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**TRANSRACIAL ADOPTIVE FAMILY DEVELOPMENT: THE
IMPLICATIONS FOR ADOPTION AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS ON
SOCIAL SUPPORT, PARENTING SELF-EFFICACY AND CULTURAL
SOCIALIZATION**

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ABSTRACT

Transracial adoptions are unique in that the physical differences between the adopted child and the adoptive parents are frequently very visible and, because of this visibility, the families may be more affected by the stigma that society places on adoptive families. Challenges faced by these families may be stressful and may increase the likelihood that adoptive parents will rely on relatives and other individuals for support. These unique demands are likely to have implications for the development of adoptive parents' sense of parenting self-efficacy. Another salient factor that may be important for understanding transracial adoptive family processes is cultural socialization which may have implications for parenting self-efficacy and/or may be influenced by parents' feelings of parenting self-efficacy. The aims of the study were (1) to examine the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization within transracial adoptive families, (2) to examine how the adoption-related factors of openness and satisfaction with the adoption are associated with cultural socialization and (3) to examine how the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization is moderated by personal factors. Participants were drawn from the Early Growth and Development Study (EGDS) in two cohorts. Results demonstrated associations between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy. Perceived social support differed depending upon the race/ethnicity of the adopted child. Cultural socialization practices varied between families who adopted Black non-Hispanic children and White Hispanic children, and between those who adopted girls rather than boys. Reasons for adopting transracially moderated the association between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization. The implications for the findings and future directions are discussed.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Transracial adoptions are unique in that the physical differences between the adopted child and the adoptive parents are frequently very visible (Grotevant, Dunbar, Kohler, & Esau, 2000) and, because of this visibility, the families may be more affected by the stigma that society places on adoptive families because of their inability to “pass” (Goldberg, Kinkler, & Hines, 2011). Challenges encountered by these families may be stressful and may increase the likelihood that adoptive parents will rely on relatives and other individuals for support. Unfortunately, social support is not always forthcoming from these sources (Brodzinsky, Smith, & Brodzinsky, 1998). These unique challenges are likely to have implications for the development of adoptive parents’ sense of parenting self-efficacy. Both parenting self-efficacy and social support have been found to be associated with more positive family relationships and better psychosocial functioning with particular benefit when individuals report high levels of both (e.g., Cutrona & Troutman, 1986; Unger & Waudersman, 1985). There have been no studies of the links between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy in adoptive families, however. The implications of perceived social support for parenting self-efficacy and socialization practices may likely be influenced by personal and adoption-related factors such as openness, child race/ethnicity, racial awareness, and reasons for completing an adoption plan. Perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and socialization practices may be particularly crucial characteristics of adoptive family functioning and well-being given that adoptive parents face many unique challenges.

There are several types of adoption, one of which is transracial adoptions which this document will address. Transracial adoptions refer to adoptions in which adoptive parents are a different race than the adopted child (Jennings, 2006). In transracial adoptions a factor that may

be important for understanding family processes is cultural socialization. Cultural socialization refers to efforts of the adoptive parents to socialize the adopted child into their birth culture and may include practices such as listening to music from the child's birth culture. In this project I will examine the association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy. Next, I will examine the cultural socialization practices of parents who have adopted transracially and how they may be related to feelings of perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy. Finally, I will examine how contextual and adoption-related factors may moderate the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization. Preliminary analyses will be performed on the entire sample of respondents, separated by cohort to investigate developmental differences, and also by child race/ethnicity to examine if race/ethnicity affects the relation between variables.

In this document I will first review the literature and theory discussing the associations between parenting self-efficacy and perceived social support. Next, I will describe the research on cultural socialization in families who have adopted minority children. Finally, how adoption-related factors, specifically openness and satisfaction with the adoption, and how personal factors such as racial awareness affect cultural socialization will be reviewed. Data from the Early Growth and Development Study (EGDS; Leve, Neiderhiser, Ge, Scaramella, Conger, Reid, Shaw, & Reis, 2007), a prospective adoption study with a subset of families who participated in transracial adoptions, will be used to examine the study questions.

Chapter 2

Functioning in Transracial Adoptive Families

Adoption has become increasingly common over the past 10-15 years (United States Department of State, 2010) and includes several types such as domestic, international, public, private and transracial. Transracial adoptions can be either domestic or international as such adoptions may involve ethnic and racial differences between adoptive parents and the adopted child that are related to physical features (Baden & Steward, 2007). For the purposes of this research domestic transracial adoptions only will be discussed. The literature broadly defines transracial adoptions as the creation of a family where the parents are of a different racial background to the adopted child (Jennings, 2006). The most common type is the adoption of a minority child by White parents (Lee, 2003) who are mostly in the middle to upper socio economic status (Smith, Juarez, & Jacobson, 2011). Racial/ethnic differences between the adoptive parents and their child have been the focus of social and political debates and have led to changes in the adoption process (Zamostny, O'Brien, Baden, & Wiley, 2003). For instance, the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994 P.L. 103-382 prohibited agencies receiving federal funding involved in foster care or adoption placements to delay, deny or discriminate on the basis of a parent's or child's race or color when making adoption decisions. This act was later amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions (IEAP) of 1996 which generally states that adoptive and foster care placements should be in the best interest of the child and criteria should not be used to exclude a particular group when making these decisions.

There has been some debate both publically and in the literature about the merit of transracial adoptions. Opponents of this type of adoption primarily cite strong concerns that non-minority families will not be able to provide an environment to support healthy racial identity

development of the adopted child (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983). Proponents argue that placing a minority child with a White family was preferable to leaving the child in the foster care system (McRoy, 1989), and research shows that children in these families are generally well adjusted (Simon & Altstein, 1987). Transracial adoption has a history of controversy and while the debates may not be as prominent today the historical footprints may have some influence on family process.

Relatively recent statistics suggest that transracial adoption comprises 40% of all adoptions in the U.S. in 2009 (US Department of State, 2010). Transracial adoption has been on the rise over recent years increasing from 11.6% of all adoptions in 1996 to 16.9% in 2003 (AFCARS, 2011) and leveling off to 40% in 2007 and 2009 (Vandivere, Malm & Radel, 2009; US Department of State, 2010). One of the factors that has led to this increase in transracial adoption is the shift in social mores. More single women have decided to parent their children and this has led to a decline in healthy White babies available for adoption. Therefore, in order to satisfy parenting needs, some White adoptive parents have chosen to complete a transracial adoption plan (Brodzinsky & Pinderhughes, 2002) and increasingly, White couples are adopting outside of their race (Jennings, 2006). Non-Hispanic White individuals are the largest group of adopters (Vandivere et al., 2009; Brodzinsky & Pinderhughes, 2002) and not surprisingly, the majority of adopted children have non-Hispanic White parents (Vandivere et al., 2009). Thus, it is critical to understand how processes in families who have adopted transracially may or may not differ from non-adoptive family processes as a fair number of families are directly impacted by this type of adoption.

The physical differences between family members in a transracial adoption are very visible (Grotevant et al., 2000). Compared to other groups of transracially adopting families, for instance African American parents and Black Hispanic children, White parents of children who are different to them (e.g., skin color and hair texture) encounter more racial and ethnic hostility

(Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Suter 2008; Tessler, Gamache, & Liu, 1999). This hostility creates difficulties in adoptive family functioning. More specifically, adoptive parents report that negative comments are invasive, and challenge the validity of their family (Suter, 2008). Adoptees report feeling objectified by stares, threatened by remarks that question the validity of their family, and misidentified as being a foreign exchange student or housecleaner (Docan-Morgan, 2011). Cases of adoptees' mistaken relationship to their adoptive parents may undermine their relationship with their family members (Suter, Reyes, & Ballard, 2010).

The experiences of transracial adoptive families described above present additional and unique challenges for parents (and other family members) in a transracial adoption that adoptive parent in same-race adoptions may be less likely to experience. As a result of some these experiences, which can be distressing, adoptive parents were found to successfully manage these situations in the moment based on the age of the child, and the other people involved in the situation (Suter & Ballard, 2009; Suter et al., 2010). Specifically, adoptive parents report confronting people who make negative statements about their child in the child's presence. Others report making protective statements which validate family identity. Taken together these reports demonstrate some of the difficulties that transracial adoptive families encounter which may have negative implications for family functioning.

The adjustment to the challenges faced by some adoptive parents, including their perception of social support and the value that society places on their parenting, constitutes an interactional process. When parenting tasks are met with sufficient skill and supportive factors, parenthood is likely to be experienced positively resulting in feelings of parenting self-efficacy (Coleman & Karraker, 1998). However, when parents do not feel skilled and/or supported, this can negatively influence the parent-child system. Parents who have adopted transracially face similar challenges as non-adoptive parents as well as additional unique challenges related to racial differences (e.g., providing skin and hair care; Benson, Sharma, & Roehlkepartain, 1994)

and proving that they are capable to parent a child (Grotevant & Kohler, 1999). At least one concern that some adoptive parents have is their perception of the lower value that society places on their parenting based upon the manner in which their family was formed (Wegar, 1997).

Efficacy theory will be used as the organizing framework for this document given the unique set of circumstances that adoptive parents face and the challenges, supports and experiences that they encounter.

