracially adopted children can fare equally as well as their peers

who are raised in same-race placements on outcomes such as academic achievement, self-esteem, and psychological well-being (Smith et al., 2011). Further, when compared to same race adopted and nonadopted children, transracial adopted youth tend to show a comparable rate of serious behavioral and emotional problems (~20% to 30%; Lee, 2003). Additionally, transracial adoptees have been found to experience similar levels of self-esteem compared to same-race adoptees and nonadoptees (Lee, 2003). Although these positive outcomes may be moderated by a number of other factors, such as the transracial adoptees' birth country, age at adoption, gender, preadoption experiences (e.g., trauma), adoptive family functioning, and experience with racism and discrimination (Lee, 2003), there is evidence to support that some transracial adoptees fare well.

Transracially adopted children who tend to fair well are thought to successful navigate the "transracial adoption paradox" (Lee, 2003, p. 711), which describes that racially and ethnically diverse children adopted by White parents are often perceived and treated by others as if they are members of the majority culture (i.e., racially White and ethnically European). By treating transracially adopted children as racially White and ethnically European, transracial adoptees forfeit their own culture and heritage in an attempt to blend in with the majority culture. A psychologically and developmentally well-adjusted transracial adoptee is said to have successfully negotiated the transracial adoptive paradox as a result of experiencing meaningful racial-ethnic socialization (Lee, 2003). Thus, it is essential that White parents intentionally promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black child(ren) through engaging in racial-ethnic socialization practices.

Despite the necessity for White parents to engage in racial and ethnic socialization practices, many White parents may choose to delay or avoid promoting the racial-ethnic identity

of their adopted child(ren). White transracial adoptive parents may fear that talking about race will cause their child(ren) to feel marginalized (Gaskin, 2015), they may lack the self-efficacy to engage in racial-ethnic socialization practices, or they may adopt a color-blind approach, believing that race should not matter (Goar et al., 2017). Failure to engage in racial-ethnic socialization may place Black transracial adoptees at a disadvantage (compared to their racially and ethnically socialized peers), as they may be unprepared to respond to racial injustices in society (Gaskin, 2015), and may experience difficulties navigating their personal identity across their lifetime (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Goar et al., 2017).

Given that White transracial adoptive parents have no first-hand knowledge about or experience navigating society as a racial minority, it is important to understand if and how White transracial adoptive parents are exposing their adopted Black children to Black cultural experiences and helping them develop a strong racial-ethnic identity. With strong evidence supporting the value of racial-ethnic socialization practices for Black children being raised in White transracial adoptive families, it is important to study the factors that are associated with White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to promote Black transracial adoptees' racial-ethnic identity (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Gaskin, 2015; Goar et al., 2017; Lee, 2003; Montgomery & Jordan, 2018; Smith et al., 2011; Smith, 2015; Smith, 2013). One important and well supported theoretical framework for understanding individuals' behavioral intentions is the TPB. However, no research to date has examined transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization using the TPB as a theoretical framework.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The TPB (Ajzen et al., 2011) is a framework for understanding what motivates individuals' intentions to engage in various behaviors. The TPB describes that individuals'

intentions to engage in a behavior (i.e., racial-ethnic socialization in the current study) is a consequence of their *attitudes toward the behavior*, perceived expectations of important others (i.e., *subjective norms*), and beliefs about successfully performing the behaviors (*perceived behavioral control*; Ajzen et al., 2011). In the current study, the TPB is used to examine White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their Black child(ren).

Previous research has demonstrated that the components of TPB may be related to White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization. Specifically, White transracial adoptive mothers with more positive *attitudes* towards racial-ethnic socialization and racial issues—as demonstrated by their heightened racial awareness (Lee et al., 2015) and cultural competence (Crolley-Simic & Vonk, 2012)—are more likely to engage in racial-ethnic socialization practices. In addition, pre- and post-adoption support have been identified as beneficial resources that adoptive parents, especially transracial adoptive parents, use as they navigate the challenges of raising a child whose race and ethnicity differs from their own (Lee et al., 2015). Engagement in pre- and post-adoption networking helps transracial adoptive parents establish connections with one another and can also motivate them to engage in racial-ethnic socialization with their transracially adopted child(ren) as a result of exposure to *subjective norms* for engaging in racial-ethnic socialization (i.e., parents see or hear about other transracial adoptive parents engaging in racial-ethnic socialization; Lee et al., 2015). Finally, White transracial adoptive parents with heightened self-efficacy for engaging in cultural and racial socialization of their racial-ethnic minority children – a common measure of *perceived behavioral control* – predicts their cultural and racial socialization behaviors (Berbery & O'Brien, 2011).

Although previous research demonstrates that White transracial adoptive parents who have positive attitudes toward, perceive greater subjective norms for, and experience heightened behavioral control to engage in racial-ethnic socialization may be more likely to engage in socialization behaviors, concerns still exist that White parents lack knowledge about how racial-ethnic identities develop, which may prevent them from engaging in racial-ethnic socialization. Many people—Black and White alike—believe that White parents are less equipped than Black parents to help a Black child develop a strong racial-ethnic identity due to a lack of personal experience and knowledge about the lived experiences of Black people, as well as limited knowledge about how a racial-ethnic identity develops (Butler-Sweet, 2011; Goar et al., 2017). Because no research has explored White transracial adoptive parents' (accurate) knowledge of (normative) racial-identity development, it is important to understand if White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge in this domain is associated with their intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization with their adopted Black child above and beyond the components of the TPB.

The TPB describes that knowledge is neither necessary nor sufficient to predict individuals' behavior (Ajzen et al., 2011). For example, in a series of studies, Ajzen et al. (2011) examined if knowledge is an important predictor of various behaviors (e.g., energy conservation, attending a mosque service) beyond the components in the TPB. Results consistently revealed that factual knowledge was unrelated to individuals' behavioral intentions. Instead, what determined individuals' behavioral intentions (and actual actions in some cases) was their *attitudes* toward the behavior, perceived expectations of important referent individuals (i.e., *subjective norms*), and feelings of control to engage in the desired behavior (i.e., *perceived behavioral control*).

Despite Ajzen et al.'s (2011) research demonstrating that knowledge is not a necessary predictor of individuals' behavioral intentions, recent research conducted by Guerin et al. (2018), suggests that knowledge can influence a person's intentions to engage in a behavior, such that knowledge of workplace safety and health positively influenced employees' intentions to teach workplace safety and health practices to others. Guerin et al.'s findings suggest that greater knowledge of a domain may be an important predictor of individuals' intentions to engage in a behavior consistent with that domain (Guerin et al., 2018). Given the disparate findings between Ajzen et al. (2011) and Guerin et al. (2018) regarding the role of knowledge on individuals' behavioral intentions, more research is needed to understand if and how knowledge impacts individuals' behavioral intentions.

Current Study

The current study examined if White transracial adoptive parents' (accurate) *knowledge* of normative racial-ethnic identity development impacts their intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization with their adopted Black child(ren) above and beyond the components of the TPB. Further, to extend research on the role of knowledge on individuals' behavioral intentions, the current study examined if White transracial adoptive parents' (accurate) knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development may *enhance* their intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization when they also hold positive *attitudes* toward, feel self-efficacious about (i.e., perceived behavioral control), and believe others expect active parental engagement in (i.e., subjective norms) racial-ethnic socialization with their Black child(ren). This research meaningfully contributes to the literature on the TPB as well as transracial adoptive families and has the potential to address concerns about the role of White transracial adoptive parents' abilities to promote the healthy development of Black adoptees' racial-ethnic identity.

Based on previous literature it was predicted that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development would be positively correlated with their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child(ren). Further, White transracial adoptive parents' attitudes toward, perceived subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of engaging in racial-ethnic socialization were expected to be positively correlated with their behavioral intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child(ren). Finally, consistent with research by Ajzen et al. (2011), it was predicted that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development would not predict their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren) *above and beyond* their attitudes toward, perceived subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of the racial-ethnic socialization process.

Although not a specific purpose of the current study, the study also *explored* if White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development interacts with the components of the TPB (i.e., attitudes toward, perceived subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of the racial-ethnic socialization of adopted Black child(ren) to predict their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren). It was expected that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development would moderate the relationships between the components of TPB and parents' intentions to promote the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren).

Method

Participants

Caucasian parents (both mothers and fathers) who have adopted, or were in the process of adopting, Black or African American child(ren) were invited to participate in this study.

Participants were recruited using one of two methods: The Adoption and Foster Parent Support Group affiliated with Crossroads Church (see Appendix A) and Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk; see Appendix B). Qualification requirements for all participants in the study included being White/European American, being at least 18 years of age, having a partner or spouse (if relevant) who is White/Caucasian, having adopted or in the process of adopting Black or African American child(ren), living in the U.S., and, for MTurk participants only, having successfully completed at least 50 HITs with a previous HIT (i.e., Higher Intelligence Task) rate acceptance of 90%. Demographic information collected about the parents (see Appendix C) included their age, parental status (i.e., mother or father), highest level of education, and religion, as well as the family's estimated annual household income. Demographic information collected about the children included the number of adopted and biological children in the home, and the first adopted child's current age, age at adoption, gender, birthplace, and type of adoption agreement (i.e., open or closed). Parents with multiple adopted children were asked to complete the study by thinking about their first adopted child.

A priori power analysis, using G*Power (Faul et al., 2007), with four continuous predictors indicated that for a moderate effect size (R^2 = .50), with a power of 95% and .05 significance level, a minimum of 130 parents were needed (Cohen, 1977; Cohen, 1992).

A total of 199 parents or legal guardians ranging in age from 23 to 63 (M_{age} = 37.42, SD = 9.42) participated in the study. As seen in Table 1, the majority of participants were married (87.4%), identified as being a mother (65.8%), and obtained a bachelor's degree or higher (90.4%). Among participants who identified with a religion (80.9%), Christianity was the most widely reported (63.3%). As seen in Table 2, on average, participants reported having 2 children with 1 adopted child in their home at the time of this study. Participants reported that, on

average, their first adopted child who identifies as Black or African American was three years old at the time of adoption but was approximately eight and a half years old at the time of the study. The majority of participants reported that their first adopted child who identifies as Black or African American was adopted domestically, within the United States (60.3%), with the most widely reported adoption agreement being an open adoption with current contact with the child's birth family (42.2%).

