

Racial/Ethnic Differences in Mothers' Socialization Goals for Their Adolescents

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Objectives: We explored the socialization goals that African American, Latino, Chinese and White mothers held for their adolescents within 4 domains that are centrally relevant during adolescence—proper demeanor, academics, race/ethnicity, and peers. **Method:** A card sort task and subsequent logistic regression analyses were used to explore mothers' choice of the most important socialization goals for their ethnically/racially diverse 6th-grade adolescents ($N = 185$). **Results:** Compared to White mothers, African American, Latino, and Chinese mothers were significantly more likely to select proper demeanor goals that emphasize deference over benevolence, and peer goals that emphasize instrumental over relational friendships. African American and Latino mothers were more likely to select race/ethnicity goals that emphasize cultural over egalitarian goals compared to Chinese and White mothers. All mothers were more likely to select academic engagement as more important than performance. In contrast to mothers' emphases within domains, mothers' ranked the importance of these different domains remarkably similarly. **Conclusions:** Mothers' socialization goals illustrate both similarities and differences across race/ethnicity. Findings are discussed with reference to how mothers' goals reflect broad cultural orientations as well as the contextual demands of their adolescents' experiences.

Keywords: race/ethnicity, adolescence, socialization, parenting, goals

Parents are children's primary socialization agents, instructing and guiding them to develop successfully within their cultural context (Sorkhabi, 2005). Broadly, parental socialization includes parents' values, beliefs, and goals for child rearing, the specific behaviors and practices in which they engage, and the style in which they do so (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Parental goals are an understudied but potentially central aspect of socialization as they link parents' beliefs about what is important to parents' behaviors (Hastings & Grusec, 1998). Parental goals have been explored in infancy and early childhood, but little research has explored such goals during adolescence, despite the continued importance of parents as socializing agents during this period. Moreover, although parents universally want their children to develop successfully, the definition of successful development may vary according to demographic "positioning" characteristics, including race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and the specific historical time and location of development, as well as parents' broad cultural orientations and perceptions of what is possible and necessary given their adolescents' varied social realities (Goodnow, 1988; LeVine, 1988).

In this descriptive research, we explore the goals that mothers endorse as most important for their adolescents and how these

goals vary across racial/ethnic groups. We first explore mothers' choices of the most important goal within four socialization domains that have been highlighted in prior conceptualizations of parents' socialization goals as salient during adolescence: proper demeanor, academics, race/ethnicity, and peers (Dix & Branca, 2003). Within each domain, we categorize goals as reflecting particular theoretical constructs that might differ in their salience across ethnicity/race or social position, due to varied cultural and sociostructural contexts for child rearing. Next, we explore the priority that mothers accord to goals from each domain of socialization relative to goals in the other domains and based on this we rank the importance of the different domains. Thus, we explore three levels of parents' goal selection—the specific goals chosen, the broader constructs they represent, and the overarching domains these goals were part of. Although mothers likely value all of the socialization goals and domains we included, mothers had to prioritize goals relative to others, reflecting the reality that parents must negotiate multiple socialization priorities simultaneously.

What Are Parental Goals and Why Are They Important for Adolescents?

Parental goals have been defined as "... internal representations of desired states or outcomes that parents hold for their child that organize and direct parents' behaviors toward their child" (Spera, 2006, p. 458). Research in middle childhood demonstrates parents' goals for their children motivate and guide their parenting practices. For example, African American parents' higher ratings of the importance of goals such as the child being respectful and highly educated were positively associated with family routines, observed mother-child harmony and maternal involvement at school (Brody, Flor, & Gibson, 1999). In a study of Chinese parents, goals

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for children's emotional socialization were related to differences in how parents encouraged children's emotional expression (Chan, Bowes, & Wyver, 2009). Through such links with parenting behaviors and practices, parental goals likely influence children's development.

Within the literature on parental goals, few studies have examined such goals among parents of adolescents, even though parenting practices such as involvement in schooling (Hill & Tyson, 2009), parental monitoring (Rodgers-Farmer, 2000), parents' management of children's peer relationships (Mounts, 2002), and parents' ethnic-racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006) are associated with adolescents' well-being and development. Interestingly, research on toddlers shows that parents' goals shift with children's developmental stage (e.g., Ng, Tamis-LeMonda, Godfrey, Hunter, & Yoshikawa, 2012) suggesting that parents' goals for adolescents may be different from goals that researchers have emphasized in studies of younger children. Specifically, during adolescence, parents may prioritize goals that enable their children to navigate the unique developmental opportunities and challenges of adolescence including the need to behave properly across settings, to achieve academically, to form positive relationships with peers, and to explore and develop group identities.

