ABSTRACT

CASTRO, ANGELENA. Let's Talk About Race: Examining Parents Experiences Discussing Race and Racism With Their Children (Under the direction of Dr. Maru Gonzalez).

This paper examines the first-hand experiences of parents and caregivers living in the United States who actively discuss race and racism with their children. It intends to raise awareness of the importance of parental and caregiver involvement in the education of their children on matters of race and racism.

The influence that parents and caregivers have on their children is tremendous. They are their children's first teachers. Children benefit from honest and developmentally accessible conversations about race and racism with their parents or caregivers. While many books, television shows, and other media are already available for parents to utilize, my research will enable researchers and educators to develop resources for parents that encompass the family unit as a whole. Engaging in dialogue about matters of race and racism is an important step forward in healing the effects and impacts of racism both socially and emotionally for families.

My research includes eight in-depth interviews with parents using an interpretive phenomenological approach. The interviews explore how the participant's past and present lived experiences with matters of race, and racism impact how they engage in conversation with their children about race and racism.

Participants noted that the methods and frequency in which they discussed race and racism with their children were impacted by external factors such as the political climate and race relations within the United States. The major themes of this study are parents family socialization, children, and community networks. The following sub-themes emerged from the data: challenges and concerns, impact of current events, and resources and support. The results suggest a need for additional resources for parents to proactively navigate these conversations

and networks to offer more social support for parents and caregivers throughout urban and rural areas within of the United States. This suggests that more opportunities for community-based education, such as within schools and community centers, would be welcomed. The study ends with implications for future research on family and community.

Let's Talk About Race: Examining the Experiences of Parents Discussing Race and Racism with Their Children

by
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to parents and caregivers throughout the United States actively engaging their children in conversations about race and racism. While I commend parents taking on this layered topic, I empathize with parents in this position who may be searching for answers to provide for their children during a time when atrocities such as the brutal murder of Sonya Massey, a 36-year-old Black woman, who was shot and killed in her home by Deputy Sean Grayson of the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office in Woodside Township near Springfield, Illinois.

The lack of readily available resources and access are barriers that attempt to prevent parents from successfully navigating this topic. I hope that this research can provide insight to institutions, researchers, and parents seeking additional information to add to their toolbox of knowledge on the topic of discussing race and racism with children.

BIOGRAPHY

Angelena Castro is an Afro-Latin woman born and raised in rural North Carolina. Angelena is a sister to two brothers and a daughter to two loving parents. She is a person with a true servant's heart and believes in seeing the best in all people. She enjoys the opportunity to learn and expand to new horizons. This research project has opened her eyes to understanding the lived experiences of those whose life paths differ from her own.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank my Mom for her encouragement throughout my graduate career. Her unwavering support and dedication to supporting me have made a profound difference in my pursuit of this degree. I am grateful to my advisor; her insightful guidance, tireless effort, and encouraging words have been invaluable. Lastly, I am proud of myself for persisting in completing this research despite adversity and personal hardships. I believe this research is of value and will benefit the greater community.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

According to the American Anthropological Association, during the 18th century, "race was established to justify systems of power, privilege, disenfranchisement, and oppression" (2023 para. 5). In the United States, through the introduction of the concept of race, racism grew its roots. We know racism as the relegation of people of color to an inferior status and unfair treatment based on unfounded beliefs about innate inferiority. This historical background paved the way for racial tensions and beliefs that still exist today and are difficult for many to acknowledge or discuss.

In acknowledging that racial inequalities occur within the United States, parents and caregivers can carefully plan conversations to prepare children and youth for experiences that they may encounter throughout their lifetime. For parents of young children, creating a space for open discussion on matters of race and racism starts in the home. According to Wrinkler, research demonstrates that children's awareness of racial differences and the impact of racism begins quite early (Winkler, 2009). Children living in the United States commonly encounter racially biased messages. These messages may be received through personal interactions or media (Mastro et al., 2017). The assumption that children do not see race or racism is false. Though many parents agree that it is important to discuss race and racism with their children, many find it challenging to navigate those conversations (Wu et al., 2022).

The resources parents across the United States utilize to facilitate conversations with their children on matters of race and racism and overall support of diversity education are continuously developing and evolving. These resources include literature to reduce bias and foster social justice, as well as digital learning resources to engage the next generation

(Bang et al., 2022)

This study intends to bring awareness to the importance of parental involvement in educating their children on matters of race and racism. The purpose of this study is to investigate how parents across the United States teach and discuss race and racism with their children. I also hope that this study will inform future research and practitioner and parenting resources and encourage honest dialogue about race and racism between children and their parents.

The literature reviewed outlines prior relevant scholarship. I begin by examining early childhood racial education and parental influence, two subjects strongly related to my study. The literature review will explore various approaches parents use to discuss race and racism with their children, highlighting the influence of society and cultural background on these conversations. Additionally, it will examine the impact of these discussions on children's understanding of race, their social attitudes, and their development of empathy towards others.

This study will explore how conversations related to race and racism look for families from different racially diverse backgrounds. How parents of children today educate their child will possibly vary from what they were taught, or it may look exactly the same. Readers can also expect to learn about the research methods used, the questions that guided the study, the results gained from the study, and implications for future research and practice. This study was guided by the following research questions.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the experiences of parents who discuss race and racism with their children?

Research Question 2: How do parents who discuss race and racism with their children make meaning of their experiences?

Research Question 3: What factors impact when and how parents discuss race and racism with their children?

Disclosure Statement

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how parents across the United States teach and discuss race and racism with their children. I also hope that this study will inform future research and practitioner and parenting resources and encourage honest dialogue about race and racism between children and their parents. Through semi-structured interviews, this study sought to investigate how parents and caregivers across the United States discuss and teach their children about race and racism.

Positionality Statement

In analyzing and documenting my supporting data, it was necessary to recognize my biases and ensure that those were far removed from my work and my selection of respondents. I did not want to mar my research; my goal was to be fair and accurate.

Being a Black woman from rural North Carolina, it would be easy to look back through the lens of my life and reflect on scenarios that could easily create biases in my mind. These reflections and scenarios take place in settings both in the United States and the Dominican Republic, my father's homeland, where colorism prevents me from catching a public car or entering certain tourist clubs. For this research, I put those experiences aside. I focused on the scope of race and racism in America from the standpoint of parents having a conversation with their young children about this topic today in light of recent racially motivated events.

I did not want to write this paper only about the Black and White races. I feel the topic of parents and caregivers talking to their children about race and racism is essential for all races. I wanted to be inclusive of other races in my research to learn of experiences beyond my race in having conversations about race and racism with children.

This research was deeply personal for me as I can identify with a child's perspective but not that of a parent. My motivations for pursuing this topic were wanting to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of parents and caregivers who discuss race and racism with their children in hopes of potentially being able to make recommendations about how parents who are in the process of navigating parenthood and daily life could do so in a positive, appropriate, and educational manner. My personal biases did not influence how I engaged with participants or the subject matter, as I aimed to remain unbiased in conducting my research.