Measures

Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development

Parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development was assessed using a 32-item measure created for this study (see Appendix D). Items on the measure were derived from a thorough review of the empirical literature examining racial-ethnic identity development among minority youth. The items, therefore, reflect robust findings from the psychological literature (i.e., "facts") concerning how a racial-ethnic identity is developed. Specifically, items on the measure reflect information about the developmental milestones associated with racial-ethnic identity development (e.g., "children 5 to 6 years old can accurately use racial labels to categorize others based on skin color"; Kirn, 1973), gender differences in racial-ethnic identity development (e.g., "Racial-ethnic identity development among boys involves receiving more racial pride messages than girls."; Stevenson et al., 2005), pace of racial-ethnic identity development (e.g., "As individuals' racial-ethnic identity develops, there is a shift from a passively defined to a more actively defined racial-ethnic identity"; Quintana, 1998), and culturally specific information regarding racial-ethnic identity development (e.g., "The relationship between self-esteem and racial-ethnic identity is stronger for African American youth than for Caucasian youth"; Smith et al., 2009). Consistent with other measures of

knowledge (Ajzen et al., 2011; Feeley & Servoss, 2005), participants responded to all items by

selecting whether the items are *true* or *false*. Correct responses to the items were summed, with

higher scores reflecting greater knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development. On average,

participants in the current study answered approximately 18 (of 32) items correctly ($M_{score}=$

17.73, Range = 9.00-25.00; see Table 3) for a hit rate of 55.4%.

To establish content validity two experts in the field of racial-ethnic identity development

and developmental psychology (i.e., a Professor of Early Childhood Development and Education

at Texas Women's University and an Associate Professor of Social Service Administration at the

University of Chicago) reviewed, evaluated, and provided feedback on the items. The experts

assessed the appropriateness of the items to determine whether they would effectively measure

knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development. Using their feedback, items were adjusted for

tone, clarity, and style. Additional evidence supporting the measure's reliability and validity is

not yet available.

Racial-Ethnic Socialization and the Components of the Theory of Planned Behavior

Nine items adapted from Grindal (2017) measured the construct of racial-ethnic

socialization (see Appendix E) in the context of the theory of planned behavior. Based on the

definitions and theoretical perspectives outlined by Hughes and Johnson (2001), Brown and

Krishnakumar (2007), Tran and Lee (2010), and Dunbar et al. (2017), the measure of racial-

ethnic socialization assessed three facets: Cultural Socialization ($n = 3$), Preparation for Bias (n

$= 3$), and Promotion of Mistrust ($n = 3$). The Cultural Socialization subscale assessed parental

messages and behaviors that promote a child's racial-ethnic identity, cultural pride, and

understanding of his/her heritage (Dunbar et al, 2017). The Preparation for Bias subscale

assessed parental messages and behaviors that teach a child about the presence of racism and

discrimination in society and culturally specific strategies to handle bias (Brown &

Krishnakumar, 2007). The Promotion of Mistrust subscale assessed parental messages and

behaviors that prepare children to be cautious during interracial interactions (Hughes et al., 2006;

Stevenson et al. 2002).

In the current study, items on each of the three subscales were assessed through the lens

of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, et al., 2011). Specifically, the racial-ethnic

socialization measure assessed each of the four major components of the Theory of Planned

Behavior: White parents' *attitude* toward racial-ethnic socialization (see Appendix E), *perceived*

subjective norms for racial-ethnic socialization (see Appendix E), *perceived behavioral control*

of racial-ethnic socialization (see Appendix E), and *intentions* to engage in racial-ethnic

socialization (see Appendix E). Items assessing parents' attitude toward racial-ethnic

socialization were rated on a 7-point bipolar adjective scale ranging from 1 (*harmful*) to 7

(beneficial). All items were averaged, with higher scores reflecting more positive attitudes

toward promoting messages that encourage a child development of a racial-ethnic identity (α =

.70). Items assessing parents' perceived subjective norms for racial-ethnic socialization were

rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 7 (*very likely*). Items were

averaged, with higher scores reflecting stronger beliefs that important others would approve of or

support the promotion of messages that encourage a child's racial-ethnic identity development (α

= .81). Items measuring parents' perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization were

rated using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very *strongly disagree*) to 7 (very *strongly*

agree). Items were averaged, with higher scores reflecting stronger beliefs about effectively

delivering messages that promote a child's racial-ethnic identity (α = .82). Finally, parent's

intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization practices were rated using a 7-point Likert

scale ranging from 1(*definitely do not*) to 7 (*definitely do*). Items were averaged, with higher

scores reflecting greater intentions to deliver messages that promote the development of a child's

racial-ethnic identity ($\alpha = .71$).

 In an ethnically diverse sample of college students at a public university in the United

States, the subscales on the racial-ethnic socialization measure by Grindal (2017) demonstrated

strong internal consistency (i.e., cultural socialization: $\alpha = .85$, preparation for bias: $\alpha = .90$,

promotion of mistrust: $\alpha = .93$). Confirmatory factor analysis supported the three-dimensional

factor structure of the measure, with each item loading highly onto its respective factor ($\lambda > .76$;

Grindal, 2017). Given the relative newness of the racial-ethnic socialization measure, additional

evidence supporting the measure's validity is not yet available.

Social Desirability

 The Socially Desirable Response Set-5 (SDRS-5; Hays et al., 1989) is a 5-item measure

used to assess individuals' tendencies to present themselves in a favorable manner rather than

presenting their true views, opinions, or feelings (see Appendix F). Participants responded to the

items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Definitely True*) to 5 (*Definitely False*).

Responses of definitely true were scored as 1 on items 1 and 5, whereas responses of definitely

false were scored as 1 on items 2, 3, and 4. All other responses were scored as 0. Scores were

summed with higher scores reflecting participants' tendencies to provide socially desirable

responses ($\alpha = .49$). This measure was included in the current study because transracial adoptive

parents may have been motivated to appear unprejudiced or well-prepared to parent a Black

child, and these responses may not reflect their true views, opinions, or feelings.

 The SDRS-5 was developed as a practical and shorter alternative using the 11-item

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS) Form A (Reynolds, 1982) measure of

social desirability, which is a subset of the full 33-item MC scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The SDRS-5 has relatively good psychometric properties, demonstrating adequate internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Hays et al., 1989), as well as strong convergent and divergent validity (Pechorro et al., 2016).

Procedure

Approval from Xavier University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendices G and H) was obtained prior to data collection. After gaining IRB approval, recruitment of participants began by distributing information about the study to parents at a monthly meeting of the Crossroads Adoption and Foster Parent Support Group (i.e., community sample). At this time, parents had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. Using a private Facebook Group and email listserv created and maintained by Crossroads Church, the Adoption and Foster Parent Support Group leader communicated with all parents inviting them to participate in the study (see Appendices I and J, respectively). The correspondence described the purpose of the study and an incentive to participate (i.e., $10 Amazon gift card). The correspondence included a secure transfer protocol (i.e., https://) hyperlinked to externally direct parents to an anonymous Qualtrics survey. Upon clicking the secure transfer protocol, participants were directed to the anonymous online survey that opened to an informed consent document (see Appendix K). Once parents agreed to participate in the study, they learned that, as part of the study's cover story, the researcher was interested in examining perceived community support for transracial adoptive families. Participants were then asked to provide demographic information about their age, parental status (i.e., mother or father), and education level, as well as their first adopted child's current age, age at adoption, gender, and birthplace (see Appendix C). Subsequently, parents completed a measure assessing their engagement in racial-ethnic socialization through the lens of

the TPB (see Appendix E; Ajzen et al., 2011) and a measure assessing their knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development (see Appendix D). It should be noted that three quality assurance items were included in the study to screen for careless responding (and can be seen on Appendices C and D). After completing all of the study's tasks, participants were thanked and debriefed (see Appendix L). As part of the debriefing, participants were asked to enter their name and email address to receive monetary compensation for their participation (i.e., $10 Amazon gift card) and were provided with information about available resources for transracial adoptive families (see Appendix M).

Despite much effort, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, recruitment of participants through the Crossroads Church Adoption and Foster Parent Support Group stagnated and was, ultimately, discontinued and recruitment of participants began using MTurk. Study procedures for MTurk participants were consistent with those recruited from the Crossroads Church Adoption and Foster Parent Support Group, with the following exceptions. MTurk participants completed pre-screening questions that determined their eligibility to participate in the study (see Appendix N). Specifically, MTurk participants were required to identify their race/ethnicity as White/Caucasian, their parenting status having adopted or fostered a child, and the adopted or fostered child's race as Black or African American. Participants who responded to any pre-screening question that deviated from these criteria were directed to a message (in Qualtrics) telling them that they did not qualify for the study (see Appendix O). These pre-screening questions were necessary because the present study required the recruitment of only White/Caucasian individuals who have adopted a child who identifies as Black or African American (for which MTurk has no qualification settings). MTurk participants who passed the pre-screening questions were directed to an informed consent (see Appendix P), and then

completed the same measures, in the same order, as participants from the Crossroads Adoption

and Foster Parent Support Group. MTurk participants were compensated $1.50 for completing

the study.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Data Screening

Prior to testing the study's hypotheses, preliminary analyses were conducted to check the

data for violations of the assumptions of the general linear model. Following procedures

described in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the data were examined for outliers, which reveal the

presence of extreme scores; normality, which assesses the shape of the distribution of scores; and

homoscedasticity, which assesses the relative equivalence of variability in scores between

continuous measures. Outliers were visually inspected using box plots (i.e., scores exceeding the

inner fence or ±1.5 times the interquartile range) and statistically examined using z scores (i.e.,

scores exceeding ±3.3 as recommended by Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). Although visual

inspection of the boxplots suggested some extreme values, no scores exceeded 3.3 standard

deviations above or below a variable's mean and, therefore, no outliers were detected for any of

the study's variables. To determine if the shape of the distribution of scores for each continuous

variable was normal, results from Shapiro-Wilks test were examined. Results revealed that all

continuous variables departed from normality and were generally negatively skewed. However,

because the General Linear Model is robust to violations of its assumption of normality, no

transformations of the data were made. Finally, visual inspection of bivariate scatterplots

revealed no apparent violations of the assumption of homoscedasticity among study variables,

meaning that the variability in scores for one continuous variable was roughly the same at all values of another continuous variable.

   Quality assurance items. Participants responded to three quality assurance items to assess their attention to detail during the study. Quality assurance items were included in the study to address the potential for random, or careless responding, which is common in online research and can pose a threat to the integrity of the data (Osborne & Blanchard, 2011). The primary analyses described below were conducted with and without data for any failed quality assurance item. Results revealed an inconsistent pattern between participants who passed all three quality assurance items and those who failed one or more quality assurance item; therefore, data from participants who failed any quality assurance item were omitted.

   Recruitment strategies. To examine the potential for different effects related to the two separate recruitment strategies utilized in the current study, the primary analyses described below were conducted with and without data for participants recruited from MTurk. Results revealed a consistent pattern; therefore, results reported below reflect data from the full sample of participants who passed all three quality assurance items (N = 199). The one observed difference in results between the two samples is noted below.