Racial/Ethnic Differences in Mothers' Socialization Goals

The literature on parents' socialization goals includes multiple perspectives on how such goals develop and sources of variation in them. In an early paper, Goodnow (1988) distinguished perspectives that hold that parents' ideas are self-constructed based on their personal experiences from perspectives that hold that parents' ideas emanate from received cultural messages. Empirically, more research has supported cultural models. Other scholars have put forth structural explanations for variation in parenting goals, such that parental goals, values, and attitudes arise from a family's position in the social structure (Burns, Homel, & Goodnow, 1984; García Coll et al., 1996; Kohn, 1977). Cultural and structural models of socialization both imply ethnic/racial differences in parental goals.

Cultural perspectives suggest that parents' goals for their children differ according to parents' perceptions of the specific developmental tasks and challenges that children encounter within their local context (García Coll et al., 1996; Spencer, 2006). Culture shapes the physical and social settings that children inhabit, customs of child rearing, and the beliefs, values, and goals of their caretakers (Super & Harkness, 1999). Within the United States, different racial/ethnic groups may more strongly endorse particular goals due to cultural priorities and in response to the historical and current experiences of the group, including the motivation for immigration, historical oppression, and experiences of stereotypes and discrimination (Coon & Kimmelmeier, 2001). In addition, independence (individualism) and interdependence (collectivism) are overarching cultural orientations that may inform parents' goals. Independence models view individuals as separate and value self-enhancement and self-esteem, whereas interdependence models view the individual as interrelated to others and value accepting norms and hierarchies to contribute to the social group (Keller et al., 2006). Importantly, these orientations are not mutually exclusive but may coexist to varying extents (Tamis-LeMonda et al.,

2007). In the United States, Asian Americans (Singelis & Sharkey, 1995; Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995), African Americans (Oyserman, Ager, & Gant, 1995), and Latino Americans (Freeberg & Stein, 1996) have been found to hold interdependent worldviews more so than do European Americans (Coon & Kimmelmeier, 2001). However, ethnic/racial minority groups may adopt independent worldviews as they assimilate into U.S. society because such worldviews may promote self-esteem in the context of discrimination (Coon & Kimmelmeier, 2001). Differences in relative emphases on these orientations, in combination with the specific socioecological context that families inhabit, can shape differences in parenting beliefs and practices, including in the four domains of interest in this study.

Based on cultural and structural perspectives, prior studies have found ethnic/racial differences in U.S. parents' goals for their children during infancy and early childhood. For instance, Harwood, Schoelmerich, Ventura-Cook, Schulze, and Wilson (1996) found that White mothers were more likely to endorse toddlers' self-maximization and self-control, whereas Puerto Rican mothers were more likely to endorse respect, manners, obedience, and connectedness. In Suizzo (2007), Mexican, African American, and Chinese mothers of children under age 6 years were more likely to endorse achievement, benevolence, and tradition compared to White mothers. Julian, McKenry, and McKelvey (1994) documented numerous small but statistically significant ethnic/racial differences in the emphasis of African American, European American, Hispanic, and Asian American parents of children aged under 18 on different goals, such as doing well in school, temper control, social relationships, and prosocial behavior. In general, these ethnic/racial group differences are evident when controls for socioeconomic status, immigrant status, or other contextual variables are included. Thus, in the present study, we explore ethnic/racial differences in salient parental goals across four central domains during adolescence: proper demeanor, academics, ethnicity/race, and peers.

Proper Demeanor

Adolescence is a period characterized by more frequent interaction with a wider variety of people across settings that parents do not enter. As such, parents may focus on socializing adolescents regarding their proper demeanor when they interact with others.

Prior studies, as well as differences in cultural values and adolescents' experiences in the larger social structure, suggest that mothers' specific goals may vary across ethnic/racial groups. Specifically, due to the greater likelihood that ethnic/racial minority mothers hold a more interdependent worldview, they may be more inclined than White mothers to value deference and respect vis-à-vis adults. Experiences of oppression and discrimination may also prompt ethnic/racial minority mothers to emphasize such deference over other socialization goals. Latino, Chinese, and African American parents have shown greater emphasis than White parents in socializing children to show deference and respect to adults in past research, but it is how they prioritize such deference relative to other potential goals (Chao, 2000; Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Harwood et al., 1996; Julian et al., 1994). In this study, we distinguish whether mothers consider it more important for their children to respect and obey adults or be kind to and help others. The former can be characterized as a deferential orientation whereas the latter

can be categorized as a benevolence orientation. In line with findings from prior research, we expect that African American, Latino, and Chinese parents will be more likely to prioritize goals reflecting deference over benevolence than will White mothers (Chao, 2000; Delgado-Gaitan, 1993; Harwood et al., 1996; Julian et al., 1994).

Academics

Achievement in school is a central developmental task of adolescence, especially upon entry into middle school. Thus, parents may emphasize academics during early adolescence because the middle school years are the beginning of "real school," where grades have serious consequences and substantial homework is assigned (Elmore, 2009).