Theoretical Framework

Family racial-ethnic socialization is the theoretical framework that guided my research, shaped the interview protocol and research questions, and informed the data analysis.

Family Racial & Ethnic Socialization

Family racial and ethnic socialization has an important role in how children learn about race and racism. It is defined as a multifaceted construct that captures how families socialize youth regarding the values, traditions, and practices associated with their ethnic-racial group; family racial and ethnic socialization also includes families' efforts to teach youth about potential ethnicity- and race-based threats and how to cope with these experiences (Hughes, 2006).

An intentional example of family racial and ethnic socialization is a parent providing their children with early reader books that teach the importance of embracing their racial features, whether that be their hair, skin, or features (Boykin, 1985). An example of unintentional family racial and ethnic socialization is a young black boy observing his father's physical reaction to seeing an unarmed black boy shot and killed by police. Whether intentional or unintentional, children are observant of their parents and follow their example (American Psychological Association, 2008). The various patterns of racial socialization practices play an important role in the developing significance and meaning that impact how children and adolescents ascribe and understand race, especially for African American youth (Neblett, 2009). Research indicates that the racial discrimination experiences of parents affect the racial socialization messages they provide to their children (Saleem, 2016).

The parental influence in racial and ethnic socialization, which the American Psychological Association defines as the "direct, explicit messages children receive about the existence of racism and the meaning of race, as well as related indirect or implicit messages" (2008, par.7). Among minorities, racial socialization and the conversations around race are different and occasionally far more challenging to have than the conversations of white children with their parents (Boykin, 1985). Black parents may often be hesitant to engage in discussions about race so as to not impose a victim mentality on their children (Rodriguez, 2008).

The value of family racial and ethnic socialization is that it aids parents in their duty to counteract messages their children receive from the broader society. Children and young people have access to messaging and the exterior world beyond their homes at faster rates than ever before. Parents are up against media, health, and educational systems (Sellers, 2006). For multicultural families, studies suggest that parents proactively prepare their children to matriculate through society with the understanding that they will be marginalized (Garcia Coll, 1996). Family racial-ethnic socialization provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how parents navigate discussions about race and racism with their children. The research interview questions were developed with this framework in mind.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Adults often delay conversations about race because they underestimate how early children begin to recognize and process racial differences (Sullivan et al., 2020). For parents to support their children in navigating their social environments effectively, it is necessary for parents and caregivers to understand when children start to notice race and how they use this knowledge. Three preregistered studies revealed that U.S. adults frequently misjudged children's abilities to categorize and attribute traits based on race. This misjudgment was more strongly linked to adult participants' reluctance to discuss race with children. Furthermore, this misjudgment indicated widespread misconceptions about children's understanding of race, which in turn may delay important conversations (Lingras, 2021).

Children notice race from a young age and can recognize and understand social injustices. However, research shows that not all caregivers address race, identity, and racism; some avoid these discussions entirely. The lack of such conversations can have significant repercussions, as silence or dismissal of the topic allows stereotypes, biases, and racism to persist and even strengthen (Kotler, et. al, 2019).

Racial Inequalities in the United States

According to the American Anthropological Association, during the 18th century, "race was established to justify systems of power, privilege, disenfranchisement, and oppression." In the United States, through the introduction of the concept of race, racism grew its roots. Racism is defined as the relegation of people of color to an inferior status and unfair treatment based on unfounded beliefs about innate inferiority (Braveman, P. A., 2022). This historical background paved the way for racial tensions and beliefs that still exist today and

are difficult for many to acknowledge or discuss.

Given that, as a result of centuries of intentional racism and racist policies, unconscious biases are triggered by the brain to make rapid judgments and assessments automatically (Chekroud, 2014). Because racism is embedded so deeply within some government, financial, educational, and other service and business systems, we have learned that racism is not always conscious, intentional, or explicit-often it is systemic and structural (Braveman et al., 2022). Due to systemic racism, minorities of color in the United States experience inequities in all facets of life, whether in access to health care, housing, or equitable education, to name a few. In the pursuit of personal advancement, research indicates that minorities are less likely to receive offers of employment or promotions (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004).

In acknowledging that racial inequalities occur within the United States, parents and early educators can carefully plan conversations to prepare youth for experiences that they may encounter throughout their lifetime (Quintana, 2016). For parents of young children, creating a space for open discussion on matters of race and racism starts in the home. According to Cole and Verwayne (2018), Research demonstrates that children's awareness of racial differences and the impact of racism begins quite early. Children living in the United States commonly encounter racially biased messages. These messages may be received through personal interactions or media (Mastro et al., 2017). The assumption that children do not see race or racism is not accurate. Though many parents agree that it is important to discuss race and racism with their children, many find it difficult to navigate those conversations (Wu, 2022).

Early Childhood Racial Education and Parental Influence

Racial formation theory which examines how racial categories are socially constructed and how they change over time. First published by sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant in 1986 (O'Brien, E. 2017). This theory has influenced the fields of sociology and related disciplines, ideas, dialogue, and political agendas in regard to race and racism in the United States today and historically since its inception more than four decades ago. Additionally, as it relates to my research, racial formation theory looks at how past events and cultural shifts have influenced the way race is understood and represented.

In 2018, kindergarten school teacher Ms. Verwayne conducted a class activity that sparked great debate amongst her students' parents. The activity consisted of students drawing pictures of themselves based on observations of their reflections in a mirror. Ms. Verwayne provided the students with sentence starters, asking them to describe their hair color and texture, skin color, and eye color. As a culturally diverse class, the teacher intended for the students to learn new vocabulary to "describe their differences" (Cole & Verwayne, 2018). This classroom activity prompted the parents of her students to begin discussing how and when their children should learn about and discuss race. It is important to recognize that racism and racial/ethnic bias exist. Contrary to popular belief and according to the American Psychology Association, children's awareness of race and ability to develop racist beliefs may begin as early as infancy (Sullivan, 2020).

The teaching of race and racism to young children is often approached with a color-blindness lens. According to Apfelbaum, "Racial colorblindness is rooted in the belief that racial group membership and race-based differences should not be taken into account when decisions are made, impressions are formed, and behaviors are enacted" (2012, p. 205). In providing early

learners with access to resources to navigate racism appropriately, more opportunities for parents are created for their children to openly discuss and develop the curiosity of the young mind (Boutte, 2011).