   Potential covariate. To examine if social desirability was associated with White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization, a bivariate correlation was computed. Results revealed that social desirability was unrelated to intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization ($r = -.05$, $p = .50$).

Primary Analyses

   Means, medians, and standard deviations associated with, and bivariate correlations among, all variables measured in the study are found in Table 4.

To test the prediction that knowledge would be positively correlated with White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child, a bivariate correlation was computed (Hypothesis 1). Results revealed that parents' scores on the knowledge test, assessing their knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development, were negatively correlated with their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child ($r = -.26, p < .001$).

Bivariate correlations were computed to test the relationships between White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization and their 1) attitudes about engaging in racial socialization, 2) perceived subjective norms for engaging in racial socialization, and 3) perceived behavioral control for engaging in racial socialization (Hypothesis 2). Results revealed that parents' intentions were positively correlated with their attitudes toward ($r = .79, p < .001$), subjective norms for ($r = .76, p < .001$), and perceived behavioral control of ($r = .52, p < .001$) the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren).

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to examine if White parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development is an important incremental predictor of their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization for their Black child, beyond the components of the theory of planned behavior (i.e., attitudes about engaging in racial-ethnic socialization, perceived injunctive norms for engaging in racial-ethnic socialization, and perceived behavioral control for engaging in racial-ethnic socialization; Hypothesis 3). In the regression, standardized scores reflecting parents' attitudes about, perceived subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of engaging in racial-ethnic socialization were entered in step 1. Step 2 contained standardized scores reflecting parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development. As seen in Table 5, parents' knowledge of racial/ethnic identity

development did not predict their intentions to engage in racial/ethnic socialization above and beyond the components of the theory of planned behavior ($\Delta R^2 = .002, p = .33$).

Finally, continuous x continuous hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between the components of the TPB and knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development on parents' intentions to engage in racial/ethnic socialization. A separate regression analysis was conducted for each component of (or predictor variable in) the TPB (i.e., attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control; Exploratory Hypotheses). Specifically, in the regression, step 1 contained standardized scores reflecting parents' knowledge of racial/ethnic identity development and one of the components of the TPB. Step 2 contained the product term carrying the interaction between variables entered at step 1. Across the regressions, as seen in Tables 6, 7, and 8, results revealed that the components of the TPB, but not knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development, were uniquely and positively associated with parents' intentions to engage in racial/ethnic socialization. The regressions also revealed significant interactions between parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development and two (of the three) components of the TPB: perceived behavioral control ($\beta = -.28, \Delta R^2 = .07, p < .001$) and subjective norms ($\beta = -.20, \Delta R^2 = .04, p < .001$; *note:* the interaction effect between parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development and their subjective norms for engaging in racial-ethnic socialization did not reach traditional levels of significance when MTurk participants were examined separately [$\beta = -.08, \Delta R^2 = .006, p = .091$]).

Post hoc simple slope analyses were conducted to probe the significant interactions between parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development and their subjective norms for and perceived behavioral control of engaging in racial-ethnic socialization on their intentions to

engage in racial-ethnic socialization. As seen in Figure 1, the relationship between parents'

subjective norms for engaging in racial-ethnic socialization and their intentions to engage in

racial/ethnic socialization was strongest among parents who scored *low* on knowledge about

racial-ethnic identity development ($\beta = .98, t = 13.86, p < .001$) relative to parents who scored

high on knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development ($\beta = .60, t = 9.84, p < .001$). As

seen in Figure 2, the relationship between parents' perceived behavioral control for engaging in

racial-ethnic socialization and their intentions to engage in racial/ethnic socialization was

strongest among parents who scored *low* on knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development

($\beta = .85, t = 9.05, p < .001$) relatively to parents who scored *high* on about racial-ethnic identity

development ($\beta = .34, t = 5.14, p < .001$).

Discussion

Transracial adoption, particularly of Black children by White parents, has been and

continues to be controversial due (in part) to concerns that White parents are ill-equipped and

unknowledgeable about how to promote the racial-ethnic identity of Black youth. Despite the

controversy, the rates of transracial adoptions have steadily risen and, currently, the adoption of

Black children by White parents in the U.S. account for a large majority of all adoptions of Black

youth (Marr, 2017). Because strong evidence exists demonstrating that the development of a

racial-ethnic identity is associated with healthy psychological functioning (Yip et al., 2006) and

positive outcomes (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007; Dunbar et al., 2016; Gaylord-Harden et al.,

2007; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Yip et al., 2006), it is important for research to examine if White

transracial adoptive parents intend to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their Black children.

Consequently, the current study addresses a gap in the literature by examining the factors

associated with White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic

socialization with their adopted Black child(ren). Specifically, the current study examined if White transracial adoptive parents' (accurate) knowledge of how racial-ethnic identity develops impacts their intentions to promote their adopted Black children's racial-ethnic identity in the context of the TPB. Results revealed that parents' knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development was *negatively* associated with their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren); however, parents' intentions were *positively* correlated with components in the TPB – attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization. Interestingly, White parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development was not an incremental predictor of their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process beyond the components of the TPB, yet two of the components in the TPB (i.e., subjective norms and perceived behavioral control) were associated with greater intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization particularly among parents with low knowledge. Findings from the current study suggest that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge is neither necessary nor sufficient in predicting their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process. Rather, factors in the TPB, including parents' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control appear to be strong predictors of parents' intentions and potentially, their actual behavior.

As expected, parents who reported having relatively strong attitudes towards, positive subjective norms for, and heightened behavioral control of the racial-ethnic socialization process also reported having stronger intentions to foster their adopted Black child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity. These findings are consistent with ideas posited by the TPB as Bosnjak et al. (2020) describe that:

Human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: beliefs about the likely

consequences of the behavior (behavioral beliefs [or attitudes]), beliefs about the

normative expectations of others (normative beliefs [or subjective norms]), and beliefs

about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior

(control beliefs [or perceived behavioral control) (p. 353).

Consequently, in the current study, it is unsurprising that the components of the TPB positively

predicted transracial adoptive parents' intentions to foster the racial-ethnic identity of their

adopted Black child(ren). Such findings add to the robust literature documenting the power of

the TPB to predict a wide range of parenting practices. For example, Powell and Karraker (2017)

examined prospective parents' intentions to engage in various parenting practices, including co-

sleeping, breastfeeding, male circumcision, and use of non-parental childcare. Results revealed

that parents' behavioral intentions were strongly positively correlated with their own attitudes

toward, subjective norms for, and perceived ability to carry out the parenting practices. These

findings, along with the findings of the current study, demonstrate that the components of the

TPB are strong and reliable predictors of parenting intentions, including racial-ethnic

socialization.

One of the primary purposes of the current study was to examine if White transracial

adoptive parents' (accurate) knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development is an important

predictor of their intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black

child(ren). Contrary to hypotheses, results revealed that parents with greater knowledge of racial-

ethnic identity development reported fewer intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization.

Thus, it seems that greater knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development does not necessarily

promote White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization,

which casts doubts on longstanding concerns that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge

of racial-ethnic identity development is necessary to foster their Black adopted child(ren)'s

racial-ethnic identity. Such a finding is consistent with prior work (see Ajzen et al., 2011)

demonstrating that factual knowledge is not always positively correlated with individuals'

behavioral intentions. However, rather than completing rejecting the idea that heightened

knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development is necessary for the effective parenting of

adopted Black children, it is possible that parents (in the current study) with greater knowledge

about racial-ethnic identity development reported lower *intentions* to engage in racial-ethnic

socialization because they were already engaging in behaviors (i.e., *actual actions*) to foster the

development of their adopted Black child's racial-ethnic identity. Because the current study did

not examine the actual racial-ethnic socialization behaviors among White transracial adoptive

parents, future research could examine what strategies or behaviors White transracial adoptive

parents may already be engaging in (beyond what they intend to engage in) that foster the

development of their Black adopted child's racial-ethnic identity. Such research may find that the

association between knowledge and behavior is complex and bi-directional, whereby engaging in

behaviors that promote the development of Black child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity likely fosters

parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development and vice versa (e.g., a child asks her

parent questions about race relations after viewing a news report highlighting a Black Lives

Matter protest, therefore prompting the parent to obtain information and reflect on his/her values

before sharing information about race-related intra- and inter-group relations that would affect

the child's racial-ethnic identity development).

     As expected, knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development was not an incremental

predictor of parents' intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process beyond the

components of the TPB. Specifically, White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of

normative racial-ethnic identity development did not explain their intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization beyond experiencing strong attitudes toward, positive subjective norms for, and heightened behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization with their Black adopted child. This finding is consistent with literature describing the role that knowledge plays in predicting individuals' intentions through the scope of the TPB. For example, Ajzen et al. (2011) revealed that individuals' attitudes toward a desired behavior, perceived expectations of important referent individuals (i.e., subjective norms), and feelings of control to engage in a desired behavior (i.e., perceived behavioral control) determined individuals' behavioral intentions (and actual actions in some cases) more strongly than their knowledge about the domain. Consequently, the findings by Ajzen et al. help challenge the idea that knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development is a necessary factor to understand White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process with their Black child(ren). These findings may also challenge the common belief that White transracial adoptive parents' who lack knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development are unable to meaningfully engage in the racial ethnic socialization process, which has led to longstanding fears about the transracial adoptions of Black children by White parents in both the Black and White communities. Therefore, adoption professionals should consider the importance of parents' attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of engaging in racial-ethnic socialization when approving adoptive placements, such that White people are not seen as ill-equipped to adopt Black children simply because they lack knowledge of how racial-ethnic identity develops.

Although not a central purpose of the current research, the study also explored if (accurate) knowledge about (normative) racial-ethnic identity development moderates the relationships between the components of the TPB (i.e., attitudes toward, perceived subjective

norms for, and perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization) with parents'

intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity development of their adopted Black child(ren).

Results revealed that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity

development moderated the relationships between two components of TPB (i.e., perceived

behavioral control and subjective norms) and their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic

socialization of their adopted Black child(ren). Specifically, parents who perceived greater

subjective norms for and greater behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization reported greater

intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black child(ren), and these

relationships were particularly strong among parents with relatively low knowledge.