Although the vast majority of parents highly value academic success (Hill, 2010; Stevenson, Chen, & Uttal, 1990), parents may differ in their ideas about appropriate pathways to academic success, in their specific goals for their children's learning, and in the priority they place on academics relative to other salient goals. For instance, prior studies have found ethnic/racial differences in parents' involvement in their early adolescents' academic performance, despite holding similar aspirations and expectations (Hughes et al., 2016). Based on the distinction between learning and performance goals (Elliott & Dweck, 1988), we examine the extent to which parents hold goals that emphasize outputs, including grades and homework completion, versus engagement—emphasizing children's hard work and interest in learning (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). In particular, we expect that Chinese mothers will be especially likely to emphasize outputs, as Luo, Tamis-LeMonda, and Song (2013) argue that the effort, diligence, high standards, and persistence that are reflected in high performance are values that emanate from Chinese Confucian principles.

Race/Ethnicity

Identity development is a key challenge of adolescence (Erikson, 1994). For racial/ethnic minority youth, racial/ethnic identity is especially salient as adolescence is a period during which youth become aware of—and possibly targets of—societal stereotypes and discrimination (Hughes, Del Toro, Harding, Rarick, & Way, in press; Spears Brown & Bigler, 2005). The emergence of formal operational thought means that adolescents think about ethnicity/race in more sophisticated ways while increased autonomy from parents means that youth are exposed to a broad array of ethnic/racial attitudes and experiences.

Accordingly, ethnicity/race is likely to be a salient domain of socialization for mothers of adolescents, especially ethnic/racial minority mothers. In prior studies, the overwhelming majority of parents have reported teaching adolescents about their cultural history, heritage and traditions (termed cultural socialization) as well as about the importance of appreciating diversity (termed egalitarianism; Hughes, Harding, Niwa, Del Toro, & Way, in press). However, because these are inherently different types of messages, with cultural socialization emphasizing group distinctiveness and egalitarianism emphasizing commonality among people, we explore how mothers prioritize cultural knowledge versus egalitarian goals as well as the priority they accord to ethnic/racial socialization relative to other socialization domains. We expect

that African American and Latino mothers will prioritize cultural socialization over egalitarianism, because they may believe that cultural knowledge will equip children to manage the stigma and negative stereotypes associated with their group (Hughes et al., 2006). Although Chinese youth also encounter discrimination and stereotypes, these tend to be based on a more positive and less threatening prototypes (e.g., smart, nerdy, unathletic; Hughes, Del Toro, et al., in press; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004) so the same emphasis on promoting cultural knowledge to manage negative stereotypes may not be evident. We also expect that White mothers will prioritize egalitarian over cultural socialization goals in line with prior findings regarding the prevalence of colorblind ideologies among Whites (Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012).

Peers

During early adolescence, children become increasingly autonomous from their families and oriented toward their peers (Brown & Larson, 2009). Further, peers become an important source of emotional support and well-being as well as an important context for youths' acquisition of values and their engagement in risk behavior (Brown & Mounts, 2007). Thus, the peer domain may be especially salient to parents during early adolescence. Much of the research on parents' efforts to influence their adolescents' peer relationships has focused on parental monitoring (Rodgers-Farmer, 2000), but recent studies have investigated how parents are involved in their adolescents' friendships in other ways. For instance, Vernberg, Beery, Ewell, and Absender (1993) documented that seventh- and eighth-grade adolescents whose parents more frequently met with other parents and encouraged activities with peers were more successful in developing friendships.

In line with cultural perspectives on ethnic-racial group differences, Brown and Mounts (2007) contend that extensive relations with nonkin peers are more problematic among ethnic/racial groups that endorse collectivistic orientations because they can interfere with young people's obligations to the family and their allegiance to adult authority. They also suggest that parents in extended-family ethnic groups such as African Americans, may have more reservations about trusting or investing time in nonkin peers than would parents in nuclear-oriented White families (Way, Greene, & Mukherjee, 2007). Indeed, in qualitative work with ninth and tenth graders, Chinese, Latino, and African American adolescents all perceived that their parents were wary of their friendships (Way et al., 2007). Chinese American and African American adolescents in particular, perceived their parents were less likely to value them having emotionally supportive friendships than were Latino parents (Way et al., 2007), which may be due to the high value Latino parents place on personalismo (getting on with others; Clauss-Ehlers & Lopez Levi, 2002). For Chinese parents, this devaluing of emotionally supportive friendships might emerge out of a utilitarian view of friends, in which friends are a potential avenue for children to improve their grades (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007), whereas for African American parents, this might emanate from the degree of risk parents perceive in adolescents' peer associations given the contexts in which their children operate (Burns et al., 1984). In light of this research, we explore the extent to which parents prioritize adolescents having friends who do well in school or do not get into trouble (instrumental goals) versus having emotionally supportive friendships (relational

goals). In line with prior findings, we expected that Black and Chinese mothers would endorse instrumental goals more so than White and Latino mothers, who have demonstrated more individualistic emphasis on adolescents' friends as important for providing emotional support and building self-esteem (Way et al., 2007).