Chapter 3

Theory of self-efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy refers to what an individual believes he or she can do in a variety of circumstances with the skills that he or she possesses (Bandura, 1986). Individual efficacy beliefs influence courses of action, how much effort is expended in the pursuit of a goal, how long a person will persevere if challenges are encountered, resilience, cognitions, psychological well-being (mental health), and accomplishments (Schunk & Carbonari, 1984). Once an efficacy belief is formed, it helps to regulate aspirations, behaviors, and affective states. Importantly, self-efficacy should not be confused with self-esteem. Perceived self-efficacy has to do with judgments of personal capabilities, and self-esteem refers to judgments of one's self worth. Individuals may judge themselves inefficacious in a particular activity, but their lack of skill may have no bearing on their self-esteem. Therefore, self-efficacy establishes what a person believes they are able to do and is an important concept to examine in relation to how efficacious parents feel about raising their children.

Self-efficacy development

Perceived self-efficacy beliefs are constructed from four primary sources: enactive mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion and physiological and affective states. Enactive mastery experiences - repeating a task several times - are the most influential source of efficacy because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether a person has the skills to succeed. Vicarious experience refers to the appraisal of one's actions in relation to the actions of others. Enactive mastery experiences serve as indicators of capabilities, and vicarious

experiences can alter efficacy beliefs either through comparison of one's own attainments to the achievement of others, or evaluation of one's own competencies (Bandura, 1997). Verbal persuasion and physiological and affective states are used to judge one's capability or vulnerability. Verbal persuasion strengthens an individual's beliefs that they possess the skills necessary to achieve their goals. The final source of efficacy beliefs is related to the physiological and emotional reactions that are used, in part, to judge individual capabilities. That is, people may pay attention to the amount of anxiety they feel in stressful or taxing situations as indicators of vulnerability and poor performance (Bandura, 1997). The information conveyed by physiological states and reactions will not be a sole indicator of perceived self-efficacy, but rather it affects perceived self-efficacy through cognitive processing. In the current document these constructs are not examined, yet it is important to consider how they may operate to influence the development of feelings of parenting self-efficacy as a way of describing the possible mechanism through which this is formed. Overall parents must weigh and integrate these sources of information to form their own parental self-efficacy beliefs.

Since development is a process it is reasonable to anticipate that parenting self-efficacy may change over the course of the child's development. For instance, as a child matures mothers who understand the likely effects of their actions in response to child behaviors may be more likely to act as constructive partners in their child's development (Bandura, 1997; Coleman & Karraker, 1998). Studies that examine how parenting self-efficacy develops suggest that perceived parenting skill tends to increase across the transition to parenthood (Gross, Conrad, Fogg, & Wothke, 1994; Porter & Hsu, 2003; Reece & Harkless, 1998; Williams, Joy, Travis, & Gotowiec, 1987). More specifically, longitudinal research shows that mothers' efficacy scores increase from the prenatal to the postpartum period (Porter & Hsu, 2003). Maternal efficacy scores are generally lower prior to birth since expectant mothers are anticipating how efficacious they may be in their new parenting role. Increases in maternal efficacy have also been recorded

from infancy into toddlerhood (Gross et al., 1994). Overall, maternal efficacy appears to change as the child develops with some parents perhaps feeling more efficacious as they are more experienced as a parent. Hence, it may be reasonable to anticipate that parents of older children may report higher parenting self-efficacy scores than parents of younger children. This project will be able to examine this possibility as the data were collected in two cohorts, a younger cohort of children in toddlerhood and an older cohort in middle childhood.

Studies examining parenting self-efficacy during a child's infancy suggest that mothers tend to have higher scores on parenting self-efficacy when compared to fathers (Froman & Owen, 1989; Reece & Harkless, 1998). This may not be surprising since mothers are responsible for more of the caretaking activities during the infancy and toddlerhood periods (Belsky, Gilstrap, & Rovine, 1984; Parke, 2002). Increases in feelings of parenting self-efficacy are related to, among other factors, repeated opportunities for mothers to perform various caretaking tasks and are associated with increased familiarity and comfort with these tasks (Bandura, 1997). This is consistent with enactive mastery, one of the mechanisms through which self-efficacy beliefs are formed. With the repeated performance of a task, it is possible that some mothers may also continue to feel more efficacious in their caretaking abilities as the child matures. Alternatively, it is also important to consider that a parent who feels efficacious at one stage, for instance during infancy, when the child is dependent on the caregiver, may not feel confident or efficacious during toddlerhood, when the child is developing a sense of autonomy and may be less cooperative (Williams et al., 1987). Since mothers may spend more time with the child relative to fathers, mother's parenting self-efficacy may be particularly important to examine during infancy and toddlerhood.

Parenting self-efficacy is a particularly important construct to understand because it is related to adjustment to parenting and the quality of the environment that parents provide for their children (Coleman & Karraker, 1998). More specifically, higher levels of parenting self-efficacy

are associated with adaptive parenting skills such as responsiveness and non-punitive caretaking (Donovan & Leavitt, 1985), and parental efforts to educate themselves about parenting by attending parenting classes (Spoth & Conroy, 1993). It is also associated with more active and direct parenting interactions (Marsh & Johnston, 1983), and active maternal coping orientations (Wells-Parker, Miller, & Topping, 1990). Furthermore, higher levels of parenting self-efficacy are related to the ability to attend to and understand infant signals (Donovan, Leavitt, & Walsh, 1990) and a lack of maternally perceived child behavioral problems (Johnston & Mash, 1989). Whereas, low levels of parenting self-efficacy have been associated with maternal depression (Cutrona & Troutman, 1986), maternal controlling and defensive behavior (Donovan, et al., 1990), and maternal perceptions of child difficulties (Halpern, Anders, Coll, & Hua, 1994). These studies and others indicate that parenting self-efficacy is related to parents' ability to foster a positive emotional and physical environment for child development. It is likely that parenting self-efficacy may also be important in fostering a positive emotional and physical environment for the child in adoptive families. But, to date, this has not been examined in an adoption sample. As noted earlier, adoptive families have a unique set of challenges, such as the uncertainty of if and when parenthood will begin (Levy-Shiff, Goldshmidt, & Har-Even, 1991) that may be of particular relevance to the development of parenting self-efficacy. Thus considering whether the associations established in the literature are consistent for both biological and families who have adopted transracially is a key objective of this dissertation.

Chapter 4

Social support

Social support is a multidimensional concept including processes such as receiving advice from others and tangible aid. There are social or emotional benefits to the individual as a result of receiving social support (Gottlieb, 1983) and social support has been found to play a role in overall family processes such as family relations (Taylor, Seaton, & Dominguez, 2008). This construct will be considered in some detail here because of the direct relevance of social support to family functioning and the possibility that social support may differ for non-adoptive versus adoptive families. First, an overview of the theory of social support will be provided, followed by a review of the most relevant literature for the dissertation research.

Social support theory proposes two models - buffering and main effect - to explain the association between social support and well-being. The buffering model suggests that social support protects individuals from the potentially damaging effects of stressful events. The main effect model suggests that social support has a positive effect on well-being regardless of if the person is under stress (Armstrong, Birnie-Lefcovitch, & Ungar, 2005; Cohen & Willis, 1985). More specifically, social support networks can provide positive experiences, positive affect and recognition of a person's worth (Cohen & Willis, 1985).

It is well established in the literature that social support is positively related to psychological well-being (Cobb, 1976; Crnic & Greenberg, 1990; Cutrona 1986; Cutrona & Troutman, 1986), family functioning (Crnic et al., 1983) and parental functioning, in particular maternal competence or parenting self-efficacy (Cutrona, 1984; Cutrona & Troutman, 1986; Elder, 1995; Zayas, Jankowski, & McKee, 2005). Of particular relevance to the dissertation research, women who reported high levels of social support during the prenatal period

subsequently reported higher levels of parenting self-efficacy 3 months postpartum (Cutrona & Troutman, 1986). These findings suggest that women who have other people on whom to rely for a variety of social provisions have more confidence in their ability to perform tasks associated with parenting. Less work has been done on this association in fathers and findings suggest that social support is not related to parenting self-efficacy (Rochlen, McKelley, Suizzo, & Scaringi, 2008; Wanamaker & Glenwick, 1998). This project will examine a main effect model because first, stressful events are not measured nor are a direct focus of this document. Second, the empirical literature has shown a direct association between social support and aspects of parental functioning, in particular parenting self-efficacy.

Relation between social support and parenting self-efficacy

Belsky's (1984) model of the determinants of parenting provides a useful framework to conceptualize the integration of both social support and parenting self-efficacy because social support is likely to shape parenting practices and can have a direct impact on parenting self-efficacy. This model suggests that social network support is a distinct source likely to promote parenting competence or parenting self-efficacy directly. Several studies have provided evidence that social support positively impacts perceptions of self-efficacy in biologically related families (Coleman & Karraker, 1998; Donovan, & Leavitt, 1989; Zeiss, Gallagher-Thompson, Lovett, Rose, & McKibbin, 1999) and appear to be consistent with Belsky's conceptual model. Specifically, parents who report high levels of social support also report better parent-child communications, more involvement with their children, and more confidence in their parenting skills, or parenting self-efficacy (Belsky, 1984). Perhaps one reason may be that social support functions as a basis of learning and reinforcement for positive parenting behaviors and attitudes.

Supportive relationships may provide useful information, and support perceptions of parenting self-efficacy. Specifically, vicarious experience and verbal persuasions are directly

influenced by social interactions and support with verbal persuasion incorporating aspects of the relational and informational functions of social support. For instance, someone who provides support may give parenting advice (informational support) or empathy (relational support). Furthermore, support network members may influence perceptions of accomplishments if they highlight the parent's past successful behaviors. Observing other individuals successfully parenting while also receiving verbal encouragement and instructional support, both aspects of social support, are likely to increase perceptions of parenting self-efficacy.