The finding that greater perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization

heightened White parents' intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black

child(ren) is consistent with previous research on the relationship between individuals' perceived

ability to perform a given behavior and their intentions to engage in that behavior (Berbery &

O'Brien, 2011). What is curious (and more challenging to explain) is why the relationship

between perceived behavioral control and intentions was particularly strong among parents with

low knowledge. One possible explanation for this finding is that parents who have relatively low

knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development may (albeit, naïvely) perceive fewer barriers

to engaging in the racial-ethnic socialization process, which may bolster their feelings of control

over the process. Because the parent-child relationship is only one of the many contexts for the

racial-ethnic socialization process (other contexts include schools, the community, and the

media; Priest et al., 2014), parents who have relatively low knowledge of how a racial-ethnic

identity develops may purposefully seek other contexts to help foster their adopted Black

child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity. Consequently, by seeking other contexts to help promote their

Black child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity, White transracial adoptive parents exert heightened

behavioral control over the socialization process (Ajzen, 2002; Ajzen, 2020). Future research

should continue to explore the complex association between knowledge of racial-ethnic identity

development and White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to promote their adopted Black

child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity by examining the variables may heightened the parents'

perceived behavioral control over the racial-ethnic socialization process (see Ajzen, 2020).

With regard to the finding that perceiving heightened subjective norms for engaging in

racial-ethnic socialization was associated with transracial adoptive parents' intentions to promote

the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black child(ren), particularly when the parents had low

knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development, it appears that being surrounded by

environmental and community support may bolster parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic

socialization, and this support may be particularly beneficial among parents' whose knowledge

of racial-ethnic identity development is low. This finding is relevant to research by Lee et al.

(2015) revealing that engagement in pre- and post-adoption networking (i.e., community

support) helps transracial adoptive parents establish connections with one another and create

subjective norms that motivate them to engage in racial-ethnic socialization with their adopted

children. Consequently, the importance of environmental and community support for promoting

White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization (by

revealing supportive subjective norms) has implications for policy, such as the Multi-Ethnic

Placement Act (MEPA) as amended by the Interethnic Placement Act (1996), which

inadvertently limited the pre- and post-adoption training opportunities available to help prepare

parents for navigating the challenges of transracial adoption. Future research applying the

findings from the current study could assist adoption agencies and other community agencies in

developing and testing the effectiveness of programs (i.e., trainings, workshops, support groups, etc.) to provide transracial adoptive parents with needed environmental support. Such programs would likely affect all parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization but may have the greatest impact on parents whose knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development is relatively low.

Contrary to expectation, results revealed that knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development did not influence (i.e., moderate) the relationship between parents' attitudes toward engaging and their intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization. Previous research has demonstrated that one robust predictor of individuals' intentions to engage in a desired behavior is their positive attitudes towards that behavior (Ajzen et al., 2011). Consequently, knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development may be unnecessary to predict White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization when attitudes toward racial-ethnic socialization are strong and positive. The power of individuals' attitudes to predict their intentions and actual behavior is often explained by research demonstrating that attitudes are based on personal experiences or observations of others that continually re-affirm and reinforce behavior (Jeihooni et al., 2019). Therefore, in the current study, if parents' intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization were a result of positive attitudes reinforced by previous experiences, it is understandable why knowledge of racial-ethnic socialization (or lack thereof) had little to no influence. Future research should explore the impact of White transracial adoptive parents' personal experiences and observations on their attitudes toward engaging in the racial-ethnic socialization process, potentially by utilizing qualitative research designs. The use of such research designs may allow researchers (see work by dos Santos and Wagner, 2018, Docan-Morgan, 2011, and Killian and Khanna, 2019) to examine parents' unique perspectives and

experiences with regard to race, transracial adoption, and racial-ethnic identity development with greater depth and context.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present findings contribute meaningfully to important literature examining the factors that influence White transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization process with their adopted Black child(ren). The current findings also offer a potential paradigm shift for understanding a White person's ability to effectively parent a Black child and meaningfully help foster the child's racial-ethnic identity. Despite the valuable nature of the current study, there are limitations that inform directions for future research.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the current study recruited participants using two sampling methods: The adoption and foster parent support group affiliated with Crossroads Church and Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Although no evidence exists in the current study to suggest meaningful differences between the two sampling methods, the transracial adoptive parents who were recruited from the adoption and foster parent support group may still be systematically different from the transracial adoptive parents who were recruited from MTurk. For example, parents recruited from the adoption and foster parent support group were participating in activities, through Crossroads Church, that demonstrated their commitment to and interest in improving their parenting. Further, these parents were connected with a tight-knit community of likeminded individuals. Unfortunately, the current study has no evidence that the transracial adoptive parents recruited through MTurk were engaging in similar experiences and/or had similar support. Consequently, although it was necessary to recruit participants using the two sampling methods, lack of information about the similarities and differences between these participants may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Concerns about the generalizability of the findings arise because research reveals that, on average, users of MTurk differ from the general population with regard to education level, socioeconomic status, and technological savviness (Goodman et al., 2013). For example, according to data from the 2009-2011 American Community Survey (see summary by Kreider and Raleigh, 2016) revealing demographic data related to transracial adoptive families, the MTurk sample in the current study overrepresented married parents (88.8% versus 73.1%) and parents with some college education or above (97% versus 82.3%). However, the average household income between White transracial adoptive parents in the MTurk sample and the American Community Survey was rather consistent, revealing that 72.3% and 76.4% of White transracial adoptive parents from the samples, respectively, had an average household income of $50,000 to $100,000 or above. Future research should work to recruit a potentially more representative sample of participants to broaden the generalizability of findings. However, such research would require knowing more about the demographic characteristics of White transracial adoptive parents in the U.S., so that future research can recruit a sample reflective of the actual population of transracial adoptive parents in the U.S.

Despite the strengths of the current study, it is important to note the limitations associated with the study's cross-sectional design. Specifically, the current study examined White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development at a single point in time. Because White parents' knowledge of how racial-ethnic identity developments likely changes as they raise their adopted Black child(ren), it would be important for future research to examine how this knowledge impact their attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of engaging in racial-ethnic socialization (and, therefore, their intention to help their child(ren) develop a strong racial-ethnic identity). Such research should utilize a

longitudinal or cross-sequential design, as these designs have allowed researchers, including

Jeihooni et al. (2019) and Knowles et al. (2015), to understand the potential impacts of changes

in parents' knowledge of a specific domain to their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived

behavioral control about a desired behavior.

A final limitation worthy of noting reflects potential concerns about the construct validity

of the 32-item measure, developed for the current study, to assess parents' knowledge of racial-

ethnic identity development. Although great effort was taken to develop a strong measure,

including deriving items from a thorough review of the empirical literature and asking two

experts in the field of racial-ethnic identity development and developmental psychology to

review, evaluate, and provide feedback on the appropriateness of the items, the White transracial

adoptive parents in the current study answered about 18 ($M = 17.73$; Range = 9.00-25.00)

questions correctly for a hit rate of 55.4%. Although this hit rate is consistent with other

measures of knowledge in the literature (e.g., 58% hit rate on an environmental knowledge test;

Ajzen et al., 2011), the score suggests that respondents had relatively *little* accurate knowledge

about the normative development of a racial-ethnic identity (given the probability of answering

each individual question correctly by guessing is 50%, the probability of answering *at most* 50%

of the questions correctly by guessing is 56.9%, and the probability of answering *more than* 50%

of the questions correctly by guessing is 43% [based on calculations of binomial cumulative

probabilities]). However, it is noteworthy that, despite participants' relatively low knowledge of

racial-ethnic identity development, they still expressed heightened intentions to promote the

racial-ethnic identity of their adopted child(ren). Consequently, it is important for future research

to establish the construct validity of the knowledge measure, which would help inform its value

to understanding White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to promote the racial-ethnic

identity of their Black child(ren). Given the construct of normative racial-ethnic identity development is complex and multifaceted, availability of a validated measure (despite the challenges of validating a measure of content knowledge) would provide researchers a unique and promising foundation for asking important next questions about how White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge on normative racial-ethnic identity development affects the quality of their parenting.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations of the current study, the work addresses gaps in the existing literature regarding the impact of knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development on White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to promote their adopted Black child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity. Although additional research is needed to fully understand White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to meaningfully engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process with their adopted Black children, the current study reveals that White transracial adoptive parents' knowledge is neither necessary nor sufficient in predicting their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process. Rather, White transracial adoptive parents' attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of engaging in the racial-ethnic socialization process appear to be strong predictors of their intentions and, potentially, their actual behavior. Further, parents who perceived greater subjective norms for and greater behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization reported greater intentions to promote the racial-ethnic identity of their adopted Black child(ren), and these relationships were particularly strong among parents with relatively low knowledge. In sum, the findings of the current study cast doubts on longstanding concerns – within both the Black community and White community – that White transracial adoptive parents who lack knowledge of racial-ethnic identity

development cannot effectively engage in racial-ethnic socialization to foster their Black adopted child(ren)'s racial-ethnic identity. Because the current study did not examine the actual racial-ethnic socialization behaviors among the White transracial adoptive parents, future research should examine what strategies or behaviors White transracial adoptive parents may already be engaging in (beyond what they intend to engage in) that foster the development of their Black adopted child's racial-ethnic identity to explore the complex and likely bidirectional association between individuals' knowledge and actual behavior.

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Table 1

Number and Percentage of Participants for Parent-Related Demographic Questions by Sample Type

Demographic Characteristic	Full Sample		Community Sample		MTurk Sample	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Parental Status						
Mother	131	65.8	56	86.2	75	56.0
Father	68	34.2	9	13.8	59	44.0
Marital Status						
Married	174	87.4	55	84.6	119	88.8
Divorced	3	1.5	2	3.1	1	.7
Separated	2	1.0	0	0	2	1.5
Widowed	3	1.5	2	3.1	1	.7
Single, never married	17	8.5	6	9.2	11	8.2

Highest Level of Education						
High School Diploma	5	2.5	1	1.5	4	3.0
Some College	14	7.0	6	9.2	8	6.0
Bachelor's Degree	98	49.2	29	33.6	69	51.5
Master's Degree	69	34.7	21	32.3	48	35.8
Doctoral Degree	13	6.5	8	12.3	5	3.7
Estimated Annual Household Income						
Less than $20,000	5	2.5	0	0	5	3.7
$20,000 to $34,999	11	5.5	2	3.1	9	6.7
$35,000 to $49,999	26	13.1	4	6.2	22	16.4
$50,000 to $79,999	69	34.7	14	21.5	55	41.0
$75,000 to $99,000	31	15.6	7	10.8	24	17.9

Over $100,000	51	25.6	33	50.8	18	13.4
Did Not Respond	6	3.0	5	7.7	1	.7

Religion

Christianity	126	63.3	50	76.9	76	56.7
Islam	1	.5	0	0	1	.7
Hindu	25	12.6	0	0	25	18.7
Judaism	1	.5	0	0	1	.7
Agnostic	2	1.0	1	1.5	1	.7
Atheist	2	1.0	1	1.5	1	.7
Spiritism	1	.5	0	0	1	.7
Nondenominational	2	1.0	2	3.1	0	0