The Present Study

Our overarching goal is to examine variation in mothers' socialization goals for their early adolescent children within and across socialization domains that are especially relevant during adolescence—proper demeanor, academics, race/ethnicity, and peers. We begin with analyses within each of these domains, examining the relative importance of theoretically distinct socialization goals. These goals reflect broad cultural orientations, with benevolence, engagement, egalitarianism, and relational peer goals more in line with an individualistic orientation, and deference, performance, cultural, and instrumental peer goals more in line with a collectivist orientation. Given past research that suggests that racial/ethnic groups in the United States endorse both individualist and collectivist values, we expected mothers to choose goals from both of these orientations that are consistent with the contextual experiences their adolescents face.

We drew from knowledge of cultural orientations, contextual experiences, and prior research in developing a priori expectations regarding possible ethnic/racial differences in goal salience as we describe above. We next explore differences in the relative importance mothers assign to proper demeanor, academics, race/ethnicity, and peers as overall domains of socialization. We expected parents to be relatively similar in their ranking of domains as all parents highly value children's social and academic adjustment. However, in line with the literature on the value that Asian parents place on academic achievement, we expected Chinese mothers would rank the academic domain as more important than other mothers (Luo et al., 2013). We also expected that minority mothers would rank the racial/ethnic domain as more important than would White mothers because their minority status in the United States makes race/ethnicity more salient (Hughes, Harding, et al., in press). Finally, we expected that White and Latino mothers would rank peers as more important than other mothers because of their greater focus on peers as contributing to the emotional well-being of their adolescents (Way et al., 2007).

This research extends prior research in a number of ways. We explore a set of theoretically based parental goals representing elements of collectivism and individualism across four domains that are central during early adolescence. We explore racial/ethnic differences in these goals in a sample of mothers from four of the major racial/ethnic groups in New York City, New York. Much research makes comparisons between White parents and parents from other racial/ethnic groups, but few studies compare parental socialization across multiple racial/ethnic groups. Methodologically, the rank ordering and choice techniques are useful in addressing racial/ethnic differences in response patterns (Millsap, 2011). By getting mothers to choose the single most important goal, results are not affected by different groups' propensities to answer scales more or less extremely than other groups. Moreover, because goals are pitted against one another, mothers have to identify the goals that are most important to them, even though mothers likely value all of the different goals. Finally, these

analyses have potential practical implications. Adolescence is a time of self-exploration, maturation, and tumultuous change, and the socializing influence of parents is critical as a stabilizing force to help the adolescent understand and cope with an increasingly complicated world. Thus, it is in the interest of families, educators and developmental researchers to understand how parents differ in their goals for promoting positive development during the adolescent transition.

Method

Procedures

This research utilized data from the Early Adolescent Cohort Study, a longitudinal, mixed-methods study of ethnically diverse middle school students in New York City. Adolescent–mother dyads were recruited from six middle schools (see McGill, Hughes, Alicea, & Way, 2011). Racially/ethnically diverse research assistants visited sixth-grade classrooms in each school in the spring of 2005 and 2006 to distribute materials to students, collect consent and parent-interest forms, and answer questions regarding the study. Field researchers then called mothers who had expressed interest in participating in the parent–adolescent study to screen them for eligibility and schedule the initial interview.

Each mother was assigned to a fieldworker who was responsible for maintaining relationships with the family and completing mothers' surveys and interviews. Mothers who indicated Cantonese, Mandarin, or Spanish as their primary language were matched to a language-fluent interviewer. The accuracy of the survey translation was established using back translation from native speakers. Fieldworkers conducted one-on-one standardized survey interviews (1.5–2 hr in length). Prior to beginning the survey, informed consent procedures were reviewed. Mothers received remuneration of \$40 for their participation in the study.

Sample

Two hundred and seven mothers completed a survey in the first year of the study, when adolescents were in sixth grade. The current sample consists of 185 mothers with full information on all study variables. Mothers were excluded from the analytic sample if they were missing data on mothers' goals ($N = 12$), immigrant generation ($N = 7$), or maternal education ($N = 3$). Descriptively, mothers who were missing goal data were slightly more likely to be first- or second-generation immigrants, Chinese, and have some college education compared to the analytic sample, but differences in the proportion of mothers with missing data across these different characteristics were small and not statistically significantly different according to chi-square difference tests. Moreover, the mothers who were missing demographic information did not differ substantially in the proportion of mothers who chose goals representing particular theoretical constructs or their mean ranking of the most important goal domains compared to those with demographic information.

The sample was relatively evenly split across African American, Latino (Puerto Rican and Dominican), White, and Chinese American racial/ethnic groups. However, there were ethnic/racial dif-

ferences in demographic characteristics.¹ The majority of Chinese and Latino adolescents were first- or second-generation immigrants (85–95%), whereas the majority of African American and White adolescents (80%) had U.S.-born parents. Although maternal education was relatively evenly distributed for Latino and African American mothers, all of the White mothers reported at least some college education and the majority had at least some postgraduate education (58%); in contrast, nearly all of the Chinese mothers had no college education (84%). African American and White mothers all responded in English, Latino mothers responded in Spanish (55%) and English (45%), and Chinese mothers responded in Cantonese (60%), Mandarin (35%), and English (5%).²

Measures

Demographic characteristics. We used adolescents' reports of *race/ethnicity* by asking them to indicate the racial/ethnic group that they felt most part of (e.g., African American, Dominican, White). For *immigrant generation*, adolescents indicated where they and their parents were born. Youth were coded as 1st generation if they were born outside of the United States, second-generation if one of their parents was born outside of the United States, and third-generation if they and both their parents were born in the United States. Due to small sample sizes, first- and second-generation youth were combined. Mothers were asked to report their highest level of *education* by selecting one of five categories. All of these variables were used as dummy codes in analyses.