Children's development may also impact parenting self-efficacy. Findings to date suggest a positive association between social support and parenting self-efficacy over time from the prenatal period into infancy (Haslam, Pakenham, & Smith, 2006). When compared to infancy, new changes in a child's behavioral and affective states may have different implications for parenting self-efficacy and social support because children's parenting needs change over this period (Barnard & Solchany, 2002). Generally, during infancy parenting responsibilities primarily involve nurturing and basic caretaking. Different parenting skills are likely required as the child matures and enters toddlerhood and early childhood because children acquire new motor, verbal and cognitive skills, and have changing skills in emotion regulation, autonomy and independence (Edwards & Liu, 2002).

Until recently research has paid little attention to the association between parenting self-efficacy and social support in families with children in the toddler and early childhood years (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990; Feldman, McDonald, Serbing, Stack, Secco & Yu, 2007; Holloway, Suzuki, Yamamoto, & Behrens, 2005; Jackson, 2000; MacPhee, Fritz, & Miller-Heyl, 1996). Adoption theory suggests that earlier developmental periods are critical in the adoptive family life cycle because of some of the challenges that both the adopted child and adoptive parents face (Brodzinsky et al., 1998). For adoptive parents these challenges include finding appropriate role models and developing realistic expectations regarding adoption, coping with any anxiety and

uncertainty associated with telling the child that he or she was adopted, and creating a family atmosphere conducive to open communication about the adoption (Brodzinsky et al., 1998). It is likely that these challenges may impact parenting self-efficacy.

The findings discussed above have been demonstrated in biologically related families. To date research has not addressed an association between social support and parenting self-efficacy in families who have adopted transracially. It is important to first, understand how this association operates for transracial adoptive families because there are a number of differences in the process of creating a family through adoption when compared to biological families. Second, it would be important to understand if there are any developmental differences in the association between social support and parenting self-efficacy since parenting self-efficacy may change across developmental periods.

In general adoptive parents are a minority group who may face several emotional obstacles and losses, such as infertility (Silverstein & Kaplan, 1990) and creating their family in societies which may place a different (often lesser) value on adoptive parenthood (Leon, 2002). There is uncertainty surrounding being selected as adoptive parents by the biological parent(s), when adoptive parenthood will begin, and having to meet certain standards set by the state and the adoption agency (Brodzinsky & Huffman, 1988; Levy-Shiff et al., 1991). These circumstances are likely to be stressful to the adoptive parents and may increase their need for adequate social support to help buffer the effects of these stressors. These stressors may also have an impact on adoptive parents' sense of parenting self-efficacy. Therefore, this dissertation research examined the association between parenting self-efficacy and social support during toddlerhood in order to provide a better understanding of the process which may impact the social and psychological child-rearing environments.

Chapter 5

Social support and parenting self-efficacy within the context of transracial adoption

Social support is positively associated with adoptive family pre- and post-adoption adjustment (see Smith 2010 for review). Perceived higher levels of social support in adoptive families generally have been related to better family functioning (Erich, Leung, & Kindle, 2008) and may have implications for parenting self-efficacy. For instance, adoptive mothers who reported higher perceived social support pre-adoption reported lower parenting stress six months post-adoption when the adopted children were approximately 2 years old (Viana & Welsh, 2010). Social support has also been positively associated with adoptive father psychological well-being when his child was a toddler (Tornello, Farr, & Patterson, 2011). Given these findings, it seems likely that feeling adequate social support may have positive implications for adoptive parents' sense of parenting self-efficacy. But, little is known about how this association will operate within an adoption in which there are racial differences between the parents and child. Furthermore, some of these families may appear more racially similar than others and this may be another important aspect to consider.

Transracial adoptions are seen by some as controversial given that they involve the interplay between race, social issues, and cultural values that may stigmatize an adoptive family. This can impact the amount of social support that the family receives during the adoption process (see Lee, 2003 for review). The reluctance expressed by some non-minority parents to adopt minority children, in particular for adopting African American children (Brodzinsky & Pinderhughes, 2002; Goldberg & Smith, 2009), may reflect anticipation of lack of support from family, friends and the community. There is evidence that some adoptive parents have anxiety

around these issues, and this may be heightened when there is ambivalent support from family and friends concerning the adoption (Brodzinsky et al., 1998). Thus, completing a transracial adoption plan may be challenging for some non-minority adoptive parents given the perceived lack of support from family and friends.

Support from family and friends for a parent is not automatic and parents who receive less support may have lower parenting self-efficacy. During interviews some adoptive parents report that they encountered comments that suggested others' beliefs that adoptive parenthood was less preferable than biological parenthood, and that adoptive parents have a weaker connection to their child (Miall, 1987). Early research reports that adoptive mothers frequently described negative emotions such as feeling hurt or upset that lower value was placed on adoptive motherhood (Miall, 1987; Wegar, 1997). Some adoptive parents may rely on family and friends for support given their perceptions of the negative attitudes from individuals from the broader society on the issue of adoptive parenthood. However, some adoptive parents find that their family and friends also hold stigmatized beliefs about adoption (Johnson & O'Connor, 2002). They report concerns that their own family members would not perceive their adopted child as a legitimate member of the family (Daniluk & Hurtig-Mitchell, 2003). These findings not only suggest that some parents involved in an adoption may feel less supported by family and friends, but from the broader societal context as well.

Beyond the above mentioned issues interviews with pre-adoptive parents, including male-female and same-sex couples, revealed that perceived social support from friends and family as a reason why they would or would not consider completing a transracial adoption plan (Goldberg, 2009). These perceptions on the part of adoptive parents have some merit, as parents completing a transracial adoption plan have been found to perceive less social support when compared to parents completing a same-race adoption plan (Singer, Brodzinsky, Ramsay, Steir, & Waters, 1985). Consistent with these findings, post-adoption interviews with adoptive parents

who completed a transracial adoption plan revealed a lack of support from family and experiencing insensitive comments from the general public (de Haymes & Simon, 2003).

Given that perceived social support may be different in families who have adopted transracially, and these families may encounter additional challenges beyond those encountered by same-race couples, it may be particularly important to examine social support within a transracial context. Even though some families involve transracial adoptions, the adopted child may look more racially similar to their adoptive parents, for instance in families where the adoptive parents are White non-Hispanic and the adopted child is White, Hispanic. This similarity may allow the family to “pass” more so than an adoptive family where the racial differences are particularly evident, for instance in a family with White non-Hispanic adoptive parents and a Black, non-Hispanic child. The ability to look more similar to a biological family whose members are racially similar may have an impact on the amount of social support that the transracial adoptive family receives. Furthermore, since social support has implications for parenting self-efficacy, it is likely that this association may be different for families completing a transracial adoption. To date, parenting self-efficacy has not been explicitly investigated in transracial adoptive families. Therefore, this project specifically examined the association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy in families who have completed a transracial adoption plan.

There has been no research on the parenting self-efficacy specifically within a transracial adoption context, however only a few studies have examined parenting self-efficacy within the adoption context. One such study examined levels of parenting self-efficacy in adoptive and non-adoptive (biological) mothers and found no significant differences (Lansford, Cebello, Abbey, & Stewart, 2001). A recent study using the same sample which was used in this dissertation also found no differences in parenting self-efficacy among three different groups of adoptive parents (Knapp, 2011). Specifically, levels of parenting self-efficacy were compared for parents with

children in the home including at least one adopted child, parents with a biological child (or children) and first time adoptive parents with no significant differences found among these three groups.

Unfortunately, the two studies described above have a number of limitations that make the findings difficult to interpret in regard to this study. Specifically, the first study examined children ranging in age from middle childhood to adolescence (10-18 years) and a third of the children were adopted after their first birthday (Lansford et al., 2001). These two factors – the ages of the children and the timing of adoption - make it difficult to interpret the findings for at least three reasons. First, adolescents present a different set of parenting challenges than do children in middle childhood, thus making the wide age range challenging for considering parenting self-efficacy (Coleman & Karraker, 1998). It does not appear as though adoptive and non-adoptive families were matched on child's age. Second, there is a consistent finding in the literature that the age at which a child is adopted has an important impact on the child's subsequent functioning with children adopted later showing significantly more problems than children adopted as infants – 3 months or younger (Hawk & McCall, 2011; Mertz & McCall, 2011; Vandivere, & McKlindon, 2010). A third of the sample was adopted after age one or older and those children may present more parenting challenges than children adopted at younger ages. These challenges are likely to have an impact on parenting self-efficacy. Additionally, it is unknown when at least one third of the children were adopted. Given the limitations of this study it is still unclear how parenting self-efficacy may operate in the context of an adoption and more specifically within transracial adoptive families.

The second study (Knapp, 2011) examined parenting efficacy in three types of adoptive families – first time adoptive parents, parents with adopted and biological children, and parents of only biological children with no differentiation of transracial adoptive families and other families. Thus it is not possible to extrapolate to how the findings may differ for transracial adoptive

families, or adoptive and non-adoptive families more broadly. Neither of these studies helps to illuminate how parenting self-efficacy may operate for adoptive parents of toddlers and those in early childhood. Furthermore, the implications for social support were not examined in either of these studies. Overall, little is known about parenting self-efficacy in transracial adoptive families and more research is needed to advance our understanding of how this type of adoption may (or may not) be related to the development of feelings of self-efficacy in parenting. Therefore, in order to understand any potential developmental significance of the association of social support and parenting self-efficacy in transracial adoptive families, and to address the gap in the literature, this project examined the association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy in transracial adoptive families from two cohorts of participants – a younger cohort of children in toddlerhood and an older cohort of children in middle childhood.