Unity	1	.5	1	1.5	0	0
Did Not Specify	38	19.1	10	15.4	28	20.9

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Participants for Child-Related Demographic Questions by Sample Type

Demographic Characteristic	Full Sample		Community Sample		MTurk Sample	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Total Number of Children in Home						
0	1	.5	0	20.0	1	.7
1	47	23.6	13	20.6	34	25.4
2	93	46.7	16	20.0	77	57.5
3	32	16.1	13	12.3	19	14.2
4	9	4.5	8	10.8	1	.7
5	8	4.0	7	6.2	1	.7
6	5	2.5	4	3.1	1	.7
8	2	1.0	2	3.1	0	0
10	2	1.0	2	3.1	0	0

Number of Adopted Children in Home

0	2	1.0	2	3.1	0	0
1	144	72.4	27	41.5	117	87.3
2	32	16.1	19	29.2	13	9.7
3	8	4.0	6	9.2	2	1.5
4	8	4.0	8	12.3	0	0
5	2	1.0	0	0	2	1.5
6	2	1.0	2	3.1	0	0
10	1	.5	1	1.5	0	0

First Adopted Child's Gender

Male	96	48.2	30	46.2	66	49.3
Female	101	50.8	35	53.8	66	49.3
Prefer Not to Respond	2	1.0	0	0	2	1.5

First Adopted Child's Birth
Country

USA (Domestic)	120	60.3	51	78.5	69	51.5
Outside of the USA (International)	51	25.6	13	20.0	38	28.4

Type of Adoption
Agreement for First
Adopted Child

Open, with current contact with birth family	84	42.2	17	26.2	67	50.0
Open, with no current contact with birth family	39	19.6	14	21.5	25	18.7
Semi-Open (i.e., communication occurs via adoption agency/professional)	17	8.5	6	9.2	11	8.2
Closed	52	26.1	21	32.3	31	23.1
As a result of foster care	6	3.0	6	9.2	0	0
Other	1	.5	1	1.5	0	0

Table 3

Number and Percentage of Participants' Scores Test of Their Knowledge of Normative Racial-Ethnic Identity Development

	Answered Correctly		Answered Incorrectly	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*
Item Number				
1	160	80.4	39	19.6
2	128	64.3	71	35.7
3	154	77.4	45	22.6
4	116	58.3	83	41.7
5	119	59.8	80	40.2
6	88	44.2	111	55.8
7	144	72.4	55	27.6
8	76	38.2	123	61.8

9	62	31.2	137	68.8
10	133	66.8	66	33.2
11	152	76.4	47	23.6
12	101	50.8	98	49.2
13	48	24.1	151	75.9
14	113	56.8	86	43.2
15	130	65.3	69	34.7
16	62	31.2	137	68.8
17	154	77.4	45	22.6
18	110	55.3	89	44.7
19	146	73.4	53	26.6
20	36	18.1	163	81.9

21	65	32.7	134	67.3
22	53	26.6	146	73.4
23	132	66.3	67	33.7
24	125	62.8	74	37.2
25	119	59.8	80	40.2
26	90	45.2	109	54.8
27	97	48.7	102	51.3
28	118	59.3	81	40.7
29	165	82.9	34	17.1
30	122	61.3	77	38.7
31	148	74.4	51	25.6
32	63	31.7	136	68.3

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics Associated with Participants' Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development, Attitudes Toward, Subjective Norms for, Perceived Behavioral Control of, and Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic Socialization

	M	Mdn	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development	17.73	18.00	3.29	---	-.19*	-.33***	-.07	-.26***
2. Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Attitudes)	5.14	5.11	.88		---	.74***	.56***	.79***
3. Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Subjective Norms)	4.89	5.00	1.08			---	.50***	.76***
4. Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Behavioral Control)	5.35	5.44	1.00				---	.52***
5. Racial-Ethnic Socialization (Intentions)	5.09	5.00	0.94					---

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

Table 5

Results for the Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining if Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic

Identity Development Predicts White Parents' Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic

Socialization Beyond the Components of the Theory of Planned Behavior

	Beta	*t*	*F*	ΔR^2
Step 1			135.65***	.69***
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Attributes**	.48	7.68***		
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Subjective Norms**	.37	6.30***		
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Perceived Behavioral Control**	.07	1.34*		
Step 2			133.27***	.002
Knowledge of Racial-ethnic Identity Development	-.04	-0.98*		

*p < .05, ***p < .001

Table 6

Results for the Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Interaction Between Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development and White Parents' Attitudes Toward Engaging in Racial-Ethnic Socialization on Their Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic Socialization

	Beta	t	F	ΔR^2
Step 1			168.80***	.63***
Knowledge of Racial-ethnic Identity Development	-.11	-2.53***		
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Attitudes**	.77	17.41***		
Step 2			112.73***	.00
Knowledge x Attitudes	.04	.92		

***p ≤ .001

Table 7

Results for the Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Interaction Between Knowledge

of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development and White Parents' Perceived Subjective Norms Toward

Engaging in Racial-Ethnic Socialization on Their Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic

Socialization

	Beta	*t*	*F*	ΔR^2
Step 1			131.63***	.57***
Knowledge of Racial-ethnic Identity Development	-.003	-0.60		
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Subjective Norms**	.76	15.28***		
Step 2			101.46***	.04***
Knowledge x Subjective Norms	-.20	-4.26***		

****p* < .001

Table 8

Results for the Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Interaction Between Knowledge of Racial-Ethnic Identity Development and White Parents' Perceived Behavioral Control Toward Engaging in Racial-Ethnic Socialization on Their Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic Socialization

	Beta	*t*	*F*	ΔR^2
Step 1			45.31***	.32***
Knowledge of Racial-ethnic Identity Development	-.22	-3.70		
Racial-ethnic Socialization **Perceived Behavioral Control**	.50	8.49***		
Step 2			40.46***	.07***
Knowledge x PBC	-.28	-4.62***		

***$p < .001$

Figures

Figure 1

Results for the Simple Slope Analysis Examining the Interaction Between Knowledge of Racial-

Ethnic Identity Development and White Parents' Perceived Subjective Norms for Engaging in

Racial-Ethnic Socialization on Their Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic Socialization

Note. Among participants with relatively low knowledge, perceiving strong subjective norms for racial-ethnic socialization are more strongly associated with relatively high intentions (compared to parents with relatively high knowledge).

Figure 2

Results for the Simple Slope Analysis Examining the Interaction Between Knowledge of Racial-

Ethnic Identity Development and White Parents' Perceived Behavioral Control for Engaging in

Racial-Ethnic Socialization on Their Intentions to Engage in Racial-Ethnic Socialization
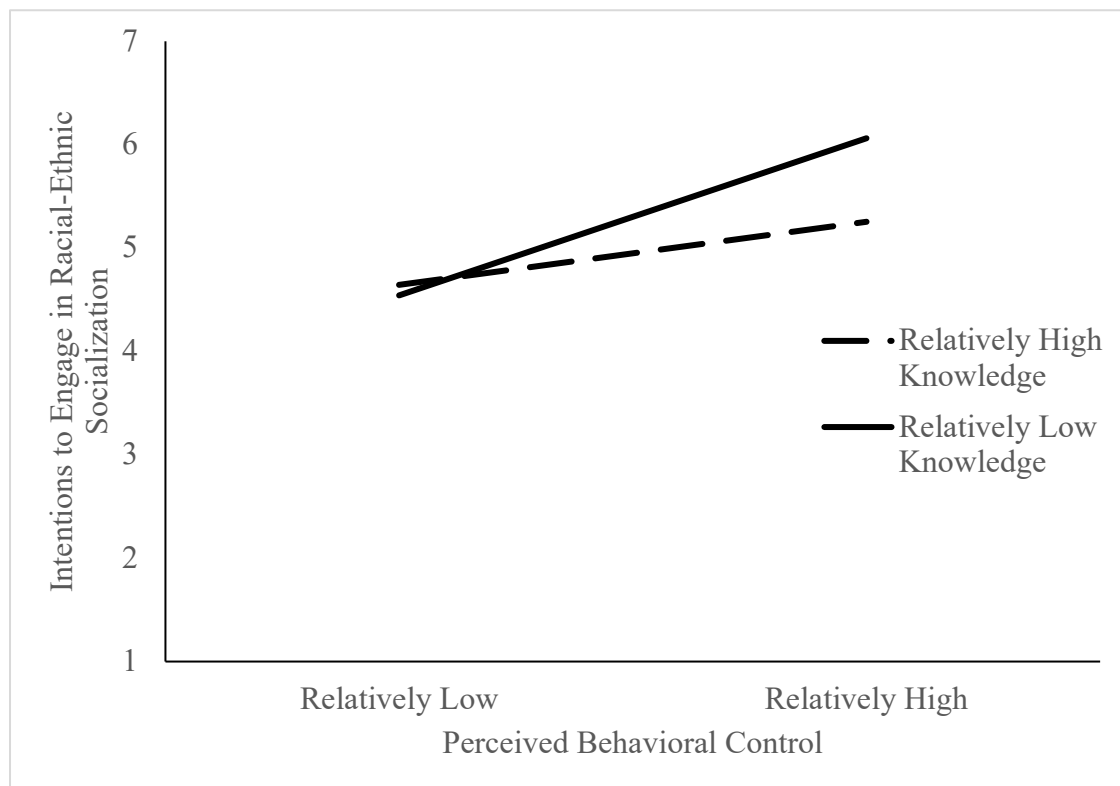
Note. Among participants with relatively low knowledge, relatively high perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization is more strongly associated with relatively high intentions (compared to parents with relatively high knowledge).

Appendix A

Crossroads Church's Foster and Adoption Support Group Approval

March 1st, 2018

Shardé Pettis
Doctoral Student, School of Psychology
Xavier University
3800 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45207

Subject: Permission to Execute Study

Dear Shardé,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the recruitment of transracial adoptive parents who are members of the Crossroads Church adoption and foster parent group for potential inclusion in your dissertation research examining transracial adoptive parents' ideas and attitudes toward the role of culture and race in their family. I have considered your request and consent to you recruiting participants from our group, with the intent to collect data during Spring 2019.

Approval from Xavier University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) must be obtained prior to data collection. After gaining IRB approval, I support your surveying of transracial adoptive parents using an anonymous online Qualtrics questionnaire. If I have any concerns or need additional information about the IRB approval or the rights of research participants, I am aware I may contact the Chair of the Xavier University's IRB, Dr. Mullins at mullins@xavier.edu.