Mothers' goals. The salience of mothers' socialization goals was assessed using a card sorting task. Interviewers carried a set of 16 paper cards, each of which showed a single socialization goal. Interviewers first showed mothers four cards from within each domain and asked them to choose the card that was most important to them within each of the four domains. For analysis purposes, we categorized the specific goals into theoretical constructs, as shown in Table 1. Next, the interviewer displayed the four cards mothers had selected as being most important within each domain and asked them to rank them in order of importance. We used this ranking of the specific goals to code the importance of the different domains. For each domain, we recorded the rank each mother awarded to the goal selected within it on a 4-point scale (3 = *chosen as most important*; 0 = *chosen as least important*). Thus, we consider higher means to indicate mothers' higher average ranking of the importance of that domain.

Results

We first present the percentage of parents from each of the four racial/ethnic groups who chose each *specific goal* as being "most important" within the four domains in Table 1; these analyses do not include any covariates. We next present four logistic regression analyses conducted using the *proc logistic* procedure in SAS Version 5.1 to explore whether race/ethnicity was a significant predictor of parents' choice of goals representing different *theoretical constructs* within each domain, adjusting for gender, maternal education and immigrant generation. In these logistic regressions, the binary indicators of theoretically derived constructs within each domain were regressed onto the categorical demo-

graphic predictors in four separate regressions. We first examined overall Wald chi-square tests to determine whether any of the variables significantly predicted the likelihood of choosing goals that reflected a particular construct. This overall Wald chi-square test provides the multiple-degree-of-freedom test for the overall effect of the variable, so the specific referent group chosen first does not matter. In cases in which these overall tests were significant, we conducted additional analyses in which we rotated the referent group to compare the odds of choosing goals reflecting particular theoretical constructs for all groups compared to one another (see Table 2). To adjust for the multiple comparisons, we used Bonferroni adjusted *p* values as shown in Table 2. After choosing the most important socialization goal within each domain, mothers ranked these four goals in order of importance, and we then coded this to represent the relative importance of the four different domains (as explained in the measures section). We then present results from four analyses of covariance conducted using the PROC GLM procedure that explore whether race/ethnicity significantly predicted mothers' ranking of the relative *importance of each domain*, adjusting for covariates. Where main effects were significant, we discuss adjusted means to indicate where there are significant racial/ethnic differences in the mean rank given to particular domains (see Table 3).³

Mothers' Socialization Goals Within Domains

Proper demeanor. Adolescents' race/ethnicity, $\chi^2(3) = 27.22, p < .001$, and immigrant generation, $\chi^2(1) = 3.92, p < .01$, significantly predicted whether mothers chose deference as more important than benevolence goals. As shown in Table 2, the odds of African American mothers choosing deference goals over benevolence goals were significantly higher than for all other racial/ethnic groups. Latino and Chinese mothers also had significantly higher odds of choosing a deference goal compared to White mothers. Mothers of first- or second-generation adolescents had higher odds of choosing a deference goal compared to mothers whose adolescents were third generation immigrants, although this difference was not statistically significant after the Bonferroni correction.

¹ These characteristics reflect the demographic makeup of the sample of adolescents, rather than the mothers themselves. Demographic information was collected in relation to adolescents because adolescents' characteristics were expected to drive parental goals. However, for succinctness (and because the characteristics of adolescents and mothers were largely consistent) we refer to "African American mothers" rather than "mothers of African American adolescents."

² Because language was collinear with race/ethnicity, it was not included in analyses. However, additional analyses were conducted to explore differences between the responses of Chinese mothers who responded in Cantonese versus Mandarin and the responses of Latino mothers who responded in Spanish versus English. Overall, there were no substantial or statistically significant differences across language (results available from the first author).

³ Analyses that included the interaction between race/ethnicity and gender were conducted but are not reported as the interaction was only statistically significant in one analysis.