Chapter 6

Cultural socialization processes in families with minority children

One of the challenges faced by parents in transracial adoptions is the socialization of minority children around issues of their race, culture and heritage. Parents, within the context of transracial adoption, need to make decisions about what they are going to teach children about their racial or ethnic heritage and history, and whether they promote, either unintentionally or intentionally, cultural customs and traditions (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes & Chen, 1999). Socialization practices around race fall within the broad category of racial socialization, that is, messages about racial and individual pride, expectations of discrimination, and intergroup relations (Coard & Sellers, 2005). Racial socialization encompasses three broad categories: cultural socialization – practices which teach children about their racial and ethnic heritage, preparing children for experience with prejudice – efforts to help children be aware of and cope with discrimination, and promoting racial mistrust - practices that stress mistrust in interracial interactions (Hughes & Chen, 1999). Another type of socialization, ethnic socialization refers to the overt and implied messages regarding intragroup messages about what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic group including the socialization of cultural values, cultural embeddedness, group history, celebrating group heritage, and promoting ethnic pride (Brown & Krishnakumar, 2007). As is evident, conceptualizations of both racial and ethnic socialization include exposure to cultural practices. Recent literature suggests that the term cultural socialization rather than racial or ethnic socialization be used to describe the processes of teaching children about their racial and ethnic histories and promoting cultural values (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006). Therefore, cultural socialization, one aspect of the broader conceptualization of racial and ethnic socialization, may be a more useful

concept to discuss when referring to how adopted minority children are socialized around cultural issues.

Within the adoption literature cultural socialization refers to the transmission of the child's birth culture, and not that of the adoptive parents (Lee, Grotevant, Hellerstedt, Gunnar, & the Minnesota International Adoption Project, 2006). More specifically the process includes exposing children to culturally relevant books, music, stories, historical or cultural figures, celebrating cultural holidays, and eating ethnic foods all related to the child's birth culture, and encouraging the child to speak in his/her native language (Hughes et al., 2006). There is a strong focus on the child's birth culture but it is likely that the adopted child will be exposed to elements of the adoptive parents' culture. Therefore, as a step toward understanding the significance of how adoptive parents socialize their child within the child's birth culture, this project focused on the cultural socialization process in families who have adopted transracially.

Cultural socialization is an essential process to understand because it has important implications for minority child development. There have been a number of studies examining the positive role of cultural socialization on the development of children's symbolic play (Cote & Bornstein, 2009), social competence (Feldman & Masalha, 2010), and psychological development (Yoon, 2001). The literature suggests that when parents engage in cultural socialization that children adjust better to the adoption (Andujo, 1988; Yoon, 2001). Specifically, they tend to have higher self-esteem and a sense of belongingness with their adoptive parents (Mohanty, Keoske, & Sales, 2006), and better racial identity development (Feigelman, 2000; Huh & Reid, 2000). In retrospective reports, Korean adult adoptees indicated that having role models from their own racial/ethnic group and attending diverse schools was an important aspect in their development. For this group of adoptees these cultural socialization practices were instrumental in creating a positive racial identity (McGinnis, Livingston, Ryan & Howard, 2009). Therefore,

cultural socialization is an important process to understand within an adoption context because it may have important implications for adopted children.

There is some evidence that adoptive parents of younger children are more likely to engage in cultural activities, for instance attending cultural events, at least in part because younger children may be more receptive to these activities (Steinberg & Hall, 2000). In contrast, research suggests that adolescent adoptees may not be as open to cultural socialization experiences and may be more interested in peer activities and acceptance (Freundlich & Lieberthal, 2000). Therefore, examining adoptive family engagement in cultural activities when the adopted child is very young – during infancy and toddlerhood – may be especially important for understanding the developmental significance of these activities and how they may impact the family in general. This project will attempt to address this question by examining cultural socialization practices in two groups or cohorts of children, a younger cohort and an older cohort.

Cultural socialization framework in transracial adoptive families

The manner in which parents who have adopted transracially socialize their children is likely to be associated with their sense of parenting self-efficacy. Having a greater sense of parenting self-efficacy may help to promote enculturation of the adopted children. More specifically, many parents who have adopted transracially make concerted efforts to teach their children about their birth culture. They do so by providing educational, social and cultural opportunities to promote ethnic and racial awareness, knowledge, values, behavior and pride, and encourage a positive ethnic identity (Lee, 2003). This type of approach is beneficial for adopted children because they are themselves more likely to show racial pride, and to participate in ethnic and cultural activities (Huh & Reid, 2000). It is possible that parents who have a greater sense of parenting self-efficacy may be more able to provide birth culture activities to their child.

Parents who feel less comfortable or have a lower sense of parenting self-efficacy in relation to cultural socialization may engage less in these types of practices. Within this context the adopted child is constantly exposed to the majority culture and the adoptive parents make minimal efforts to expose the child to his or her birth culture (Lee, 2003). One interpretation is that parents who adopt this approach may feel less comfortable or lack the skills to provide their child with birth culture related activities. This strategy may not only speak to parenting self-efficacy but has broader implications for family functioning. Higher reported rates of maladjustment (e.g., perceived racial stress, feelings of lack of belongingness, concerns about their racial appearance; DeBerry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996) and less ethnic identity (Huh & Reid, 2000) have been reported in children whose parents made minimal efforts to expose them to their birth culture. These findings are in comparison to other transracially adopted children in families where race is openly and sensitively discussed. Lower engagement in cultural socialization does not appear to be beneficial. However, it is characteristic of some transracial adoptions and may likely have implications for parenting self-efficacy.

Cultural socialization may have implications for parenting self-efficacy and/or may be influenced by parents' feelings of parenting self-efficacy. For instance, adoptive parents may minimize the salience of the child's race and ethnicity by not acknowledging any racial or ethnic differences between themselves and their child. But they may promote teaching the child how to protect him or herself against racially motivated incidents (Lee, 2003) because they possess the skills or are more comfortable in one area but not in the other. Cultural socialization is a crucial process to examine within the context of a family who has adopted transracially. There are clear implications for child, parent and family well-being, and cultural socialization may be related to parenting-self efficacy.

The influence of social support on cultural socialization in transracial adoptive families is an understudied area. It is likely that adoptive parents would seek help and advice from other

parents who have adopted transracially, friends, the adoption agency or the broader community. Research to date has indirectly addressed this association by reporting that adoptive parents have friends from the child's birth country (Friedlander, Larney, Skau, Hotaling, Cutting, & Schwam, 2000), participate in support groups and training programs, are living in or moving to culturally diverse neighborhoods (Friedlander, et al., 2000; Vonk & Angaran, 2001; Vonk, Lee, Crolley-Simic, 2010), and have spiritual or religious support (Crolley-Smith & Vonk, 2011). It is likely that the contacts that they have with others who are supportive would have a positive influence on their cultural socialization practices. Therefore, this project examined the influence of social support on cultural socialization in order to extend and contribute to the literature.

Cultural socialization and factors related to the adoption process

There are several factors associated with the adoption process that may have implications for cultural socialization and one of these is openness in the adoption. Openness is broadly defined as any contact between the biological parents, biological family, and adopted child and the adoptive parents (McRoy, Grotevant, & White, 1988). Early reports suggest two main reasons for advocating adoption openness (Berry, Cavazos-Dylla, Barth, & Needel, 1998). First, concern expressed by adoption professionals over potential adoptee identity confusion related to the concealment of adoption information. Second, birth mother involvement in the placement decision making process increased because of the decrease in infants available for adoption (Berry et al., 1998). Adoptive parents have a number of different reasons for choosing an open adoption – ranging from the belief that it is in the best interest of the child to a strategic approach by adoptive parents to increase their chances of successfully completing an adoption plan (Goldberg, Kinkler, Richardson, & Downing, 2011). In open adoptions, the identities of both adoptive and birth parents are known by each other but the frequency of contact between birth and adoptive families varies. The degree of openness is typically agreed upon by the biological

and adoptive parents early in the adoption but it may vary throughout the child's life. Adoption openness occurs on a spectrum and contact may evolve after the adoption plan is completed (Grotevant & McRoy, 1998). The amount and frequency of contact can be determined through a formal agreement and include, for instance the number of annual in-person visits and monthly letters. A less formal understanding of the type and frequency of contact may be agreed upon. Sharing of information may occur before and/or after the child is placed with the adoptive family (Berry et al., 1998). Open adoptions are currently the most common type of domestic adoption arrangement in the United States (Vandivere et al., 2009).

The amount and frequency of contact in an open adoption takes a variety of forms including formal agreements specifying the number of visits and other contact, as well as informal understandings about contact. Contact can take the form of letters, emails, sharing photos, in-person meetings, or communicating on social network websites. Sharing of information may occur before and/or after the child is placed with the adoptive family (Berry et al., 1998). Contact may not be consistent in type and frequency across the lifespan of the child.