Discussing Race and Racism for Parents of Children of Color

Having already established that it is often difficult for parents to navigate conversations about race and racism with their children, research indicates that parents of young minority children do often begin the task of preparing their children for the experience of racism through informal discussions (Brown, 2007). In recent years, the conversations about race and racism have become more serious between parents and children who are between the ages of 8-11, according to a February 2024 study by Northwestern University. Studies show that in response to national events such as the 2020 murder of George Floyd, Black parents' conversations with their children on the subject of race and racism increased more frequently (Sullivan et al., 2021)

In addition to navigating the conversation about race and racism, parents must incorporate into the conversation how the experience of discrimination and racial biases, whether conscious or unconscious, impacts each minority child differently. The perception of racism is also to be considered in how parents approach these conversations (Carter, 2015). Parents of Hispanic and Latin origin, in addition to ethnicity, have issues of language barriers and immigration status assumptions that must be included in their conversation (Vittrup, B. (2018). Asian families might include conversations about the history of Asian hate in America, from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the forced internment of people of Japanese descent during World War II, and more recently, the event of COVID-19, referred to as the “Kung-Flu” by former U.S. President Donald Trump. The United States is a country

of many races and cultures. It would be difficult for any parent to have a conversation about race and racism without first explaining "why racism and unconscious bias exist," which requires sharing its history in our country and the role their race played in it, whether as the perpetrators or as the victims. Accordingly, for parents of color living in the United States who aim to help their children anticipate and process marginalization due to their race or ethnic backgrounds, they model positive self-views, encourage conversations about their heritage (i.e., cultural knowledge, values, practices), and inspire their children to respect their cultural background, a practice termed cultural socialization (Hughes et al., 2006).

As the United States' population becomes more ethnically and racially diverse, youth of color now represent over half of the K-12 population in public schools (US Census Bureau, 2015). With this in mind, for parents of color, cultural socialization has been found to consistently benefit the child's engagement, motivation, and performance in school (Wang, 2019). Providing evidence that a child can be aware of the cultural and racial differences that exist and continue to thrive without the method of practicing unrealistic colorblindness. Research indicates that it is an educational and ethical necessity to teach and engage children in conversations about race and racism (Boutte, 2011). Otherwise, instances of "intergroup bias" may occur, which is the systematic tendency to evaluate one's own membership group, in this instance race, more favorably than members of another race (Dunham, 2011).

Parents who prioritize engaging their children in discussions about race should also recognize their race-related concerns and use those concerns as opportunities to navigate and identify potential solutions. Research has shown that for parents of black children, in addition to engaging in conversations about race, it is important for them to equip their

children with coping strategies as well, if so ever needed (Cooper et al., 2019), aiding in the promotion of positive well-being for their children (Murray et al., 2018).

Discussing Race and Racism for Parents of White Children

The conversation about race and racism is not just limited to minority families. Conversations must also occur between White families and their children. This may have to include some hard conversations about the history of racism in the United States. Research indicates that despite White parents in the United States' beliefs that their children should learn about race and racism, they often avoid these discussions, suggesting a discrepancy between what they say and their actions (Zucker, 2018). It is equally important that White parents also have conversations with their children so that they are educated and informed about racial biases that exist as a result of our country's history (Scott, 2020).

Acknowledging that talking about the history of racism is also difficult for White families, an option is teaching their children to be anti-racist. Anti-racism consists of beliefs that racial groups are "equals in all their apparent differences" and that racial inequalities exist due to racist policies (Wray-Lake et al., 2022). While teaching children to be anti-racist still requires conversations about the history of racism, it provides children with the knowledge and tools to treat everyone as equals. White parents have also utilized an egalitarian approach in discussing race and racism with their children. Egalitarianism is defined as advocating for equal rights and treatment of different groups, is an approach researchers have identified that White parents have found appropriate in discussions about race and racism with their children in the context of the U.S. (Vittrup, 2018). Research indicates that children acquire their racial biases and attitudes from their parents. In facilitating conversations on race and racism, adults play a vital role in promoting positive outcomes, such as disrupting the development of racist attitudes and

beliefs (Aboud et al., 1996). For parents that pose a differentiated view or practice ambivalent prejudice, which is a social psychological theory that states that when people become aware that they have conflicting beliefs about an outgroup, they experience an unpleasant mental feeling generally referred to as cognitive dissonance. In turn, these behaviors are often consciously and unconsciously modeled to their children (Fiske et al., 2012). Unsurprisingly, research has shown that children with an understanding of race use their ideas to shape how they determine social status at an early age and even associate with specific races over others as stereotypically more wealthy or more impoverished (Olsen et al., 2012). Resulting in the development of social preferences founded upon race-based hierarchies (Dukler et al., 2012).

While it is acknowledged that same-race parents have difficulties discussing race with their children, it is assumed that parents of mixed races would be living examples of the anti-racism concept and find it easier to have conversations about race with their children. However, parents of biracial and mixed-race children have the added complexity of assisting their children in understanding their racial identities (Wilton, L. S. 2013). Identity shifting, which is a way for an individual to cope with perceived threats to their racial identity, occurs when the child intentionally changes their self-concept of how they see themselves. Identity shifting may be triggered by the presence or absence of the racial group in which they primarily identify within their present social environment (Jackson, 2012).

Aiding Parents in Discussing Race and Racism with Their Children

The resources parents across the United States are utilizing to facilitate conversations with their children on matters of race and racism and overall support of diversity education are continuously developing and evolving. Resources such as literature to reduce bias and foster social justice, as well as digital learning resources to engage the

next generation (Bang, 2022)

Additionally, where parents and caregivers may lack knowledge, social support in the form of affinity groups, qualified mentors, and like-minded peers has been proven to be critical to the development and implementation of effective ethnic-racial socialization skills in children, adolescents, and young adults (Garmon, 2005). In viewing the importance of educating and supporting children in their development and understanding of race and racism as a community effort, we attempt to counteract a common tendency in mainstream thinking (Rogoff, 2003).

Coinciding with the evidence-based benefits of discussing race and racism with young children, parents and caregivers engaging in similar conversations with their adolescent-aged children is equally important. The World Health Organization categorizes Adolescence as the phase of life between childhood and adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. Research indicates that cognitively, adolescence is a time when youth show an increase in abstract thinking and advanced reasoning compared to previous developmental stages (Keating,1990). As they continue to develop, the ability of adolescents to recognize systemic discriminatory practices increases. Therefore, as they come to understand that others around them endorse stereotypic beliefs, they gain an insight into the social motives of others that affect their relationships with other individuals, social settings, and society (McKown, 2003).

As technology advances, adolescent children's and young people’s engagement with digital news and social media increases, bringing them considerable exposure to race-related content. Critical Race Digital Literacy is a fairly new concept that originated during a pilot study (Tynes, 2021). This concept “aims to prepare students to understand,

recognize, and respond to structural factors, particularly racism, as they relate to discourse and reasoning in the digital age" (Garcia, 2021).