Table 1
Descriptive Percentages of Mothers From Each Racial/ethnic Group Who Select Each Goal as the Most Important Within Domain

Theoretical constructs specific goals	African American (N = 49)	Latino (N = 48)	Chinese (N = 43)	White (N = 45)	Total (N = 185)
Proper demeanor					
Deference	77.55	62.50	58.14	6.66	51.89
Respects adults	69.39	50.00	27.91	4.44	38.92
Listens to adults	8.16	12.50	30.23	2.22	12.97
Benevolence	22.45	37.50	41.86	93.33	48.11
Is kind to others	18.37	25.00	32.56	82.22	38.92
Helps others	4.08	12.50	9.30	11.11	9.19
Academics					
Performance	20.40	37.50	46.51	4.44	27.03
Gets good grades	12.24	22.92	39.53	.00	18.38
Completes all homework assignments	8.16	14.58	6.98	4.44	8.65
Engagement	79.59	62.50	53.28	95.55	72.98
Works hard in school	36.73	18.75	13.95	31.11	25.41
Is interested in what he or she is learning at school	42.86	43.75	39.53	64.44	47.57
Race/ethnicity					
Egalitarian	20.41	35.42	67.44	68.89	47.03
Appreciates people of other ethnic groups	20.41	35.42	67.44	68.89	47.03
Cultural	79.59	64.58	32.56	31.11	52.97
Learns about his/her ethnic group	28.57	14.58	18.60	15.56	19.46
Is proud of his/her ethnic or racial heritage	48.98	45.83	9.30	11.11	29.73
Participates in the traditions of his/her ethnic or racial group	2.04	4.17	4.65	4.44	3.78
Peers					
Relational	16.33	18.75	6.98	68.89	27.57
Has friends who he/she wants to be with	16.33	18.75	6.98	68.89	27.57
Instrumental	83.67	81.25	93.02	31.11	72.43
Has friends who are well behaved	36.73	33.33	72.09	13.33	38.38
Has friends who get good grades	14.29	14.58	11.63	.00	10.27
Has friends who don't get into trouble	32.65	33.33	9.30	17.78	23.78

Academics. Race/ethnicity, immigrant generation, gender, and maternal education did not significantly predict choosing a performance goal as more important than an engagement goal.⁴

Race/ethnicity. Only race/ethnicity was a significant predictor of choosing a cultural versus an egalitarian goal, $\chi^2(3) = 25.63$, $p < .001$. African American and Latino mothers had significantly higher odds of choosing a cultural goal as more important than an egalitarian goal compared to Chinese and White mothers (see Table 2).

Peers. Race/ethnicity was the only significant predictor of choosing an instrumental versus a relational goal, $\chi^2(3) = 16.81$, $p < .001$. African American, Latino, and Chinese parents had significantly higher odds of choosing an instrumental goal as more important than a relational goal compared to White mothers (see Table 2).

Ranking of Socialization Domains

As shown in Table 3, all groups chose proper demeanor and academics as the two most important domains. Latino and Chinese parents were more likely to rank academics as most important, whereas White and African American parents were more likely to rank proper demeanor as most important. Then, African American and Chinese parents were more likely to rank race/ethnicity as the third most important domain, whereas White and Latino parents

were more likely to rank peers as the third most important domain. However, all of these differences in the relative ranking of goals from these domains were very small, and as presented below, few were statistically significantly different.

Proper demeanor. Race/ethnicity, gender, maternal education, and immigrant generation were not significantly related to the mean ranking of the importance of proper demeanor.

Academics. There was a significant main effect of gender on the ranking of the importance of academic goals, $F(1, 183) = 4.78$, $p < .05$, such that the academic domain was rated as more important for girls than boys.

Race/ethnicity. There was a significant main effect of race/ethnicity on the ranking of the racial/ethnic domain, $F(3, 183) = 2.86$, $p < .05$. Post hoc tests indicated that African American mothers ranked racial/ethnic attitudes as more important than White mothers at trend level (see Table 3).

Peers. There was a significant main effect of race/ethnicity on the ranking of the peer domain, $F(3, 183) = 3.32$, $p < .05$. Post hoc tests indicated that White mothers ranked peer relationships as

⁴ We conducted an additional analysis with an alternative grouping of the academic goals into constructs. In this analysis the goal "completes all homework" was considered an indicator of behavioral engagement, rather than performance. Results were consistent with the presented results.

Table 2

Odds Ratios and 95% Confidence Intervals Indicating the Choice of Goals Within Domain for Each Significant Predictor

Group comparisons	Proper demeanor deference (vs. benevolence)		Race/ethnicity cultural (vs. egalitarian)		Peers instrumental (vs. relational)	
	Odds ratio estimate	95% Wald CI	Odds ratio estimate	95% Wald CI	Odds ratio estimate	95% Wald CI
African American vs. Latino	04.85 [†]	[1.42, 16.60]	01.40	[.46, 4.23]	00.87	[.25, 3.06]
African American vs. Chinese	07.49 [*]	[1.87, 30.03]	04.67 [†]	[1.36, 16.09]	00.28	[.05, 1.54]
African American vs. White	49.22 ^{***}	[10.64, 227.80]	15.88 ^{***}	[4.33, 58.29]	08.71 ^{**}	[2.62, 28.98]
Latino vs. Chinese	01.54	[.58, 4.07]	03.34 [†]	[1.30, 8.55]	00.32	[.07, 1.38]
Latino vs. White	10.14 [*]	[2.14, 48.02]	11.34 ^{**}	[2.69, 47.92]	10.07 ^{**}	[2.40, 42.24]
Chinese vs. White	06.58	[1.15, 37.63]	03.40	[.68, 16.97]	31.45 ^{**}	[4.55, 217.48]
Immigrant vs. nonimmigrant	03.09	[1.01, 9.46]				

Note. CI = confidence interval. *p* values reflect Bonferroni corrections.