Sincerely,

Kerry Gautraud
Administrator of Crossroads Church Adoptive and Foster Parent Group
adoption@crossroads.net
3500 Madison Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45209

4/4/18
Date

crossroads 3500 MADISON ROAD, CINCINNATI, OH 45209 P513.731.7400 F513.731.3978 CROSSROADS.NET
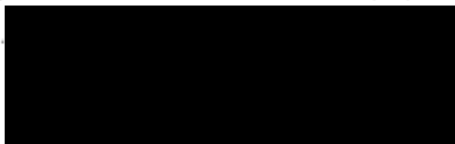
Appendix B

MTURK Recruitment Page

Appendix C

Demographic Questionnaire

<u>INSTRUCTIONS:</u> The questions below are about you and your adopted child. If you have adopted multiple children who are Black or African American, please answer the questions by reporting your first adopted child's information.

1. Your parental status:

    a. Mother

    b. Father

2. Your marital status:

    a. Married

    b. Divorced

    c. Separated

    d. Widowed

    e. Single, never married

3. Your highest level of education:

    a. Some high school

    b. High school diploma

    c. Some college

    d. Bachelor's Degree

    e. Master's Degree

    f. Doctoral Degree

4. Your age (in years): _____

5. Your estimated annual household income:

    a. Less than $20,000

    b. $20,000 to $34,999

    c. $35,000 to $49,999

    d. $50,000 to $74,999

    e. $75,000 to $99,999

    f. Over $100,000

6. Your religion (if applicable): _____

7. Total number of children in your home: _____

8. Number of adopted children in your home: _____

9. Your first adopted child's current age (in years): _____

10. Your first adopted child's age at adoption (in years): _____

11. Your first adopted child's gender:

    a. Male

    b. Female

    c. Prefer Not to Respond

12. Your first adopted child's birth country: _____

13. Type of adoption agreement for your first adopted child:

    a. Open, with current contact with birth family

    b. Open, with *no* current contact with birth family

    c. Closed

    d. Prefer Not to Respond

14. Name a color that is also a fruit: _____

Appendix D

Knowledge Test

INSTRUCTIONS: Listed below are statements concerning racial-ethnic identity development. Read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false. Select TRUE or FALSE for each item to indicate your answer.

1. Children 3 to 6 years old (early childhood) can accurately use racial labels to categorize *others* based on skin color (i.e., black or white).
   a. **True**
   b. False

2. Girls are typically slower to develop a racial-ethnic identity than boys.
   a. True
   b. **False**

3. A child's ability to accurately label his/her *own* race or ethnicity occurs in the early childhood years (i.e., 3 to 6 years old).
   a. **True**
   b. False

4. The development of a child's racial-ethnic identity is a one-way process from parent to child.
   a. True
   b. **False**

5. Developing a child's racial-ethnic identity prevents the negative effects of prejudice and discrimination that racial-ethnic minority child experiences.
   a. True
   b. **False**

   Independence Day occurs in September every year.
   a. True
   b. False

6. Promoting mistrust or wariness during interracial interactions is a core component of developing children's racial-ethnic identities.
   a. **True**
   b. False

7. The frequency of messages that children receive about their racial-ethnic identity decreases as they age.
   a. True
   b. **False**

8. Developing a racial-ethnic identity is a direct, verbal, and proactive process rather than indirect, non-verbal, and reactive process.
   a. True
   b. False

9. Messages about race and ethnicity are conveyed consistently throughout their child's life despite the child's developmental competencies and experiences.
   a. True
   b. False

10. Minority individuals can have a racial-ethnic identity (i.e., identify with a race or ethnicity) without exploring its personal meaning.
    a. True
    b. False

11. The development of a strong racial-ethnic identity (i.e., having deeply explored its meaning) is associated with healthy psychological functioning.
    a. True
    b. False

12. When developing a racial-ethnic identity, individuals progress through stages and statuses sequentially and do not move backwards through stages and statuses.
    a. True
    b. False

13. African American youth can experience stability in their racial-ethnic identity status over time.
    a. True
    b. False

14. Individuals who have committed to their race or ethnicity after exploring its personal meaning must maintain their ethnic language and customs.
    a. True
    b. False

15. Greater racial-ethnic identity exploration is associated with heightened academic performance among African American youth.
    a. True
    b. False

16. Beginning in early childhood (ages 3 to 6), children are able to differentiate racial and ethnic groups based on their own or others cultural traditions. (For example: "Do Mexican children have a piñata at their birthday party or at Christmas?").
    a. True
    b. False

17. The identity development process among African American children involves the formation of attitudes toward their own and other racial-ethnic groups.
    a. **True**
    b. False

18. Black parents' level of education, pride, and value in their cultural heritage is related to less proactive promotion of their child's racial-ethnic identity development.
    a. True
    b. **False**

19. The family context is regarded as the most influential setting for developing a child's racial-ethnic identity.
    a. **True**
    b. False

20. It is during middle childhood (ages 7 to 12) that minority youth begin to independently examine the meaning of their ethnicity and their minority status.
    a. True
    b. **False**

21. Minority youth's understanding that their race and ethnicity are permanent characteristics throughout life and across situations emerges in adolescence (ages 13 to 18).
    a. True
    b. **False**

22. Racial-ethnic identity refers specifically to the racial-ethnic label that an individual self-selects (e.g., Latino, Puerto Rican, African American, Chinese).
    a. True
    b. **False**

23. Experiences with racism and discrimination prompt adolescents to explore their racial-ethnic identity.
    a. **True**
    b. False

24. Ethnic minority friendship pairs display similar levels of racial-ethnic identity development.
    a. **True**
    b. False

25. Not until adolescence do individuals understand that their race or ethnicity is a constant feature that cannot change.
    a. True
    b. **False**

26. Racial-ethnic identity development among boys involves receiving more racial pride messages than girls.
    a. True
    b. False

27. Girls are more likely than boys to receive messages that help them cope with racial barriers when developing a racial-ethnic identity.
    a. True
    b. False

   The word chair rhymes with swear.
    a. True
    b. False

28. The relationship between self-esteem and racial-ethnic identity is stronger for African American youth than for Caucasian youth.
    a. True
    b. False

29. As individuals' racial-ethnic identity develops, there is a shift from a passively defined to a more actively defined racial-ethnic identity.
    a. True
    b. False

30. The development of a racial-ethnic identity among African American youth reduces maladaptive behaviors.
    a. True
    b. False

31. Racial-ethnic minority adolescents, but not younger children use pronouns such as "us" and "we" when referencing the racial or ethnic group to which they identify.
    a. True
    b. False

32. Adolescents perceive their peers as having a greater influence than their parents on long-term developmental issues, such as their racial-ethnic identity.
    a. True
    b. False

Note. Correct answers are indicated by bold font.

Appendix E

Racial-Ethnic Socialization Measure

<u>Attitudes</u>

<u>INSTRUCTIONS:</u> Using the 7-point scale provided below, please indicate the extent to which you have or plan to engage in the following behaviors. Please select the one number that best reflects your response to each statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 – Very harmful
- 2 – Harmful
- 3 – Somewhat harmful
- 4 – Neutral
- 5 – Somewhat beneficial
- 6 – Beneficial
- 7 – Very beneficial

1. Encouraging my child to be proud of his/her racial/ethnic group would be/is…

2. Teaching my child about the traditions and customs of their racial and ethnic group would be/is…

3. Encouraging my child to attend cultural events of his/her racial/ethnic group (e.g., parades, festivals, plays) would be/is…

4. Speaking with my child about stereotypes, prejudice, and/or discrimination against members of his/her racial/ethnic group would be/is…

5. Speaking with my child about other people who may try to limit him/her because of his/her race/ethnicity would be/is…

6. Speaking with my child about how his/her race/ethnicity might affect how others view his/her abilities would be/is…

7. Telling my child to avoid other racial/ethnic groups because of their members' prejudice against my child's racial/ethnic group would be/is…

8. Doing or saying things to encourage my child to keep a distance from people of other racial/ethnic groups would be/is…

9. Doing or saying things to keep my child from trusting people from other racial/ethnic groups would be/is…

Subjective Norms

INSTRUCTIONS: Using the 7-point scale provided below, please indicate the extent to which you it is likely that people that you care about would encourage you to engage in the following behaviors. Please select the one number that best reflects your response to each statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 – Very unlikely
- 2 – Unlikely
- 3 – Somewhat unlikely
- 4 – Neutral
- 5 – Somewhat likely
- 6 – Likely
- 7 – Very likely

10. People whose opinions I care about think I should encourage my child to be proud of his/her racial/ethnic group.

11. People whose opinions I care about think I should teach my child about the traditions and customs of their racial and ethnic group.

12. People whose opinions I care about think I should encourage my child to attend cultural events of his/her racial/ethnic group (e.g., parades, festivals, plays).

13. People whose opinions I care about think I should speak with my child about stereotypes, prejudice, and/or discrimination against members of his/her racial/ethnic group.

14. People whose opinions I care about think I should speak with my child about other people who may try to limit him/her because of his/her race/ethnicity.

15. People whose opinions I care about think I should speak with my child about how his/her race/ethnicity might affect how others view his/her abilities.

16. People whose opinions I care about think I should tell my child to avoid other racial/ethnic groups because of their members' prejudice against my child's racial/ethnic group.

17. People whose opinions I care about think I should do or say things to encourage my child to keep a distance from people of other racial/ethnic groups.

18. People whose opinions I care about think I should do or say things to keep my child from trusting people from other racial/ethnic groups.

Perceived Behavioral Control

INSTRUCTIONS: Using the 7-point scale provided below, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree that you perceive you *could* engage in the following behaviors if you wanted to. Please select the one number that best reflects your response to each statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 – Strongly disagree
- 2 – Disagree
- 3 – Slightly disagree
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Slightly agree
- 6 – Agree
- 7 – Strongly agree

19. If I wanted to, I could easily encourage my child to be proud of his/her racial/ethnic group.

20. If I wanted to, I could easily teach my child about the traditions and customs of their racial and ethnic group.

21. If I wanted to, I could easily encourage my child to attend cultural events of his/her racial/ethnic group (e.g., parades, festivals, plays).

22. If I wanted to, I could easily speak with my child about stereotypes, prejudice, and/or discrimination against members of his/her racial/ethnic group.

23. If I wanted to, I could easily speak with my child about other people who may try to limit him/her because of his/her race/ethnicity.

24. If I wanted to, I could easily speak with my child about how his/her race/ethnicity might affect how others view his/her abilities.

25. If I wanted to, I could easily tell my child to avoid other racial/ethnic groups because of their members' prejudice against their racial/ethnic group.

26. If I wanted to, I could easily do or say things to encourage my child to keep a distance from people of other racial/ethnic groups.

27. If I wanted to, I could easily do or say things to keep my child from trusting people from other racial/ethnic groups.