Sean, the father of a black daughter and son, admitted that he focused more on teaching his children the importance of embracing their blackness. "My daughter has natural hair; we don't believe in perms. My wife and I practice teaching our children to understand the privilege of being Black. We try and teach them about our history as Black people. We don't start our story at slavery." Similarly, Jacob, the father of three black daughters, emphasized that for him, it is important to instill in his daughters a "positive self-image and to embrace their blackness regardless of what they see or hear about black beauty in the media. Raising three little girls with a darker complexion, I know that there is always dialogue or hate in the world that could impact them mentally. I've experienced discrimination myself as a dark-skinned black man.

Community Networks

In exploring how parents discuss race and racism with their children, community emerged as a vital theme. For five of the eight participants in this study, their community has played a significant role in shaping their conversations about race and racism with their children. Participants shared how living within culturally diverse neighborhoods and having various personal and professional networks have aided them in navigating the complexities of discussing race.

The sub-theme of resources and support focuses on the role of external resources such as books, workshops, and community groups in facilitating conversations about race and racism. All eight participants indicated that they had utilized external resources to support them in discussing race and racism with their children. Eliza, who is the parent of a one-year-old

daughter is actively weaving tools to promote a positive self-image into her bi-racial child's life. Items such as dolls of color, children's books that promote the embracing of naturally curly hair, and encouraging those in her daughter's life to practice speaking positively about her black heritage. Looking towards the future, Eliza foresees engaging in conversations with her daughter about colorism and understanding her privileges as a light-skinned black person. "Today, we're particular about the images she has access to, and we want her to see beauty in blackness." By carefully selecting representations of beauty and identity, she lays the groundwork for deeper conversations about colorism and privilege in the future. Eliza also shared how it is important to her that the people in her child's life promote a positive self-view and encourage her daughter to embrace all aspects of both her races.

Janet shared that she has found support from her neighbor, an older black gentleman who has unofficially served as a resource for her to seek support in teaching her son about racial differences. She shared that while she and her son have a comfortability with the neighbor she fears that the general public "may not understand their friendship." Janet shared that she recently wanted to invite the neighbor to accompany her son to a baseball game, but she was hesitant because she "did not want people to confuse the neighbor for a kidnapper or something."

Throughout the years Jacob has encouraged his oldest daughter to join different clubs and sports teams where she has the opportunity to engage with other children and adults from various cultural backgrounds. "I believe the best way for her to learn about other people and allow them to learn about her is through active engagement. She plays soccer and basketball and participates in the local 4-H program. When my younger daughters are a bit older, I plan to encourage them to tap into what interests them as well and use that as an opportunity for them to learn about other people and their cultures as well."

Chapter 3

Methodology

Using qualitative methodology, this study sought to gain insight into the lived experiences of parents and caregivers who engage in conversations about race and racism with their children. Qualitative methods are described as means for researchers to study participants in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Aspers, 2019). Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case studies, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Denzin, 2005). Given the exploratory nature of this study, phenomenology was the best way to capture information from the participants as I explored how they made meaning of their experiences with discussing race and racism with their children. Phenomenology has been described as a strategy to help researchers explore the experiences of others more deeply (Neubauer, 2019). In this particular study of the experiences of parents and caregivers, I wanted to obtain information that would allow me to draw broad conclusions from my observations.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

A criterion sampling technique (Wagner, 2015) was used to recruit participants for this study as there were specific criteria concerning parenthood, age, and prior experience discussing race and racism with their children. Participants were recruited from organizations whose constituents were parents and other faculty and student contacts. I shared the recruitment email

with organizations and via the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram. No individuals were specifically targeted for recruitment.

In order to be selected for inclusion in the study, participants had to meet the following criteria: be between the ages of 21 and 64, identify as parents or caregivers that have experience discussing race with their children. Anyone who did not fit that criterion was excluded from the study. Through my networks at work, the university, and the community, I was able to identify parents from different parts of the country and various races.

Participants consisted of six women and two men. All participants were parents who had experience discussing race and racism with their children. All participants were over the age of 21. Of the participants one individual lived on the West Coast. Seven participants were living in the U.S. South. Participant pseudonyms and related demographic information can be found in Table 1.

Data Collection

I used the qualitative research method of interviews to collect data. I chose semi-structured interviews to gain feedback from the individual respondents about specific open-ended questions. Depending on the respondent, the interview would last from 30 minutes to an hour. The interviews were conducted via the Zoom platform. The interviews were not recorded. However, digital transcripts were produced so that I could accurately assess the responses. This method allowed me to maintain the fidelity of the research. Additionally, the virtual option also allowed me to reach a greater pool of respondents who have had conversations about race and racism with their children. I also chose this method because it would allow me to visually see their body language and measure their emotions during our interview. Keeping in mind that the respondents could also see me and my body language, it was imperative that I maintained a non-

biased manner both physically and verbally. Again, this was to maintain the fidelity of the interviews.

The Zoom platform was used to conduct the interviews. The virtual face-to-face option also allowed me to reach a greater pool of respondents who have had conversations about race and racism. Through my networks at work, the university, and the community, I was able to identify parents from different parts of the country and various races. In this particular study of race and racism, I wanted to obtain information that would allow me to draw broad conclusions from my observations. While the respondents were aware of the purpose of the interview and the theme, they did not have access to the interview questions before they were interviewed. Although it is debatable whether it is best to provide the respondents with the interview questions or not, I chose not to. I wanted to increase the chances of participants giving unrehearsed, honest answers and not choosing to decline questions in an effort to further ensure the fidelity of my research. During the interviews, which lasted an average of about an hour, participants were asked 24 open-ended questions (see Appendix C), which were categorized into four different sections in order for me to gain an understanding of their experiences. Those sections were race, family, nuclear family, and community.

During the informed consent process, all participants were made aware that participation was voluntary and that their information would be kept confidential. I was the only person collecting data, and the participants were assigned alphanumeric codes for other record-keeping purposes. The informed consent form (See Appendix B) did not require the participants' signature to ensure the participants' identities were protected to the fullest extent possible; participants verbally consented to be a part of the study and maintained a copy for their records.

Data Analysis

The transcription of the eight participant interviews involved converting the spoken dialogue into written text. This allowed me to capture the nuances of all eight participant responses and ensure accuracy for analysis. Through horizontilization (Moustakas, 1994), I began to review each participant's interviews for recurring statements to identify themes. Once this step was complete, I began coding the data, which involved identifying and categorizing key themes, concepts, and patterns within the data. This was done on two occasions to refine the overall themes and subthemes of the data. This systematic organization allowed me to organize information into manageable segments.

Data triangulation (Wray, 2007) was completed though utilizing memoing to complement my data analization processes by allowing me to document my thoughts, reflections, and insights during data collection and analysis, which fostered a deeper engagement with the material and enhanced my overall understanding of the study's findings as the researcher. The qualitative research method of memoing also allowed me to make notes on nonverbal observations of the participants made during the data collection process to create seamless data referencing to ensure consistency in my findings. This method also allowed me to identify biases in participant accounts of their experiences. Ultimately, data triangulation aided in strengthening my overall research and its validity.