[†] *p* < .02. * *p* < .008. ** *p* < .002. *** *p* < .001.

significantly more important than African American mothers (see Table 3).

Discussion

We explored racial/ethnic differences in mothers' socialization goals for their early adolescents within and across four central domains—proper demeanor, academics, race/ethnicity, and peers. We found racial/ethnic differences in mothers' selection of specific goals within each domain, but mothers were remarkably similar in their ranking of the domains themselves. The observed differences in the salience of particular goals is consistent with the idea that parents' socialization goals reflect their cultural orientations and the different contexts and challenges that their adolescents face (García Coll et al., 1996; Spencer, 2006). Meanwhile, the observed similarities in the ranking of socialization domains underscores that there are substantial commonalities in what parents desire for their children in the broadest sense. In other words, we found far more similarities in rankings of goals *across* domains than we did *within* them.

Within the proper demeanor domain, consistent with prior work and with a priori expectations, ethnic/racial minority mothers were more likely to select a deference goal as compared to a benevolence goal than White mothers. Although not predicted a priori, African American mothers were also more likely to select a deference goal than were Chinese and Latino mothers. These findings are consistent with prior findings that African American,

Chinese, and Latino parents emphasize respecting adults and following family rules (Julian et al., 1994). For African American mothers, this may reflect the traditionally strong emphasis on showing respect within family and kinship networks (Hines & Boyd-Franklin, 2005). Moreover, African American mothers' particularly strong endorsement of the importance of respecting adults may emerge from a fear of the actions of adults who hold negative stereotypes about the behavior of African American youth (Hill, 2010; Smetana & Chuang, 2001). For Chinese and Latino mothers, this focus on deference likely emerges out of strong beliefs in the importance of respecting social hierarchies, filial piety, and maintaining harmony in relationships (Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990; Hill, 2010). Despite observed differences in the particular goals chosen within the proper demeanor domain, mothers from all racial/ethnic groups ranked proper demeanor as one of the most important domains overall.

Within the academic domain, we had expected that Chinese mothers would be more likely than would other mothers to emphasize a performance goal over an engagement goal, due to the relevance of grades and other indicators of success to concepts of filial piety and family honor (Chao & Tseng, 2002; Luo et al., 2013). Although a higher percentage of Chinese than other mothers chose a performance goal, this was not statistically significant after controlling for demographic characteristics. Several explanations seem plausible. The lack of differences may be because Chinese mothers in this sample have low levels of education, whereas in the United States nationally Asian children are most likely to have mothers with at least a bachelor's degree (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010). Other possibilities are that mothers may not consider academic performance to be as important because the Chinese adolescents in the sample are already averaging good grades (85–89 in language and math) or that these parents focus on educational socialization more intensively when children are younger (Chao & Tseng, 2002). We also did not find ethnic/racial differences in the mean ranking for the importance of the academic domain relative to other domains. Mothers from all ethnic-racial groups ranked academic goals as one of the most important socialization domains overall, consistent with prior findings that education is highly valued by parents from all racial/ethnic groups (Hill, 2010; Stevenson et al., 1990).

Within the racial/ethnic domain, consistent with our a priori expectations, African American and Latino mothers were signifi-

Table 3

Adjusted Means of the Ranking of Domains by Race/Ethnicity

Ethnic/Racial groups	Proper demeanor		Academics		Race/ Ethnicity		Peers	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
African American	2.36	.15	1.92	.14	1.22	.07 ^a	.52	.07 ^b
Latino	2.12	.15	2.29	.15	.78	.07	.79	.08 ^b
Chinese	2.00	.19	2.20	.18	1.05	.09	.75	.09 ^b
White	2.52	.19	1.61	.18	.68	.09 ^a	1.23	.09 ^b
Total	2.27	.93	2.01	.94	.93	.81	.81	.91 ^b

Note. Means with the same superscript are significantly different from one another at *p* < .10 after the Bonferroni adjustment.

cantly more likely to endorse a cultural over an egalitarian socialization goal compared to White and Chinese mothers. Cultural socialization is an important means by which parents can reinforce adolescents' racial/ethnic identity and prepare them to understand racial barriers given racial stratification in the United States (Hughes et al., 2006; Knight et al., 2011; Shelton et al., 2005). African American and Latino mothers may be especially likely to worry about their children's need for cultural knowledge and pride given the likelihood that they may be exposed to ethnic/racial stereotypes and discrimination. White and Chinese parents emphasized egalitarian goals, which often downplay the role of race in society (Hughes, Harding, et al., in press). For White mothers, prioritizing egalitarian goals is consistent with the dominant U.S. narrative regarding the value of a color-blind society (Apfelbaum et al., 2012). For Chinese mothers, we suspect that this egalitarian emphasis may have a slightly different origin. In our qualitative interviews, Chinese mothers discuss downplaying their cultural heritage with their children because they believe that doing so will increase their children's assimilation and thereby their opportunity in the U.S. educational and occupational system. In addition to ethnic/racial differences in goal priorities within the ethnic/racial domain, there were ethnic/racial differences in the domains' ranking relative to other domains. Not surprisingly, White mothers rated the race/ethnicity domain as less important than did other mothers (although this difference was only statistically significant in comparison to African American mothers).