Historically, closed adoptions which did not involve any contact between the birth and adoptive families were considered better for all participants in order to preserve the anonymity of all parties involved, and facilitate the grief process for the biological mother. However, recent research suggests that openness in adoption has positive implications for the birth mother, adopted child and adoptive parents. For instance, openness has been associated with positive adjustment post placement for the biological mother (Ge, Natsuaki, Martin, Leve, Neiderhiser, Shaw, Villareal et al., 2008; Henney, Ayers-Lopez, McRoy, & Grotevant, 2007; McRoy et al., 1988). Birth mothers involved in open adoptions may feel more secure about the child's well-being because of the direct contact they have with the adoptive family. This arrangement typically promotes trust that their child is in a safe and caring home (Pannor & Baran, 1984). Other important aspects of openness include positive implications for adopted child psychosocial

development (Berge, Green, Grotevant, & McRoy 2006; Wrobel, Ayer-Lopez, Grotevant, McRoy & Fitzpatrick, 1996) and adoptive parents are generally satisfied with the level of openness (Berry et al., 1998).

The limited research available on openness in transracial adoptions suggests that, in general, openness is less likely in this type of adoption when compared to a same-race adoption (Berry et al., 1998). Lower scores for openness are related to the perception of major differences between birth and adoptive parents (Grotevant, McRoy, & van Dulmen, 1998). In a transracial adoption the racial and cultural backgrounds between the biological and adoptive parents may stand out as one of these differences and contribute to lower reports of openness. This may limit the amount of information the adoptive parents have on the child's cultural background and may have implications for cultural socialization. This additional cultural and racial background information may then promote how adoptive parents culturally socialize their child.

It is unclear from the research to date (e.g., Berry et al., 1998) if transracial adoptions are initially closed, or overall just have a lower openness when compared to other types of adoptions. One factor that may impact the likelihood of openness in adoption is the child's age at adoption. Empirical research demonstrates that White parents who adopted Black children after toddlerhood are more likely to be in an adoption where there is no contact between the adoptive and biological families (Brooks & James, 2003). Brooks and James proposed that this type of adoption is more appealing for White adoptive parents if it is perceived as a way to eliminate the need for contact with the biological family. But, when there is some form of openness between the adoptive and biological families it is more likely to occur for children adopted as infants (Berry et al., 1998).

Research on adoptions more broadly suggest that adoption-related openness may be highest when children are young but may change over time to reflect the changing needs of both the adoptive and the biological parents (Grotevant & McRoy, 1998; Siegel, 2003). Openness in

adoption appears to be greatest during the toddlerhood period, around 2 to 3 years old (Berry, 1991). For instance in an adoption study with children age 2 to 4 years old, results showed that over that two year period contact between the adoptive and birth parents decreased or stopped (Berry et al., 1998). Consistent with those findings other reported studies show a significant decrease in the amount of contact between the adoptive parents and the biological parents between the child age of 2 to 4 years old (Frasch, Brooks, & Barth, 2000). By the time the adopted child is around 4 years old, communication between the adoptive and biological parents may decrease or stop completely (Berry et al., 1998). Communication may decline or stop for a variety of reasons including the birth parents wanting to move on with their lives, and increased geographic distance between the adoptive and birth families (Grotevant et al., 1998). Together, these findings indicate that child age at adoption may impact the amount of reported openness. The implications for openness on cultural socialization may be more relevant for children adopted as infants given that contact between the adoptive and biological parents is more likely in this situation. Therefore, in order to develop an understanding of the implications for openness on family processes it is important to examine openness for minority children who were adopted during infancy.

Chapter 7

Openness and adoptive family functioning

Recent research has demonstrated that openness in adoption has positive implications for the biological parents, adopted child and adoptive parents. For instance, openness has been associated with positive adjustment post placement for the biological mother (Ge et al., 2008; Henney et al., 2007; McRoy et al., 1988) as well as for the adoptive parents (Ge et al., 2008). Higher levels of adoption openness have been positively associated with better adopted child psychological outcomes (Berge et al., 2006) and adoptive parents' perceptions of the biological parents (Hollenstein, Leve, Scaramella, Milfort & Neiderhiser, 2003). Adolescent reports of openness in the adoption have been associated with positive identity development, and overall satisfaction with the adoption experience (Berge et al., 2006; Berry et al., 1998; McRoy & Grotevant, 1991; Sykes, 2001).

One particular element that appears to be important for openness is the adoptive parents' satisfaction with the adoption (Grotevant, McRoy, Elde, Fravel, 1994). Adoptive parents involved in adoptions with a high level of openness report an overall satisfaction with this type of adoption arrangement (Etter, 1993; Grotevant et al., 1994; McRoy et al., 1988). Those with lower openness may report dissatisfaction with the adoption (Grotevant et al., 1994). Adoptive parents also report higher levels of self-disclosure (Mendenhall, Grotevant, & McRoy, 1996), a more positive impression of their child's biological parents (Berry, 1991; Hollenstein et al., 2003) and feeling less fearful that the biological parents will attempt to reclaim the child (Grotevant & McRoy, 1997; Kraft, Palombo, Woods, Mitchell, & Schmidt, 1985; McRoy et al., 1988). It is likely that adoptive parents may feel comfortable engaging in contact with the biological parents given these findings.

Higher openness has implications for adoptive parents' perceptions and parenting of their children. They tend to rate their children's behavior more positively (Berry, 1991) and as being more competent and less deviant when compared to adoptive parents who completed a closed adoption (Lee & Twaite, 1997). One interpretation of these findings is that knowing more information about the child, facilitated through openness, may decrease any possible perceptions of deviant behavior. With this information adoptive parents may feel better informed and may have a greater understanding of what is needed to take care of their child and may feel that they possess the necessary skills to raise their child. Adoptive parents in more open adoptions also report feeling better equipped to answer questions that their child may have in the future about issues related to the adoption (Berry et al., 1998). It is likely that with greater openness the biological family may share more information such as the pregnancy history of the birth mother, and/or on the mental and physical health histories of the biological families, and the family's racial and cultural history. Thus, it is important to study openness given that it may have implications for family functioning and is a relatively underdeveloped area of research.

Predictors of cultural socialization

Cultural socialization is a multilayered process for non-minority adoptive parents who have not been raised within the birth culture of the child because it involves gaining knowledge about another culture, and learning how to transmit that knowledge in a developmentally appropriate way (Carstens & Julia, 2000). There is some evidence to show that adoptive parents begin to socialize their transracially adopted child around cultural issues as early as toddlerhood (Scoggs & Heitfield, 2001; Vonk et al., 2010). These include reading racial/ethnic books, participating in racial/ethnic holidays and preparing foods associated with the child's cultural

background (Vonk et al., 2010). Longitudinal research suggests that adoptive parents engaged in the cultural socialization of their child most during toddlerhood and childhood and became more ambivalent about engaging in cultural activities when the child entered adolescence (DeBerry et al., 1996). This could be in response to the adopted child's decreasing interest. As children mature they became less interested in cultural socialization (Simon & Alstein, 1987) and by adolescence they may be more interested in engaging in peer group activities (Meier, 1999) rather than attending cultural activities with their adoptive parents. Additionally, parents' own interest in cultural socialization practices diminishes over time (Bergquist, Campbell, & Unrau, 2003; DeBerry et al., 1996; Vonk et al., 2010). Adoptive parents expressed feeling awkward over time because they believed the minority and White perspectives to be incompatible (DeBerry et al., 1996). Hence, if we are to capture the developmental significance of cultural socialization on family process it is important that we assess the construct early in the development of the child. This project will be able to address this question by examining the cultural socialization practices of adoptive families in two cohorts of adopted children, a younger cohort and an older cohort.

Adoptive parents' engagement in cultural socialization practices is related to family racial/ethnic differences (Lee et al., 2006). They report that their child's appearance was a motivator to engage in cultural socialization (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). These practices may be more beneficial to transracial adoptees whose physical appearance, e.g., skin color and hair texture, are different to their adoptive parents because they are more likely to struggle with racial and ethnic issues than are same-race adoptees (Benson et al., 1994). Furthermore, reported phenotypic differences, e.g., skin and hair, are related to factors such as adoptive parents' racial awareness. Therefore, it may be important to examine if there are differences in adoptive parents' cultural socialization practices in families where the adopted child may be perceived as more racially similar to the adoptive parents than not.

Racial awareness refers to the attitudes and beliefs about the behavior and motivations of minority people (Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000). Some White adoptive parents completing a transracial adoption plan, who place minimal importance on race as a factor for socializing their child, have been found to have more ambivalent attitudes about cultural socialization (DeBerry et al., 1996). They are less likely to live in racially diverse communities, and less likely to make efforts to expose adopted children to what it means to grow up as a minority, for instance dealing with negative racial comments and situations, within this society (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983). On the other hand, adoptive parents who place a high premium on race related issues tend to participate in cultural activities related to the child's culture of origin, and to have conversations with their child(ren) about race related issues (Lee et al., 2006). Therefore, the literature supports that adoptive parents' own perspectives on race play an important role in how they socialize their children. Racial awareness may also lead adoptive parents to examine their beliefs about the importance of cultural socialization, which subsequently prompts action (Lee et al., 2006).

Adoptive parents' ability to communicate acceptance of racial difference promotes more positive family environments (Thomas & Tessler, 2007) and may also facilitate cultural socialization. As a result, it may be important to examine parents' own racial awareness to understand its implications for cultural socialization of their adopted child. Unfortunately, there is limited research on cultural socialization in adoptive families and even less on adoptive parents' racial awareness. Thus, to extend our understanding of the factors which affect the cultural socialization of children who have been transracially adopted this project will examine parents' racial awareness in relation to their cultural socialization practices. However, racial awareness may not be the only factor that can affect cultural socialization.