Trustworthiness

In order to ensure trustworthiness, I reviewed all interview transcripts. I wrote memos as soon as I could after interviews, and I had meetings with my advisors about the process of coding and to be sure I was using the best methodology for conducting data analysis. After the interviews were transcribed, all data was coded to identify different themes and the relationships between them. During the data collection and analysis process, I wrote memos because,

according to researcher Lee and colleagues (2019), the memo-writing process enables the researcher to be reflective and analytical of their findings. The meetings with my advisors ensured I was on the right track when it came to analyzing and interpreting the data.

Limitations

The findings of this study are not generalizable since they are based on highly individual experiences. This small sample size does not represent all parents and caregivers across the United States. However, the purpose was not to be able to make generalizations about the population but rather to understand their lived experiences discussing race and racism with their children. Not all racial and ethnic identities were included in the participant sample.

Chapter 4

Results

Results for this research will be presented with demographic information first to provide context for the coding descriptions.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Name	Gender Identity	Racial Identity or Ethnicity	Geographic Location
Joan	Female	Black	U.S. West Coast
Maya	Female	Black	U.S. South
Eliza	Female	Black	U.S. South
Charlotte	Female	White	U.S. South
Janet	Female	White	U.S. South
Lynn	Female	Hispanic	U.S. West Coast
Jacob	Male	Black	U.S. South
Sean	Male	Black	U.S. South

Note. N=8 Demographics were taken from eight participants.

Table 2

Participant Biographies

Name	Brief Biographies
Joan	An African American wife and mother of two black children, one daughter and one son who live in an urban city in Washington.
Maya	An African American single mother of two black sons that live in rural North Carolina.
Eliza	An African American wife and mother of a bi-racial daughter who live in urban North Carolina.
Charlotte	A White American single mother of one white son who lives in urban North Carolina.
Janet	A White American single mother of one white daughter who lives in rural North Carolina.
Lynn	A White Hispanic wife and mother of two children, a son and daughter who live in Urban California.
Jacob	An African American husband and father of three black daughters who lives in an urban city in South Carolina.
Sean	An African American husband and father of two black children, a son and a daughter. Who lives in rural North Carolina.

Following qualitative data analysis (Lazar, 2017), three major themes emerged: parents' family socialization, children's racial awareness, and community networks. Parents' family socialization focused on participants' lived experiences learning about race in their family of origin. The theme of children was based on participants' experiences discussing race and racism with their own children. Lastly, community networks delved into the parents' network of resources in navigating conversations about race and racism with their children. The following sub-themes emerged from the data: challenges and concerns, impact of current events, and resources and support. Challenges and concerns correspond to the main theme of parent's family socialization, the impact of current events corresponds to children's racial awareness, and

resources and support correspond to the major theme of community networks. Overall, the themes presented offer a full view of what motivated the research participants to engage in conversations with their children about race and racism, why they continue to have those conversations, and how they navigate these discussions with their children.

Parents' Family Socialization

Within the context of this study, parents' family socialization refers to the cultural norms, values, and beliefs related to race and racism within the family unit. This theme encompasses various elements, including how parents communicate about race, their motivations, the messages they convey, and the strategies they use to help their children navigate a racially diverse world. All eight participants in this study indicated that their past experiences with their own parents within their family of origin have influenced how they approach the topic with their own children today.

The experiences of the two white participants differed significantly from those of the Black and Hispanic participants, who grew up hearing their parents discuss race and racism. Charlotte, a white woman born and raised in the U.S. South, shared that "When I was in high school, my parents had a mindset that all people were the same, they sort of had a colorblind approach." For their household, when a major current event involving race occurred, that was when her parents would actually sit her and her siblings down for a conversation. Charlotte added:

> My parents tried to not be racist but of course we all are racist a little bit or have biases. I remember asking my parents how they would react if I started dating a black boy and their reactions weren't bad, but they sat me down and told me I would be setting myself up for a hard life. That was the type of messaging we received, that life would be difficult

if we were to be associating with a black person.

In a complete contrast of experiences, Janet, a white woman who grew up on the U.S. West Coast, expressed that for her growing up in California was a “melting pot of races, I never experienced racism or really knew what that was until I moved away.” She also shared that race and racism wasn’t something her parents talked about in the home.

The one Hispanic participant, Lynn, the daughter of Nicaraguan immigrants who settled on the U.S. West Coast in California, shared that “Growing up, my siblings and I were all different shades. My sister and I were fair-skinned, whereas our brother had a darker complexion. We could all see how we were treated differently based on that.” Internally, within their household, her mother took a more “don’t rock the boat” approach when discussing race and racism. “Whenever I had experienced a race-related issue with a white person, my mom would also refer to them as American as if I wasn’t American myself. It was made clear to me to not question people who were American, people who were white.”

All five of the study participants who were Black recalled similar messages from their parents while growing up in the U.S. South. Maya expressed, “My first introduction to learning about racism and inequality was through experiences that my father shared with me even before I started kindergarten. Once I began school, I was nervous just from anticipating having similar experiences or being treated differently because I was black.” Colorism, which is discrimination that treats people differently based on their skin tone, was also something that came up for the Black participants and the experiences they had growing up in their parent's home. Maya went on to share, “Being lighter-skinned and having a darker-complected sister, we were treated differently. I was always called beautiful, but she repeatedly told you're beautiful to be a dark girl.”

Today, as adults with their own families, the participant's approaches to discussing race and racism with their children centered on both direct and indirect conversations about race and racism. Collectively, regardless of race or geographic location, all participants disclosed that how they would approach the conversation with their children prior to actual engagement was something they had spent time thinking about. This was particularly important to Charlotte; she expressed very specific goals for parenting and engaging in conversations with her son aged three, about race and racism. Charlotte stated "On two separate occasions, he's come home from daycare and said to me that someone with brown skin is yucky, completely devastated. I imagine he's heard that from another child who heard it from their parents." Charlotte shared that she has been trying to approach the subject on a level that he can understand and inquired deeper into why her son would repeat that statement. She also encouraged her son "to think about all the great people he knows with brown skin." Joan was another participant who mentioned their specific approaches and goals for discussing race and racism with their children. Stating that until recently she "treaded lightly on the subject of race and racism; it seems like today the matters of race and racism are everywhere." A factor Joan mentioned for ramping up these conversations with her two children because of their increase in age.