Finally, findings within the peer domain, in which we distinguished relational goals from instrumental goals, indicated that ethnic/racial minority mothers were significantly more likely to promote instrumental than relational goals compared to White mothers. For African American and Latino mothers, this emphasis may emerge out of fears of negative peer influence given that the misbehavior of black and brown adolescents is typically punished more severely compared to other adolescents (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Skiba et al., 2011). Indeed, of the three instrumental goals, African American and Latino mothers were most likely to prioritize having friends who do not get into trouble and who are well-behaved. Interestingly, based on prior research, we had expected Latino mothers to more strongly endorse relational goals, but when forced to choose the *most* important goal, it seems that concerns about children's behavior were more salient, perhaps because of the danger mothers perceive for their adolescents' misbehavior. Chinese mothers' emphasis on instrumental peer goals, specifically, on having friends who are well behaved, fits with valuing good behavior, harmony, and politeness (Harrison et al., 1990; Luo et al., 2013). For White parents, relational goals may be prioritized as a way to enhance their adolescents' self-esteem, in line with their individualist cultural orientation (Chao, 1995). This same valuing of self-esteem may explain why White mothers rated the peer domain as more important than other mothers (although this difference was only statistically significant compared to African American mothers).

Overall, the specific patterns of goals endorsed by mothers from different racial/ethnic groups suggest cultural models that vary in response to specific socioecological contexts. Mothers from ethnic/racial minority groups were similar in the pattern of goals they selected, emphasizing deference, academic engagement, and instrumental peers, with the exception that Chinese mothers emphasized egalitarian rather than cultural socialization goals. African

American and Latino parents may endorse similar ethnic/racial socialization goals because their adolescents share the challenges of combating stereotypes and societal discrimination. White mothers endorsed a pattern of goals most different to the other groups. Their prioritization of benevolence, relational goals and egalitarianism is consistent with an individualistic cultural orientation. Importantly, although Chinese, African American, and Latino mothers endorsed goals that were more in line with collectivist cultural orientations—deference and instrumental peer goals—they also endorsed goals consistent with an individualist orientation—engagement and egalitarianism (for Chinese mothers), illustrating the coexistence of these orientations (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study extends past research, there are limitations that should be addressed in future research. The largest limitation is that important demographic characteristics were collinear with racial/ethnic group in this sample. Prior research suggests that immigrant generation, time in the United States, acculturation, and socioeconomic status influence parents' socialization goals (Durgel, Leyendecker, Yagmurlu, & Harwood, 2009; Kohn, 1977; Miller & Swanson, 1958; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007). Although child gender, maternal education, and immigrant generation were not significant predictors of socialization goals over and above racial/ethnic group, because these characteristics were highly confounded, the results should be understood as capturing the experience of both racial/ethnic group and other demographic factors. For instance, the results for Chinese mothers represent findings for immigrant Chinese mothers who have low levels of education, whereas the results for White mothers represent findings for highly educated White mothers. Second, our sample was nonrepresentative and self-selected, which limits the extent to which patterns we identified can be generalized more broadly. Third, although our use of forced choice methods to assess mothers' prioritization of important goals is advantageous in some ways, it may nevertheless exaggerate differences between groups. As the descriptive results suggest, in most cases, at least some mothers from each racial/ethnic group endorsed each goal suggesting there is also within-group heterogeneity. Fourth, in comparing Latino to other mothers, we were unable to examine Puerto Rican and Dominican mothers separately due to limited sample size. Given diversity in the socioeconomic characteristics and historical experiences of these two groups, future research should explore their socialization goals separately. Fifth, mothers answered the questions in different languages. Although back-translation was used to ensure accurate translation and results did not vary for Chinese or Latino mothers who responded in different languages, the meaning of these words may have particular cultural nuances. Finally, although this research explores goals within four central domains during adolescence, these domains are not comprehensive and future research could explore mothers' goals for family relations, religion, dating, and personal growth, which could show larger group differences in how they are ranked.

Conclusion

This descriptive research explored racial/ethnic differences in mothers' socialization goals. There were nuances in the specific

goals endorsed by mothers that likely correspond to the contextual demands that adolescents from different racial/ethnic groups experience. However, there were only small differences in the ranking of the importance of domains, suggesting that there are substantial commonalities in what parents desire for their children in the broadest sense. Future qualitative and quantitative research could explore why these similarities and differences emerge.

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