Intentions

INSTRUCTIONS: Using the 7-point scale provided below, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree that you will engage in the following behaviors. Please select the one number that best reflects your response to each statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 – Definitely Not
- 2 – Probably Not
- 3 – Possibly
- 4 – Neutral
- 5 – Probably
- 6 – Very Probably
- 7 – Definitely

28. I intend to encourage my child to be proud of his/her racial/ethnic group.

29. I intend to teach my child about the traditions and customs of their racial and ethnic group.

30. I intend to encourage my child to attend cultural events of his/her racial/ethnic group (e.g., parades, festivals, plays).

31. I intend to speak with my child about stereotypes, prejudice, and/or discrimination against members of his/her racial/ethnic group.

32. I intend to speak with my child about other people who may try to limit him/her because of his/her race/ethnicity.

33. I intend to speak with my child about how his/her race/ethnicity might affect how others view his/her ability.

34. I intend to tell my child to avoid other racial/ethnic groups because of their members' prejudice against my child's racial/ethnic group.

35. I intend to do or say things to encourage my child to keep a distance from people of other racial/ethnic groups.

36. I intend to do or say things to keep my child from trusting people from other racial/ethnic groups.

Appendix F

Socially Desirable Response Set-5

INSTRUCTIONS: Listed below are a few statements about your relationships with others. Using the 5-point scale provided below, please indicate the extent to which each statement is TRUE or FALSE for you. Please select the one number that best reflects your response to each statement. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

- 1 – Definitely true
- 2 – Mostly true
- 3 – Don't know
- 4 – Mostly false
- 5 – Definitely false

1. I am always courteous even to people who are disagreeable.

2. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.

3. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

4. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.

5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.

Appendix G

Institutional Review Board Initial Approval

November 7, 2019

Sharde Pettis

███████████████████████████

Re: Protocol #19-060, *Is Knowledge of (Normative) Racial Identity Development Necessary?*
White Transracial Adoptive Parents' Intentions to Promote Black Adoptees' Racial Identity

Dear Ms. Pettis:

The IRB has reviewed the materials regarding your study, referenced above, and has determined that it meets the criteria for the Exempt from Review category under Federal Regulation 45CFR46. Your protocol is approved as exempt research, and therefore requires no further oversight by the IRB. We appreciate your thorough treatment of the issues raised and your timely response.

If you wish to modify your study, including the addition of data collection sites, it will be necessary to obtain IRB approval prior to implementing the modification. If any adverse events occur, please notify the IRB immediately.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. We wish you success with your project!

Sincerely,

███████████████████████████

Morrie Mullins, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Xavier University

MEM/sb

Appendix H

Institutional Review Board Modification Approval

July 8, 2020

Sharde Pettis

███████████████████████████

Re: Protocol #20-001, *Is Knowledge of (Normative) Racial Identity Development Necessary? White Transracial Adoptive Parents' Intentions to Promote Black Adoptees' Racial Identity"*

Dear Ms. Pettis:

The IRB has reviewed the materials regarding your study, referenced above, and has determined that it meets the criteria for the Exempt from Review category under Federal Regulation 45CFR46. Your protocol is approved as exempt research, and therefore requires no further oversight by the IRB. We appreciate your thorough treatment of the issues raised and your timely response.

If you wish to modify your study, including the addition of data collection sites, it will be necessary to obtain IRB approval prior to implementing the modification. If any adverse events occur, please notify the IRB immediately.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. We wish you success with your project!

Sincerely,

███████████████████████████

Joanne Estes, PhD
Vice Chair, Institutional Review Board
Xavier University

JE/sb

Appendix I

Participation Invitation Email

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

My name is Shardé Pettis, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Psychology at Xavier University. This letter describes the research I am pursuing for my dissertation that requests your participation. The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of perceived community support on White transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child(ren).

Your participation in this study will include completing questionnaires. Your participation is voluntary and should take no more than 30 minutes. Both fathers and mothers within the same family are invited to participate in the study but asked to individually complete his or her own questionnaires. As an incentive (and appreciation) for your participation, you will receive a $10 Amazon gift card following completion of the study.

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on future participation in the Crossroad's Church Adoption and Foster Support Group. Thank you for your consideration of participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact the researcher, Shardé Pettis, at pettiss@xavier.edu. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to Xavier University's Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or irb@xavier.edu.

Participation link: [insert survey link here]

Shardé Pettis, M.A., School of Psychology, Xavier University

Appendix J

Participation Invitation Facebook Post

Hello,

My name is Shardé Pettis, and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Psychology at Xavier University. I am pursuing for my dissertation that requests your participation. The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of perceived community support on White transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their Black child(ren).

Your participation in this study will include completing questionnaires. Your participation is voluntary and should take no more than 30 minutes. Both fathers and mothers within the same family are invited to participate in the study but asked to individually complete his or her own questionnaires. As an incentive (and appreciation) for your participation, you will receive a $10 Amazon gift card following completion of the study.

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on future participation in the Crossroad's Church Adoption and Foster Support Group. Thank you for your consideration of participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact the researcher, Shardé Pettis, at pettiss@xavier.edu. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to Xavier University's Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or irb@xavier.edu.

Participation link: [insert survey link here]

Shardé Pettis, M.A., School of Psychology, Xavier University

Appendix K

Informed Consent (for Crossroads Church Adoption and Foster Support Group)

INVESTIGATOR: Shardé Pettis, M.A.

You are being asked to participate in a research project by Shardé Pettis, a doctoral student in the School of Psychology at Xavier University. The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of perceived community support on transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adoptive child. The study should take no more than 30 minutes to complete. There are no known or anticipated risks related to your participation in this study. Your responses are anonymous. No personal or identifying information, including IP addresses, will be collected during this study. If you choose to participate, and you complete the whole study, you will be compensated for your time with a $10 Amazon gift card. To receive this compensation, you will provide your name and email address following completion of the study, but this information will not and cannot be linked to your study answers or responses.

Nature and Purpose of the Project
This study examines the effects of perceived community support on transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adoptive child. If you participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires about your knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development, as well as your behaviors, attitudes, and intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization. The study should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

Why You Were Invited to Take Part
You were invited to take part in this study because you are a White transracial adoptive parent who has adopted or is in the process of adopting a Black or African American child.

Anticipated Discomforts/Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks related to your participation in this study.

Benefits
Although there are no direct benefits from taking part in this study, your participation will help researchers understand more about the relation between community support and racial-ethnic socialization in transracial adoptive families.

Confidentiality/Anonymity
Because you will not be asked to provide any identifying information, your responses are anonymous and therefore cannot be linked to you. In addition, any demographic information you provide will not be used for identification purposes and will only be reported on an aggregated basis. Data without personal identifiers may be retained indefinitely and used for other purposes beyond those described in this consent document. Only the researchers involved in this study will have access to the data, and the data will be stored securely in a locked file cabinet and a password-protected computer.

Compensation

Participants will be compensated for their time at the completion of the study with a $10 Amazon gift card.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on future participation in the Crossroad's Church Adoption and Foster Support Group. Refusal to participate in this study will also have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from Xavier University. If you decide to participate in this study, you may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation or penalty, but you will not receive the $10 Amazon gift card.

If you have any questions during the study, you may contact the principal investigator, Shardé Pettis at pettiss@xavier.edu, or the professor supervising this study, Dr. Tammy Sonnentag, at sonnentagt@xavier.edu. If any issues arise over the course of the study relating to your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Xavier University Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or via email at irb@xavier.edu. If you would like a copy of this informed consent, please print this page or email the researcher.

By clicking "next" below, I consent to participate in the study and assert that I am, at least, 18 years of age.

Appendix L

Debriefing Form

Thank you for participating in this study. The study you just completed examines if knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development impacts White transracial adoptive parents' engagement in racial-ethnic socialization. We hope that by conducting this study, we can develop a better understanding of the factors that enhance transracial adoptive parents' involvement in the development of their children's racial-ethnic identity.

Please keep the purpose of this study confidential and do not disclose any information about this study to other potential participants.

The following link will connect you to a separate survey where you may enter your name and email address to receive a $10 Amazon electronic gift card as compensation for your participation in this study. The link will also provide you with information about resources that are available for transracial adoptive families that may be helpful to facilitate the racial-ethnic socialization and identity development of your child(ren).

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, or if you wish to inquire about the results of this study, you may contact the researcher, Shardé Pettis, at pettiss@xavier.edu, or the professor supervising this study, Dr. Tammy Sonnentag, at sonnentagt@xavier.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Xavier University's Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix M

Available Resources for Transracial Adoptive Families

Websites

The American Psychological Association's RESilience Initiative https://www.apa.org/res/parent-resources/index
Collection of books, strategies, and blog posts about discussing race and ethnicity with children and engaging children of all ages in racial-ethnic socialization.

Be the Bridge
https://bethebridge.com/transracial-adoption/
"*Be the Bridge has recognized a need to offer white adoptive parents of children of color a clear and simplified catalogue of information. We encourage those who are beginning their transracial adoptive journey or parents who have already transracially adopted to engage with this information and connect with others on similar journeys.*"

Child Welfare: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/postplacement/transsupport/
Resources for transracial adoptive parents to help them understand and care for their children, including articles on topics such as helping adopted children maintain a cultural connection and raising a child of another race.

Kids in the House: https://www.kidsinthehouse.com/adoption/types/transracial
Collection of videos featuring transracial adoptive parents and experts in the area of transracial adoption on topics such as acknowledging White privilege in interracial adoption, the differences between culture, ethnicity, and race, and supporting transracially adopted teens.

North American Council on Adoptable Children:
https://www.nacac.org/help/parenting/transracial-parenting/
Articles about transracial parenting, additional resources for transracial adoptive parents and families, and information about the NACAC's transracial training.

North American Council on Adoptable Children STARS (Sharing Transracial Adoption Resources and Support: https://www.nacac.org/connect/parent-group/view/all/
A database of adoption-related support groups across the U.S. and Canada

PACT: An Adoption Alliance
https://www.pactadopt.org/resources/transracial-adoption-interracial-adoption.html
Collection of articles, essays, and videos on the topic of transracial adoption, as well as information regarding online chat groups and educational workshops and conferences.