Children's Racial Awareness

For this study, the major theme of the development of racial awareness in their children refers to young individuals, often within the developmental stages where they are beginning to form their understanding of race and racism. This can include children from early childhood through adolescence, generally ages 0 to 18. Six out of the eight participants were more conscious of how they approached discussing race and racism with their children as a result of how their parents negatively discussed race and racism when they were children themselves. "I

don't want my child to anticipate discrimination at every turn, but I want them to understand that they may experience incidents that will not make them feel good simply because of their race." The challenges and concerns of these six participants focused on the act of addressing complex or sensitive issues related to discussing race and racism with their children. For Joan, explaining to her son why an app on his phone "that makes gun noises" could be life-threatening for him was a challenge that had to be overcome. Out of concern and in compromise, Joan asked her son "to please only play with the app in the house, you cannot go outside in the yard and play with it." She went even further to caution her son and remind him that "you are not the same as your white friends, where we live you cannot do the same things as them. Someone may think you actually have a gun." Joan shared that she informed her son of Tamir Rice, a child who was close in age with her son and killed by police who mistook his toy gun for an actual weapon. "Sometimes bad things happen to black people, even if it's innocent and you only have a toy someone could think it's the real thing. You won't always be cute and cuddly and someday someone could perceive you as a threat."

Maya shared similar sentiments: "Raising two black boys, I have to teach them that they must always be presentable when they step out into the public. As a black boy, you are often perceived a certain way, and you must put your best self forward." Although challenging and often difficult, both women approached the challenge of discussing race and racism with their young black sons head-on. For both women, their examples illustrate the difficult balance parents must strike between protecting their children and preparing them for a world that may not always be kind.

Community Networks

In exploring how parents discuss race and racism with their children, community

networks emerged as a vital theme. For this study, community networks are defined as organized groups or initiatives that connect parents with one another and provide resources, information, and assistance. These networks focus on fostering relationships among parents, sharing experiences, and addressing challenges related to discussing race and racism.

For five of the eight participants in this study, community networks played a significant role in shaping their conversations about race and racism with their children. Participants shared how living within culturally diverse neighborhoods and having various personal and professional networks have aided them in navigating the complexities of discussing race.

The sub-theme of resources and support focuses on the role of external resources such as books, workshops, and community groups in facilitating conversations about race and racism. All eight participants indicated that they had utilized external resources to support them in discussing race and racism with their children. Eliza, who is the parent of a one-year-old daughter, is actively weaving tools to promote a positive self-image into her bi-racial child's life. Items such as dolls of color, children's books that promote the embracing naturally curly hair, and encouraging those in her daughter's life to practice speaking positively about her black heritage. Looking towards the future, Eliza foresees engaging in conversations with her daughter about colorism and understanding her privileges as a light-skinned black person. "Today, we're particular about the images she has access to, and we want her to see beauty in blackness." By carefully selecting representations of beauty and identity, she lays the groundwork for deeper conversations about colorism and privilege in the future. Eliza also shared how it is important to her that the people in her child's life promote a positive self-view and encourage her daughter to embrace all aspects of both her races.

Janet shared that she has found support from her neighbor, an older black gentleman who

has unofficially served as a resource for her to seek support in teaching her son about racial differences. She shared that while she and her son have a comfortability with the neighbor she fears that the general public "may not understand their friendship." Janet shared that she recently wanted to invite the neighbor to accompany her son to a baseball game but she was hesitant in that she "did not want people to confuse the neighbor for a kidnapper or something."

Throughout the years Jacob has encouraged his oldest daughter to join different clubs and sports teams where she has the opportunity to engage with other children and adults from various cultural backgrounds.

> "I believe the best way for her to learn about other people and allow them to learn about her is through active engagement. She plays soccer, basketball, and participates in the local 4-H program. When my younger daughters are a bit older, I plan to encourage them to tap into what interests them as well and use that as an opportunity for them to learn about other people and their cultures as well."

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The results of this study highlight the nuanced experiences of parents who engage in discussions about race and racism with their children, examined through a phenomenological research approach (Neubauer, 2019). While there is a growing body of research on parents discussing race and racism with their children (Brown, 2007), research focusing on how fathers and mothers individually navigate this topic is limited. This study contributes to existing literature on parents' experiences discussing race and racism with their children by providing a deeper understanding of parents' experiences who are proactive in discussing race and racism with their children. My study's findings expand this field of research to include parents' motivations for discussing race and racism with their children, their methods of discussion, and the impact or influence of community and resources.

Though each participant's story was unique, I found several similarities in their experiences and motivations for pursuing these conversations with their children. Participants' motivations centered on reflecting on their childhood and how they were taught about race and racism and current events in today's society (Chekroud, 2014). This diversity of participants by race was also found to be a factor in the ways and means that parents approached the conversations about race and racism with their children.

The experiences of white parents and black parents differed in that for the black parents engaging in conversations about race and racism with their children felt more dire. Given the history of race and racism within the United States and the state of race relations in the country today. For the black parents, having these discussions was more of a rite of passage. As their parents had these talks with them, today they have similar discussions with their children.

For the white parents that participated in this study their motivations aligned with antiracist practices (Wray-Lake et al., 2022). Which consisted of them understanding their privilege as White people within the United States and recognizing the importance of engaging in conversations with their children regularly about race and racism. The White participants in the study also noted the importance of modeling anti-racist behaviors and challenging racist ideals.

Their geographic locations influenced their discussions about race and racism. For the parents raising children on the U.S. West Coast, their children had greater access to more diverse populations and more frequently engaged with people who had diverse perspectives to share. For parents in the U.S. South, discussing race and racism had more sensitive undertones, with traditional views influencing their discussions. Despite their differing backgrounds, all participants shared a common commitment to fostering an environment where conversations about race can occur openly and constructively.

This research further weakens the assumption that children do not see race or racism (Wu et al., 2022). The participants in study indicated that their children had often asked them questions or made comments that whether directly or indirectly had a focus on race and an instance of racism. Which aligns with racial and ethnic socialization, which the American Psychological Association defines as the "direct, explicit messages children receive about the existence of racism and the meaning of race, as well as related indirect or implicit messages" (2008, par.7). The parents has a result of the inquiries from their children were prompted to go deeper and seek out resources and language to have an actual conversation about race and racism with their child.

Though all participants experienced varying degrees of support from community and or

resources, five of the eight participants could identify at least one community member, organization, or resources that have aided them in discussing race and racism with their child. Such findings, which highlight the importance of communal support and resources for parents in navigating matters of race and racism (Boykin, 1985). Further, all participants expressed that they understood the importance of engaging in conversations about race and racism with their children although all hadn't identified useful tools to aid in the discussion.

This study underscores that how families engage in discussions about race is not only a reflection of their values and beliefs but also a crucial foundation for children to develop a nuanced understanding of the world around them (Winkler, 2009). As parents continue to reflect on and refine their approaches, they contribute to a more informed and compassionate generation capable of navigating the complexities of race and racism.

Implications for Research and Practice

The findings from this study carry important implications for both research and practice. Primarily, there is a need for further scholarship to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of parents from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds who engage in discussions about race and racism with their children. This study was limited in that only three racial identities were represented by the participants. Future research in this area of inquiry must include more people who represent the racial and cultural diversity of the population within the United States. Researchers should, therefore, be more intentional in their recruitment efforts to engage participation from those groups. Additional scholarship is also needed to examine the role and impact of multi-generational households and their influence on conversations parents have with their children about race and racism. From this study, it was determined that many participants were motivated to discuss race and racism with their children because of interactions

they had with their own parents growing up. It's recommended that the study be expanded to understand how these conversations are navigated when the grandparents live within the home further.