It is also possible that the reasons adoptive parents decided to pursue and complete a transracial adoption plan have implications for their involvement in cultural socialization (Zhang

& Lee, 2011). Adoptive parents' race-related child-centered reasons, such as the number of minority children waiting and in need of adopting have been associated with an increased likelihood of completing a transracial adoption plan more so than adult-centered reasons (e.g., struggles with infertility; Farr & Patterson, 2009). Understanding adoptive parents' motivations for adopting are likely to have important implications for how engaged they become in cultural socialization. More specifically, it is conceivable that motivations such as making one's family more diverse, and appreciation for cultural differences are related to greater cultural socialization, more so than reasons such as the length of time a family waited to adopt. However, the association between adoptive parents' reasons for adopting and their cultural socialization practices is a relatively understudied area. Therefore, this project will take into consideration reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan as a potential factor which could affect engagement in cultural socialization.

Chapter 8

The Current Study

As outlined above, families who have adopted transracially face several unique challenges that may have an impact on family functioning. The purpose of this study is to examine links among specific family processes within families who have completed transracial adoption plans. The study is framed within three conceptual models. The aims and hypotheses are indicated in the models and text below.

Aim 1. To examine the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization within transracial adoptive families.

Efficacy theory suggests that perceived self-efficacy beliefs can be constructed through verbal persuasion and vicarious experiences. Social support provided by family, friends and other supportive individuals in the form of learning and reinforcement for positive parenting, is one source through which these beliefs can be constructed. Thus, perceived social support should be related to parenting self-efficacy. The conceptual model illustrated by Figure 1-1 includes links among parenting self-efficacy, social support and cultural socialization.

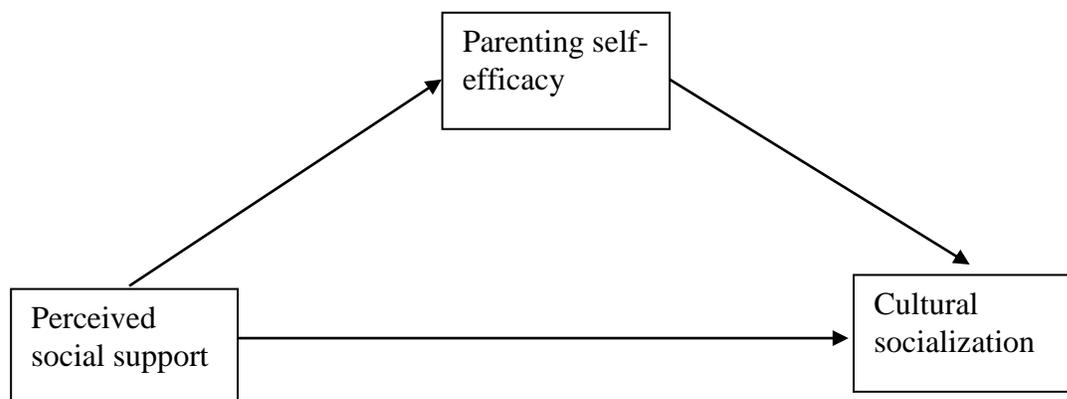


Figure 1-1. The association among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization.

Each pathway in the model represents a specific hypothesis. Hypothesis 1a is illustrated by the pathway (path a) between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy, Hypothesis 1b by the mediation pathway (path b) between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization. Although there may also be a direct effect of perceived social support and cultural socialization (path c) for mediation to be present, there is no specific hypothesis about this path.

Hypothesis 1a: Higher levels of perceived social support will be associated with higher levels of parenting self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 1b: The association between perceived social support and cultural socialization will be mediated by parenting self-efficacy.

Aim 2. To examine how the adoption-related factors of openness and satisfaction with the adoption are associated with cultural socialization in transracial adoptive families.

Openness in the adoption facilitates contact and the sharing of information between the birth and adoptive families. In this study, openness early in the adoption is considered, thus the pathway linking background information about the adopted child's family racial and cultural characteristics and adoptive parents' cultural socialization will be tested (Figure 2-1).

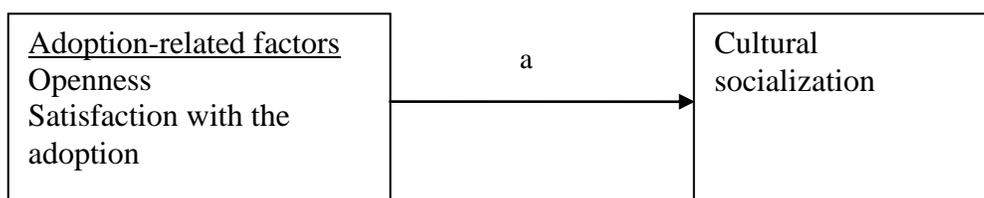


Figure 2-1. The association between openness and cultural socialization, and satisfaction with the adoption and cultural socialization.

Furthermore, satisfaction with the adoption is closely related to openness such that more openness is associated with more satisfaction with the adoption (Grotevant et al., 1994). Thus, it is likely that adoptive parents who have both high openness and high satisfaction with the adoption may be likely to engage in more cultural socialization. Based on these expectations the conceptual model illustrated in Figure 2-1 links adoption openness and satisfaction with cultural socialization via a direct path (path a).

Hypothesis 2: Greater openness and satisfaction in the adoption will be positively and directly associated with cultural socialization.

Aim 3. To examine how the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization is moderated by personal factors in transracial adoptive families.

This model examines how personal factors such as adoptive parents' reasons for completing a transracial adoption, adoptive parents' racial attitudes and adopted child's race/ethnicity may moderate the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization (Figure 3-1).

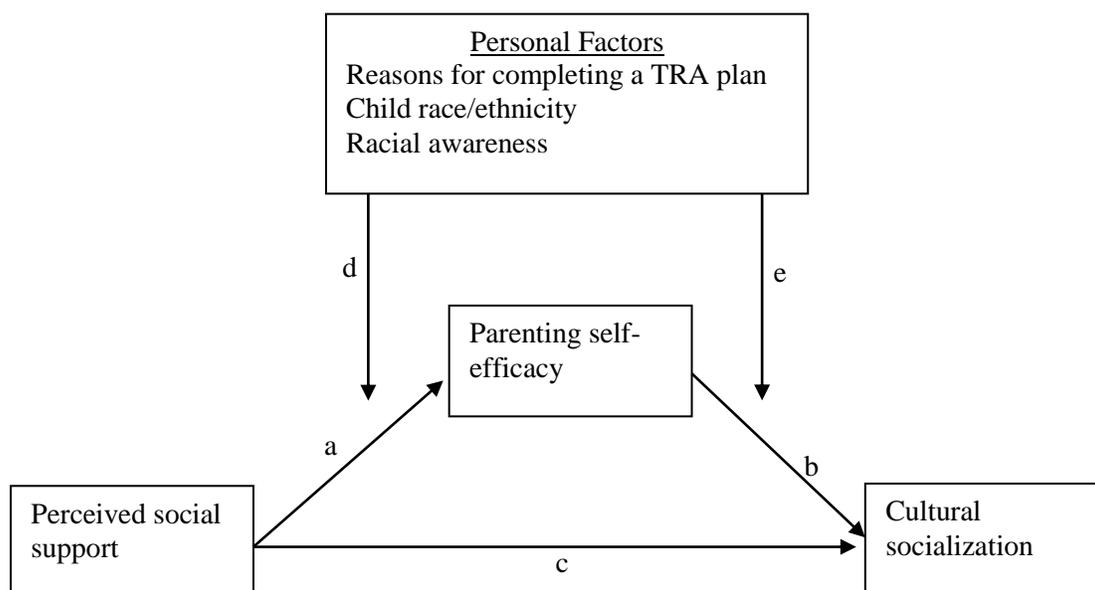


Figure 3-1. Pathways among perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy and parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization moderated by reasons for completing a transracial (TRA) adoption plan, child race/ethnicity and racial awareness.

Reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan and adoptive parents' attitudes toward race are hypothesized to alter the strength of the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization. Thus, the conceptual model illustrated by Figure 3-1 builds upon Figure 1-1 by including adoptive parents' personal factors as moderators of the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization.

Hypothesis 3a: The association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by reasons for completing a transracial adoption (paths d and e). Specifically, the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization will be stronger with greater child centered reasons for completing a transracial adoption.

Hypothesis 3b: Child race/ethnicity will moderate the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization (paths d and e). This is an exploratory hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3c: Associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by racial awareness with stronger associations when racial awareness is greater.

Chapter 9

Method

Participants

Study participants were drawn from the Early Growth and Development Study (EGDS), a prospective, longitudinal adoption study of adopted children, adoptive parents and birth parents designed to examine genetic and environmental influences on the social and emotional development of infants and toddlers (Leve et al., 2007). Participants from the EGDS were collected in two cohorts. EGDS Cohort I includes 361 sets of adoptive parents, an adopted child and at least one birth parent. The second cohort includes 200 sets of adopted children, adoptive parents and birth parents. Data from both cohorts were used. See Table 1-1 for full sample characteristics.