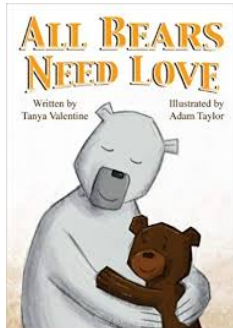Transracial Parenting in Foster Care and Adoption:
http://www.ifapa.org/pdf_docs/TransracialParenting.pdf
A guidebook from IFAPA for transracial/transcultural families on helping your child gain a strong sense of racial or cultural identity, how to handle racism, how to answer tough questions, and more.
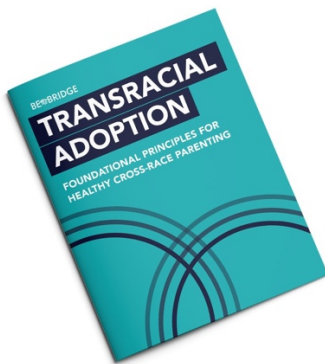
Books and Articles

*All Bears Need Love* by Tanya Valentine


All Families Are Special by Norma Simon

Be the Bridge Transracial Adoption: Foundational Principles for Healthy Cross-Race Parenting
Purchase at: *https://bethebridge.myshopify.com/products/be-the-bridge-transracial-adoption-foundational-principles-for-healthy-cross-race-parenting-pdf-download*
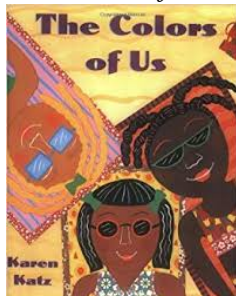

Chocolate Hair Vanilla Care:
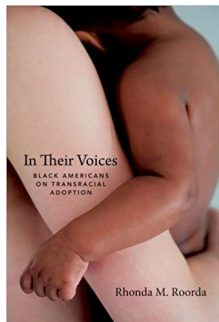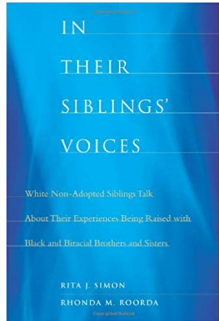*A Parent's Guide to Beginning Natural Hair Styling*
by Rory Mullen
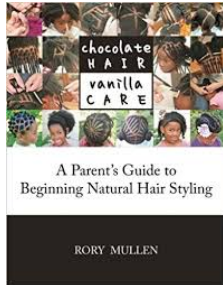
Chocolate Me! by Taye Diggs & Shavne Evans
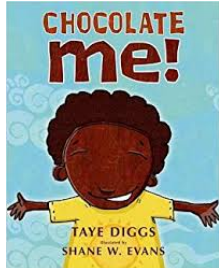
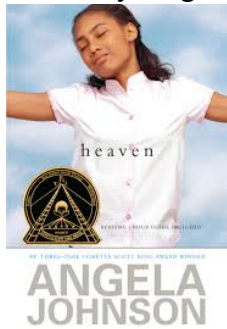*The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz

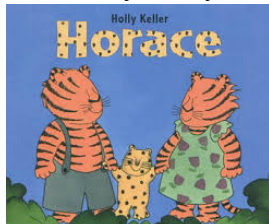*In Their Voices: Black Americans on Transracial Adoption* by Rhonda Roorda

In Their Own Voices, In Their Parents' Voices, and In Their Siblings' Voices by Rita Simon & Rhonda Roorda
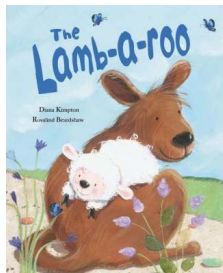
Heaven by Angela Johnson
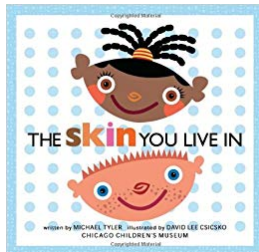

Horace by Holly Keller

The Lamb-a-roo by Diana Kimpton

Lucy's Family Tree by Karen Halvorsen Schreck, Illustrations by Stephen Glassler

The Skin You Live In by Michael Tyler and David Lee Csicsko

Interracial Adoption is on the Rise and America is Better for it by Naomi Schaefer Riley
https://nypost.com/2017/08/20/interracial-adoption-is-on-the-rise-and-america-is-better-for-it/

Transracial & Transcultural Adoption: Preservation Policy and a Personal Perspective by
Alexis Oberdorfer, MSW https://chlss.org/blog/transracial-and-transcultural-adoption/

The Realities of Raising a Kid of a Different Race by Karen Valby https://time.com/the-realities-of-raising-a-kid-of-a-different-race/

Appendix N

MTURK Pre-Screening Questions

Prior to being included in this study, please complete the following question.

Please indicate your race/ethnicity.

a. American Indian*
b. Asian*
c. Black/African American*
d. White/Caucasian
e. Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin*
f. Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic*
g. Prefer not to respond*

*Skip Logic to → End of Survey

Prior to being included in this study, please complete the following question.

Please indicate whether you have adopted or fostered a child.

a. Yes, I have adopted or fostered a child.
b. No, I have not adopted or fostered a child.*

*Skip Logic to → End of Survey

Prior to being included in this study, please complete the following question.

Please indicate the race/ethnicity of your adopted or fostered child.

a. American Indian*
b. Asian*
c. Black/African American
d. White/Caucasian*
e. Hispanic, Latino, Spanish origin*
f. Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic*
g. Prefer not to respond*

*Skip Logic to → End of Survey

Appendix O

Failure to Qualify Message

Thank you for completing the screening question. You do not qualify for the study, so please do NOT submit the HIT because it will be rejected.

Appendix P

Informed Consent (for MTurk)

INVESTIGATOR: Shardé Pettis, M.A.

You are being asked to participate in a research project by Shardé Pettis, a doctoral student in the School of Psychology at Xavier University. The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of perceived community support on transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adoptive child. The study should take no more than 20 minutes to complete and experienced survey. There are no known or anticipated risks related to your participation in this study. Your responses will only be known by the project researchers, who will keep your identity confidential. If you choose to participate, and you complete the whole study and pass quality assurance and other data quality checks (e.g., spent sufficient time answering the questions), you will be compensated for your time (i.e., $1.50).

Nature and Purpose of the Project
This study examines the effects of perceived community support on transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adoptive child. If you participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires about your knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development, as well as your behaviors, attitudes, and intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization. The study should take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Why You Were Invited to Take Part
You are invited to take part in this study because you are registered to complete tasks on MTurk, are at least 18 years of age, are Caucasian, live in the U.S., have a partner/spouse (if relevant) who is White/Caucasian, have adopted or fostered a child who identifies as Black/African American, and have successfully completed at least 50 HITs, and have a previous HIT rate acceptance of 90%.

Anticipated Discomforts/Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks related to your participation in this study.

Benefits
Although there are no direct benefits from taking part in this study, your participation will help researchers understand more about the relation between community support and racial-ethnic socialization in transracial adoptive families. After completing they survey, participants will be provided with a list of resources for transracial adoptive families curated specifically for this study.

Confidentiality/Anonymity
Participation is voluntary. The answers you provide will only be known by the project researchers, who will keep your identity confidential. The researchers will not share your information with anyone nor link your study responses to your name. Any demographic information you provide will not be used for identification purposes and will only be reported on an aggregated basis. Data without personal identifiers may be retained indefinitely and used for

other purposes beyond those described in this consent document. Only the researchers involved in this study will have access to the data, and the data will be stored securely on password-protected computers.

Compensation
If you complete the whole study and pass quality assurance and other data quality checks (e.g., spend sufficient time answering the questions), you will receive monetary compensation (i.e., $1.50).

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Refusal to participate in this study will have NO EFFECT ON ANY FUTURE SERVICES you may be entitled to from the University. You are FREE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PENALTY. If you withdraw from the study, you should not submit the HIT and you will not be compensated. You will only be compensated only if you complete the study in its entirety and pass all quality check items.

If you have any questions during the study, you may contact the principal investigator, Shardé Pettis at pettiss@xavier.edu, or the professor supervising this study, Dr. Tammy Sonnentag, at sonnentagt@xavier.edu. If any issues arise over the course of the study relating to your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Xavier University Institutional Review Board at (513) 745-2870 or via email at irb@xavier.edu. If you would like a copy of this informed consent, please print this page or email the researcher.

There are two options below. If you have read and understand this consent form and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, please select the first option (i.e., "Yes, I consent to participate in this study."). However, if you have read and understand the consent form but do not agree to participate in the study under the terms described, please select the second option below (i.e., "No, I do not consent to participate in this study.").

- o   Yes, I consent to participate in this study.

- o   No, I do not consent to participate in this study.

Summary

Title: Is Knowledge of (Normative) Racial Identity Development Necessary?: White Transracial Adoptive Parents' Intentions to Promote Black Adoptees' Racial Identity

Problem: White parents' adoption of Black children has experienced rapid increases (2000: 11.7%, 2008: 23.4%, 2012: 36.9%), and currently, the adoption of Black children by White parents in the U.S. is the most frequent adoptee-parent combination (Marr, 2017). Although transracial adoptions were once an infrequent and highly controversial practice in the U.S. (with the first documented transracial adoption occurring in 1948), they are no longer infrequent. Although adoptions of Black children by White parents are now relatively common, there are fears that such placements compromise the children's ability to develop a racial-ethnic identity and, therefore, stunts their ability to develop effective coping skills to combat prejudice and discrimination in society (Dunbar et al., 2017). The fears associated with White parents' transracial adoptions of Black children stem from concerns that White parents are unknowledgeable about how to promote the racial-ethnic identity of Black youth. Given these fears, research is needed to determine whether White parents' lack of knowledge about racial-ethnic identity development may negatively affect Black children's wellbeing. This dissertation examined the role of knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development on White transracial adoptive parents' intentions to ethnically and racially socialize their Black child(ren) through the lens of the theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen et al., 2011).

Method: Participants for this study were Caucasian parents (both mothers and fathers) who have adopted, or were in the process of adopting, Black or African American child(ren) ($n = 199$; $M_{age} = 37.42$, $SD = 9.42$). The participants completed a measure created for the current study to examine their factual knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development, a measure to assess their engagement in racial-ethnic socialization through the lens of the TPB (adapted from Grindal, 2017), and the Socially Desirable Response Set-5 (Hays et al., 1989). Participants provided demographic information about their age, parental status (i.e., mother or father), and education level, as well as their first adopted child's current age, age at adoption, gender, and birthplace. The researcher obtained informed consent prior to data collection.

Findings: Parents' knowledge of normative racial-ethnic identity development was negatively associated with their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization of their adopted Black child(ren); however, parents' intentions were positively correlated with all three components in the TPB (i.e., attitudes toward, subjective norms for, and perceived behavioral control of racial-ethnic socialization). White parents' knowledge of racial-ethnic identity development was not an incremental predictor of their intentions to engage in the racial-ethnic socialization process beyond the components of the TPB, yet two of the components in the TPB (i.e., subjective norms and perceived behavioral control) were associated with greater intentions to engage in racial-ethnic socialization particularly among parents with low knowledge.

Implications: The current study contributes meaningfully to important literature examining the factors that influence White transracial adoptive parents' engagement in the racial-ethnic socialization process with their adopted Black child(ren). The findings of the current study challenge longstanding fears about the transracial adoptions of Black children by White parents in both the Black and White communities.