This study involved participants based on the East and West Coasts of the United States. This research should be expanded to include the experiences of parents across all regions of the United States. Additionally, further research is needed to understand how parent's messages to their children about race and racism vary by life stage and whether the messaging changes depending on the child.

In terms of practice, participants offered few recommendations for enhancing support to parents, highlighting the necessity for multifaceted strategies. Exposure to diverse digital resources such as animated series for young children and children's books was emphasized as a tool that has been useful but lacking in abundance for parents to access. One participant stressed the importance of exposing their child to different races and cultures through sports and various clubs/organizations. This suggestion demonstrates the importance of communities creating accessible opportunities for children to engage with each other.

Strategies for parents to discuss race and racism with their children should be varied and tailored to different contexts. While a universal solution may not exist, it is essential to enhance support for parents who opt to address these topics. This will ensure they have the tools and resources needed to foster healthy conversations on what can be a sensitive subject.

Parents in the United States with a desire to discuss race and racism with their children should know that their desire is positive steps forward in fostering understanding and encouraging the development of empathy and compassion for others in their child. Parents should know that creating an open and safe environment for their child to feel comfortable in

asking questions and expressing their thoughts is essential. Using age-appropriate language and materials such as books and videos, sharing personal experiences, and encouraging critical thinking about social issues can help their children develop a well-rounded perspective. Additionally, acknowledging that these conversations may be uncomfortable but necessary can foster resilience and awareness. Lastly, modeling inclusive behavior and highlighting diverse voices in media can reinforce the lessons learned. As the participants in this study modeled, opening the door to these conversations can lead to significant enlightenment, not only for the children but for parents as well.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Greetings,

My name is Angelena Castro. I am a student at North Carolina State University. I am recruiting participants to be part of a study examining the experiences of parents and caregivers that discuss race and racism with their children -- focusing specifically on community, children, and family experiences in relation to discussing race and racism --with the ultimate aim of developing resources and services to support this better population.

Participants should be parents or caregivers between the ages of 21 and 60. They must have children and have discussed race and racism with their children. Participation in this study consists of one audio-recorded interview and a brief demographic questionnaire, to be completed virtually and prior to the interview. The interview will take place via audio chat on Zoom© will focus on the participant's previous and present-day experiences and will last between 60 and 90 minutes.

If you choose to participate, you will have the option of choosing among 2 gifts (i.e., a Airfryer or a blender valued between $40 and $50 upon completion of the interview. Your participation in this study is voluntary and confidential, and it is your right to stop participation in this study at any point. If you or someone you know may be interested, please complete this secure and confidential google form, accessible only to me. Upon completion of the google form, I will contact interested participants in the manner requested. If via email, the email will be generic and provide no information about the study.

Thank you,

Angelena Castro

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Title of Study: Let's Talk About Race: Examining Caregivers' Experiences Talking to their Children about Race and Racism

eIRB #

Principal Investigator: Angelena Castro, acastro@ncsu.edu, 704-242-7282

Faculty Point of Contact: Maru Gonzalez, mgonza22@ncsu.edu

Funding Source: Gradate assistantship

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are invited to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate, and to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of this research study is to gain a better understanding of the experiences of parents or caregivers who have discussed race and racism with their children in order to develop tools and resources, including a book. to better serve parents and caregivers like yourself across the United States.

We will do this by asking you to participate in an interview and to complete a brief demographic questionnaire prior to beginning the interview.

You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in this study. Research studies also may pose risks to those who participate. You may want to participate in this research in order to contribute to the broader field of knowledge of the personal experiences of parents or caregivers that will ultimately aid in the development of resources, including a book, and services to better support this population. You may not want to participate in this research due to the potential for

psychological and social risks, including recounting instances of family, peer, or community rejection, isolation, and mistreatment.

Specific details about the research in which you are invited to participate are contained below. If you do not understand something in this form, please ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If, at any time, you have questions about your participation in this research, do not hesitate to contact the researcher named above, the faculty point of contact, or the NC State IRB office. The IRB office's contact information is listed in the *What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?* section of this form.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the experiences of parents or caregivers who have discussed race and racism with their children in order to develop tools and resources to better serve parents and caregivers like yourself across the United States.

Am I eligible to be a participant in this study?

There will be approximately 10-12 participants in this study.

In order to be a participant in this study, you must agree to be in the study and you must be (1) a parent or caregiver; (2) must have experience discussing race and racism with your children (3) be between the ages of 21 and 60.

You cannot participate in this study if you do not want to be in the study or do not meet the criteria for participation.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

1. You will be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will take place via Skype© or Zoom© and will last between 60 and 90 minutes.

2. You will be asked to complete a brief paper demographic questionnaire prior to the interview electronically.
3. For your participation in this study, you will have the option of choosing among 3 gifts (i.e., a wireless speaker, a coffee maker, or an air fryer) valued between $40 and $50 upon completion of both interviews.

The total amount of time that you will be participating in this study is between 60 and 90 minutes over the course of one interview.

Recording and images

If you want to participate in this research, you must agree to be audio recorded. If you do not agree to be audio recorded, you cannot participate in this research.

Risks and benefits

There are minimal risks associated with participation in this research. The risks to you as a result of this research include a small chance that you may be identified by those who know you based on the information you share with the researcher. The researcher will destroy all records that contain your name or contact information once the interview is transcribed as well as change any identifying details to decrease the likelihood of identification; however, it is still a risk you should consider before participating in this study. This research will also ask you to reflect on your family, children, and community experiences. As such, there are some potential risks including feelings of vulnerability or emotional reactions. You can decline to answer any questions that I ask, to pause for a break, or to stop participating at any point.

There are no direct benefits to your participation in the research. The indirect benefits are contributing to the broader field of knowledge of the personal experiences of parents and

caregivers who have discussed race and racism with their children so that we can develop tools and resources, including a book, to better serve parents like yourself across the United States.

Right to withdraw your participation

You can stop participating in this study at any time for any reason. In order to stop your participation, please notify the researcher at any point in the process. If you choose to withdraw your consent and to stop participating in this research, your data will be excluded from the research pool and permanently destroyed. If you revoke consent after publication of the data, your data will be excluded from future use, but cannot be redacted from the original publication.

Confidentiality, personal privacy, and data management

Trust is the foundation of the participant/researcher relationship. Much of that principle of trust is tied to keeping your information private and in the manner that we have described to you in this form. The information that you share with us will be held in confidence to the fullest extent allowed by law. Protecting your privacy as related to this research is of utmost importance to us. However, there are very rare circumstances related to confidentiality where we may have to share information about you. These are limited to instances in which imminent harm could come to you or others.