Table 1-1

Adult participant characteristics for all EGDS participants

	Birth Mother	Birth Father	Adoptive Mother	Adoptive Father
Age				
Mean (SD)	24.35 (6.03)	26.06 (7.75)	37.41(5.57)	38.25 (5.85)
Range	13.63 – 43.39	15.47 – 58.91	23.73 – 55.08	24.39 – 59.79
Race/ethnicity (%)				
White	71	70	92	90
African American	13	11	4	5
Hispanic/Latino	6	9	2	2
Multi-ethnic	5	5	1	1
Other	4	1	1	1
Marital status (%)				
Single never married	46	44	<1	0
Married	13	15	86	86
Living in a committed relationship	29	32	6	6
Education (%)				
High school degree	37	44	9	15
Trade school	13	12	4	6
2-yr college	9	6	7	5
4-yr college	8	5	41	39
Graduate program	<1	1	38	35
Median Income	\$15,000- \$25,000	\$25,000 - \$40,000	\$100,000 - \$125,000	

On average, adoptive parents for the full sample had been married for 18.16 years ($SD = 5.15$ years, range = 6.04 – 33.13 years). The mean age of child placement was 6 days ($SD = 12$ days, range = 0 – 91 days). The subsample of adoptive families who completed a transracial adoption plan includes 61 adoptive parents from Cohort I, and 51 adoptive parents from Cohort II for a total of 112 adoptive parents. Adoptive mothers who completed a transracial adoption plan were on average 36.17 years old, married (97.3%), and had at least a college education (99.1%). Adoptive fathers who completed a transracial adoption plan were on average 37.26 years old, married (90.2%), and had at least a college education (70.6%). The current study uses data from 80 participants who responded to the survey (37 from Cohort I and 43 from Cohort II; Table 2-1). Demographic characteristics of children involved in a transracial adoption are reported in Table 3-1. Sixty-one percent of children in transracial adoptive families were male.

Table 2-1

Adult participant characteristics for study participants

		Birth Mother	Birth Father	Adoptive Mother	Adoptive Father
Age	Mean (SD)	25.44 (6.23)	26.38 (8.69)	35.57 (5.70)	36.88 (5.18)
	Range	14.11 – 41.08	15.60 – 48.20	24.86 – 51.71	25.50 – 48.61
Race	White	28 (35%)	10 (48%)	78 (97.5%)	72 (90%)
	African American	44 (55%)	8 (38%)	-	-
	Asian	1 (1.3%)	-	-	-
	Multi-ethnic	6 (7.4%)	-	-	1 (1.3%)
	Other	1 (1.3%)	3 (14%)	2 (2.5%)	7 (8.7%)
Marital status	Single never married	49 (61.3%)	11 (55%)	1 (1.3%)	-
	Married	4 (5%)	2 (10%)	69 (86.2%)	66 (82.5%)
	Living in a committed relationship	21 (26.2%)	6 (30%)	3 (3.8%)	3 (3.8%)
	Other	6 (7.5%)	1 (5%)	7 (8.7%)	11 (13.7%)
Education	< High school diploma	17 (22.1%)	4 (22.2%)	-	1 (1.3%)
	G.E.D	10 (13%)	-	-	1 (1.3%)
	High school diploma	22 (28.6%)	8 (44.4%)	8 (10.4%)	11 (14.5%)
	Trade school	18 (23.3%)	2 (11.1%)	2 (2.6%)	4 (5.3%)
	2-yr college	6 (7.8%)	3 (16.7%)	9 (11.7%)	3 (3.9%)
	4-yr college	4 (5.2%)	1 (5.6%)	27 (35.1%)	34 (44.7%)
	Graduate program	-	-	31 (40.2%)	22 (29%)
Median Income		\$15,000 - \$25,000		\$100,000 - \$125,000	

Table 3-1

Child characteristics for those involved in transracial adoption

		Ethnicity			
		Hispanic or Latino		Non-Hispanic or Latino	
		(n)	%	(n)	%
Race					
	White	27	33.7	1	1.2
	African American	2	2.5	45	56.3
	American Ind/Alas Nat	-	-	-	-
	Nat Haw/ Pac Islander	-	-	1	1.3
	More than one race	4	5.0	-	-
Sex					
	Male (n = 49; 61%)				
	Female (n = 31; 39%)				

Procedure

Recruitment occurred between 2003 and 2009 from adoption agencies located in 10 states across the U.S. These agencies reflected a range of U.S. adoption agencies which included public, private, religious, and secular. Participating adoption agencies were provided an honorarium for their assistance with recruitment to help to compensate them for the time and effort involved. Eligibility requirements included a domestic adoption placement within 90 days postpartum, the infant was free of major medical complications such as prematurity or extensive surgeries, the infant was placed with a nonrelative adoptive family and both the birth and adoptive parents were able to read and understand English at an 8th grade level. The birth mother was recruited first, followed by the adoptive parents. The study participants were representative of the adoptive parent and birth parent populations that completed adoption plans at the participating agencies during the same period. A letter was sent to the adoptive family and then a recruiter contacted the family by telephone, reminded the family of the letter sent previously, and provided detailed information about the study and participation. Informed consent was obtained

from those agreeing to participate in the study. A more detailed description of the study design and sample characteristics is available in Leve et al (2010).

This study is focused on the adoptive families only, thus description of assessment procedures and timing refers only to those for adoptive families. In-person assessments were conducted with the adoptive family and were 2-3 hours long. These assessments included mailed self-report booklets, computer assisted personal interview questions, video-recorded child tasks, parent-child and adoptive parent interactions, and interviewer impressions. Interviewers completed a minimum of 40 hours of training, including a 2-day group session, pilot interviews and videotaped feedback prior to administering interviews with study participants. These assessments occurred when the child was 9, 18 and 27 months of age and brief telephone interviews occurred at approximately 6 month intervals. All interviews were audio or video recorded and a trained evaluator provided feedback for a random selection of 15% of the interviews to ensure adherence to the study's interview protocols. Assessments for birth and adoptive parents were conducted by separate teams of interviewers. Each team was blind to data collection by the other team. Participants were compensated for their time.

Adoptive parents who completed a transracial adoption were identified from the larger EGDS sample. To be included in this subsample both parents had to be of a different race than the adopted child. Because the recruitment of Cohort I spans 3.5 years and Cohort II spans approximately 2 years, and because the birthdates for children in each cohort are a minimum of 1.5 years apart, the timing of assessments for this study occurred during middle childhood for Cohort I and during late toddlerhood for Cohort II. Data collection for each cohort occurred at a different site. Adoptive parents completing a transracial adoption from Cohort I were mailed a package of measures at their 6.5 year assessment and invited to participate in additional data collection as part of this dissertation study associated with the EGDS project. Only one adoptive parent needed to complete the measures. The sex of the adoptive parent was not collected as part

of this mailed assessment. Data from Cohort II were collected at the end of the 36-month telephone interview with adoptive parents conducted by a trained research assistant. Again, either the adoptive mother or the adoptive father needed to complete the survey. The sex of the adoptive parent completing the measure was recorded and in most instances, 79%, the adoptive mother completed the questionnaires. It is likely that a similar pattern exists in Cohort I as adoptive mothers may be more likely to be the primary caretakers. The term adoptive mother will be used for measures where either adoptive parent could have completed the survey. Parents were told that these questions were part of a study being conducted by a graduate student associated with the project and should take about 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaires were administered to the adoptive mother or adoptive father once consent was obtained. Parents from both cohorts were paid \$25 for their time spent completing these additional questionnaires. IRB approval (IRB # 26790) was granted by the Office of Research Protection at Penn State for all procedures in this study.

Measures

Demographic information. Participants provided demographic information via self-report for age, race, education, income, occupation, and the number of people living in the home at the time of the adoption placement at the beginning of the study. The race of the child was determined by the race/ethnicity of both of the birth parents and was reported by the birth mother. If the child's race/ethnicity did not match either of the adoptive parents, this was considered a transracial adoption.

Parenting self-efficacy. Each adoptive parent completed the parenting efficacy scale (Teti & Gelfand, 1991) in a mailed questionnaire package at the 27-month assessment. This is a 10-item measure designed to assess parents' feelings of self-efficacy. Mothers' reports of parenting self-

efficacy were used for the current project since mothers in this study were more likely to be the primary caretakers of children. Nine items address parents' feelings of efficacy in relation to specific domains of care. The last item assessed parents' global feelings of efficacy in parenting. Items include "How well can you get your baby to pay attention to you?" and "In general how good of a parent do you feel you are?" With the exception of item 2, items were scored on a 4-point scale (1 = *Not good at all* to 4 = *Very good*). Item 2 ranges from "I don't understand my baby/child" to "I understand my baby/child all of the time." Details on concurrent validity were previously established with a strong negative correlation between this measure and the Parenting Stress Index Sense of Competency Scale (Teti & Gelfand, 1991). Higher scores indicated greater parenting self-efficacy. Cronbachs alpha for adoptive mothers for this study is .73.

Social support. The General Life Satisfaction Questionnaire (Crnic, 1983) was administered via a mailed questionnaire package prior to the 9-month assessment. This questionnaire consists of 22 items. The respondents indicated their level of satisfaction with several potential sources of social support, including neighbors, friends or family, organized groups, and intimate relationships on a 4-point scale (1 = *Very dissatisfied* to 4 = *Very satisfied*). Items include, "How much satisfaction do you get from your friendships?" and "How satisfied are you with this (support from organized groups) situation." Higher scores indicated greater satisfaction with social support. Adoptive mother reports were used for this study. The reliability of this measure has been established previously (Kessler, Kendler, Heath, Neale, & Eaves, 1992; Crnic, 1983), however no validity data are available. Alpha within the current study (α is .79) is consistent with those reported previously (α is .81 for adoptive mothers).