How we manage, protect, and share your data are the principal ways that we protect your personal privacy. Data generated about you in this study will be de-identified.

De-identified. De-identified data is information that at one time could directly identify you, but I have recorded this data so that your identity is separated from the data. I will have a master list with your

code and real name that we can use to link to your data. While I might be able to link your identity to your data at earlier stages in the research, when the research concludes, there will be no way your real identity will be linked to the data we publish.

Data that will be shared with others about you will be de-identified in order to protect your privacy. A qualitative interview does not allow for anonymity; however, I will take steps to de-identify data related to your participation in this research to ensure your real identity is not linked to the data.

To help maximize the benefits of your participation in this project by further contributing to science and our community, your de-identified information will be stored for future research and may be shared with other people without additional consent from you.

Compensation

For your participation in this study, you will have the option of choosing among 3 gifts (i.e., a wireless speaker, a coffee maker, or an air fryer) valued between $40 and $50 upon completion of both interviews.

If you withdraw from the study prior to its completion, you will not receive any compensation.

What if you are an NCSU student?

Your participation in this study is not a course requirement and your participation or lack thereof, will not affect your class standing or grades at NC State.

What if you are an NCSU employee?

Your participation in this study is not a requirement of your employment at NCSU, and your participation, or lack thereof, will not affect your job.

Sponsorship and Funding

This research is funded through a graduate assistantship. This means that a faculty member is funding my research. I do not, however, have a direct financial interest with the sponsor or in the final results of the study. If you would like more information, please ask the lead researcher, Angelena Castroabout the funding and sponsorship.

What if you have questions about this study?

If you have questions at any time about the study itself or the procedures implemented in this study, you may contact the lead researcher,

Angelena Castro

704-242-7282

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact the NC State IRB (Institutional Review Board) Office. An IRB office helps participants if they have any issues regarding research activities. You can contact the NC State IRB Office via email at irb-director@ncsu.edu or via phone at (919) 515-8754.

Consent To Participate

By giving consent, I am affirming that I have read and understand the above information. All of the questions that I had about this research have been answered. I have chosen to participate in this study with the understanding that I may stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I am aware that I may revoke my consent at any time.

Appendix C

Interview Protocol

Reviewing the Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me today! My name is Angelena Castro and I am a graduate student at North Carolina State University. I hope to gain a better understanding of your experiences as a parent or caregiver who has discussed race and racism with your child so that we can develop tools and resources to better serve parents like yourself across the United States. Because you are the expert on your family and lived experiences, you can help us understand your experiences in your family and within the larger community as they relate to discussing race and racism. In addition, you can help us determine how other parents and/or caregivers and practitioners can best support you. That's why I'm so grateful that you are willing to talk with me today.

Before we begin, I would like to review a few points and confirm whether you provide your permission to participate. These points are also reflected in the copy of the consent statement that I gave you:

- This interview is completely voluntary. You do not have to take part in this interview.
- Because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, this interview will be audio recorded.
- All of your answers will be confidential. This means that your name will not be linked with the notes or audio recordings from this interview. No quotes or comments you make will be linked with your name in any way. Your name will not be used in any publications or reports about these interviews; only pseudonyms will be used when quoting from the transcripts.

- If you mention another person, please describe them by their role (e.g., mom, dad, sibling) rather than by name. If you do mention someone by name, I will redact that information during the transcription process.
- In this interview, I will be asking you about your experiences talking with your children about race and racism.
- We understand that sharing experiences of possible discrimination or violence might feel upsetting or triggering. Whatever comes up for you is real and okay. Please take care of yourself as you need to. That being said, we're also excited to hear about your positive experiences of engaging in dialogue about race and racism with your child.
- You may choose to not take part in the interview at any time. You may also choose to not answer certain questions and still continue in the discussion.
- We have planned for this interview to last between 60 to 90 minutes.
- Do you have any questions prior to moving forward?

I would like to begin recording this session now, is that okay with you?

TURN ON RECORDER

Interview Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences of parents of diverse backgrounds across the U.S., with a specific focus on their experiences discussing race and racism with their children. I understand that you may not feel comfortable answering all questions, so again, you do not have to answer any questions you don't feel comfortable answering. To protect their privacy, we ask that you do not state any names when describing your experiences.

During today's interview, I will ask you focused questions about prior and current experiences.

Are you ready to begin?

Questions

Family

1. Tell me a bit about your experiences growing up.
    a. Where did you grow up? Please describe the location. (Tell me more about what that was like
        i. Description of location by race/ethnicity, socio-economic class, religion, whether rural or (sub)urban
2. To what extent were race, racism, and racial identity discussed within your family? In what context?
3. What are some of the messages you heard from your family about race, racial identity, and racism?
    a. Colorism is defined as prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group. To what extent, if at all, did colorism manifest in your family?
    b. What religion is your family?
    c. Do you think their religion or spiritual beliefs influenced what they thought and how they talked about race and racism? What about culture? If so, how so?
4. What do you think would have helped your family be more open in discussing race and racism?

Children

5. What have been your experiences discussing race and racism with your children?
    a. Do you have a specific example(s) you can provide?

b. What tools or resources have you found helpful in navigating these conversations?
c. How have your children actively expressed an interest in discussing race and racism with you?
d. Describe how you talk to your child or children about stereotypes, biases, and discrimination against racial and ethnic groups different from yours.
e. How does your child or children respond when you talk to them about race and racism?
f. Do you and your children share the same race and ethnicity? If not, to what extent, if at all, does this impact the way you talk to your child about race and racism?
g. To what extent, if at all, do you focus on the role of self-love and embracing their racial, cultural, and/or ethnic identities in conversations about race and racism with your child? This includes hair, skin color, features, culture, and language.
    i. Do you have a specific example or examples you can provide?
h. What advice do you have for parents and caregivers who want to engage with their children in dialogue about matters of race and racism but aren't sure how?

Community

Now, I am going to ask you a couple of questions related to the climate in your community. For the purposes of this study, we are defining climate as related to the overall quality and character of a given entity or institution -- in this case the community -- and reflective of the norms, values, and expectations of said entity or institution. Climate also includes the quality of interpersonal relationships and the extent to which people are treated equitably.

i. Describe the local climate in your community in relation to people of color.

ii. To what extent, if at all, does the national climate in relation to race and racism affect the frequency of your speaking with your child about race and racism?

6. To what extent do you communicate with peers and other parents and caregivers about race and racism? What specifically do you discuss?
7. What do you think would help your children be more aware of issues regarding race and racism?
8. How important is it for you to discuss race and racism with your children?
9. What are your experiences in the community or neighborhood in which you live?
    a. Description of community/neighborhood
10. Where in your community have you found it harder to be accepted? Why?
    a. Who is there?
    b. What do you do there?
    c. What negative experiences have you had within this space?
11. What kinds of community supports and resources have you found useful in talking with your child/children about race and racism?

Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you so much for your participation in this study!