Cultural socialization. One parent, either the adoptive mother or adoptive father completed the Cultural Activities with Child(ren) measure (Paulsen & Merighi, 2009) at the end of the 36-

month post-placement telephone interview (Cohort II) or at the 6.5 year assessment (Cohort I; Appendix A). Either the adoptive mother or adoptive father completed the survey. The majority of respondents were mothers (79% for the data available from Cohort II) therefore for simplicity the findings will be described as adoptive mother. The cultural socialization scale consists of 21 items that are designed to capture family participation in cultural activities or in which adoptive parents involved their child. Items include, “Cooking foods traditional to your child’s birth culture” and “Participating in local culture groups/events related to your child’s birth culture.” Items are scored on a 5-point scale (1 = *Never* to 5 = *At least once a week*). Higher scores indicated greater engagement in cultural socialization. In previous studies, the measure demonstrated high reliability .90 but no validity information is available (Paulsen & Merighi, 2009). Cronbachs alpha for the current sample was .93.

Openness. The openness in the adoption is measured using an aggregated score of perceived openness, contact, and knowledge scores from each informant (both adoptive parents and birth mother) from the second in-person assessment at child age 18 months. This measurement strategy is consistent with Grotevant and McRoy’s (1998) conceptualization of openness as a spectrum of contact and communication between adoptive family and the birth parents. Complete details for the creation of this aggregate score and convergent validity are available in Ge et al (2008). Adoptive and birth parents responded to items such as, “How open would you describe the adoption right now?” and “How often have you sent photos of the child to the birth mother?” Cronbachs alpha was .74 for data collected at 18 months.

Attitudes toward race. One parent, either the adoptive mother or adoptive father completed the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000). Adoptive parents in Cohort I completed this measure via mail at their 6.5 year assessment, and adoptive parents in Cohort II

completed the measure at the end of the 36-month telephone interview. The majority of respondents were mothers in Cohort II so the findings will be described as adoptive mother. The CoBRAS is 20-item scale that measures the participant's opinions on the importance and impact of race and racial issues in U.S. society. Items include "It is important that people begin to think of themselves as Americans and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American" and "Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.". Items are scored on a 6-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 6 = *Strongly agree*) with higher scores indicating a greater belief in racial and gender intolerance and racial prejudice. In previous research reliability for the CoBRAS ranged from .70 to .86, and concurrent and criterion-related validity scores are reported (Neville et al., 2000; Chen, LePhuoc, Guzman, Rude, & Dodd, 2006; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy & Hart, 2008). Reliability for this study was .91.

Transracial adoption reasons. The reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan were assessed with a 14-item questionnaire designed for this study by the author of this study, her advisor and members of the EGDS team (Appendix B). Twelve items were on a Likert scale, and two items were free response. Adoptive parents in Cohort I completed this measure via mail at their 6.5 year assessment, and adoptive parents in Cohort II completed the measure at the end of the 36-month telephone interview. The majority of respondents are mothers (79% - based on the data from Cohort II) therefore the findings will be described as adoptive mother. The twelve items on the Likert type scale include, "We/I knew that there was a greater need for parents to adopt minority children" and "We/I know other adoptive parents with a transracially adopted child(ren)" and are scored on a 5-point scale (1= *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate more child-centered reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan. No validity information is available for this measure as yet. Cronbachs alpha was .66. The two free response items include, "Please tell us about any other reason(s) you chose to adopt

transracially,” and “What do you wish you knew about transracial adoption before you made the decision to adopt transracially?”

Satisfaction with the adoption process. The literature has established that the level of openness is associated with satisfaction with the adoption process (Grotevant et al., 1994). Adoptive parents completed 4 items which asked about their satisfaction with the adoption process during the 6-month telephone interview. Items include, “How satisfied are you with the amount of information you have about the birth mother” and “How satisfied are you with the amount of information you have about the birth father” and are scored on a 4-point scale (1 = *Very satisfied* to 4 = *Very dissatisfied*). Items are reversed coded so that higher scores indicate greater satisfaction with the adoption process. Adoptive mother report will be used for this study. No validity information is available. Cronbachs alpha was .73 for adoptive mothers.

Data Analytic Plan

Preliminary data analyses were conducted on the entire sample, then by cohort to investigate developmental differences. Linear hierarchical multiple regressions were used to test hypotheses associated with Aim 1 and 2. A general path analytic framework was used to test the moderated mediation hypotheses associated with Aim 3 in accordance with the recommendations of Edwards and Lambert (2007) since moderated mediation can occur on more than one path in the model (Preacher, Rucker & Hayes, 2007). The model fit was assessed with three indices. First, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) addresses how likely it is that the data fit the model reasonably well and values of .08 or less reflect an acceptable fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). Second, the comparative fit index (CFI), which compares the fit of the model against the null model, and values of .90 or higher reflect a good fit (Bentler, 1990). Third, the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) provides an estimation of model fit which takes into account the

number of parameters, and values greater than .90 represent an acceptable fit (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980). If the overall pattern of fit indices suggests adequate fit for the CFI, and the TLI but not the RMSEA then the model will be judged to have an acceptable fit (Graham, 2004).

Bootstrapping was used to obtain confidence limits for the indirect effects since it is the most reasonable method (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007; Preacher & Hayes, 2008) and is a way to test for significance (MacKinnon et al., 2007). The use of bootstrapping is an appropriate approach and has reasonable control over Type I errors (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

Power Analyses

G*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) the online power calculator was used to calculate power for the logistic regressions. In order to achieve a .95 power ($1 - \beta$ error probability), a medium effect size (.30), with a minimum of two predictors a total sample size of 50 is needed (Faul et al., 2009). Therefore, 80 participants will be sufficient to achieve adequate power.

A path analytic framework was used to assess moderated mediation. One assumption of structural equation modeling theory is that confidence can be determined in the distribution of the obtained test statistics and standard errors once the total sample size is large enough (Bollen, 1989). Estimation guidelines suggest that a minimum of 10 participants per parameter within a path analysis would result in a sufficient sample size and power (Kline, 2005). Therefore, a total sample size of $N = 80$ for families who adopted transracially will be sufficient to achieve adequate power. Consistent with other research (e.g., D'Lima, Pearson, & Kelley, 2012; Greenbaum, Mawritz, & Eissa, 2012) results using bootstrapping will be presented.

Chapter 10

Results

In this section the descriptive statistics, including results of analyses examining potential sample and cohort effects, are reported first. Next, correlations among adopted child demographic characteristics and constructs of interest are presented. Preliminary analyses describing cohort differences, child demographic characteristics based on adoptive parent perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization are then presented. Finally, analyses that address the specific aims are described.

Descriptive analyses

Adoptive parents who responded to the surveys on transracial adoption and cultural socialization and those who did not were compared across demographic variables (age, education, income, employment status) and the study variables (perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy, cultural socialization, openness, satisfaction with the adoption) to examine potential biases in responders and non-responders. Compared with the total number of families who adopted transracially (112) the 80 adoptive parents who responded to the survey, who were most often mothers, were not significantly different in age ($t(109) = 1.65, n.s.$), level of education ($\chi^2(4) = 1.48, n.s.$), income ($\chi^2(10) = 4.68, n.s.$) and employment status ($\chi^2(7) = 8.43, n.s.$). For the study variables, adoptive parents who participated in this project were not significantly different from those who did not participate on scores of parenting self-efficacy ($t(92) = 1.64, n.s.$), perceived social support ($t(106) = .17, n.s.$), openness ($t(104) = 1.90, n.s.$) and satisfaction with the adoption ($t(104) = .62, n.s.$). Descriptive statistics for all constructs of interest are presented in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1

Means and standard deviations among study variables

N	Total 80		Cohort I 37		Cohort II 43	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Adoptive mother age	35.58	5.70	36.50	5.71	34.74	5.64
Perceived social support	3.52	.34	3.54	.30	3.51	.37
Parenting self-efficacy ^a	33.15	2.60	33.80	2.55	32.56	2.54
Cultural socialization	66.24	23.40	67.89	24.15	64.81	21.97
Openness	-.44	.96	-.57	.99	-.33	.93
Satisfaction with the adoption	13.58	2.94	13.47	2.86	13.68	3.05
Racial awareness	56.04	15.87	54.65	15.96	57.23	15.90
Reasons for adopting transracially	47.00	5.77	46.97	6.61	46.72	5.03

Note. ^aCohort I significantly different from Cohort II

I examined mean differences of perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization by cohort, adopted child sex and adopted child race/ethnicity to test for cohort, sex and race/ethnicity differences. For perceived social support, there were no significant differences between cohorts ($t(76) = .47, n.s.$) or child sex ($t(76) = -.29, n.s.$). However, significant differences for social support emerged based on child race/ethnicity ($t(69) = -2.63, p < .01$) when comparing White, Hispanic and Black, non-Hispanic adopted children. Specifically, adoptive parents reported greater perceived social support for transracial adoptions involving Black, non-Hispanic children ($M = 3.60, SD = .32$) when compared to White Hispanic children ($M = 3.39, SD = .33$). With respect to parenting self-efficacy, there were significant differences among groups based on cohort. That is, adoptive parents of children in Cohort I (older children)

perceived greater levels parenting self-efficacy when compared to adoptive parents Cohort II ($t(72) = 2.08, p < .05$). No differences were found in parenting self-efficacy by adopted child sex ($t(72) = -.74, n.s.$) nor based on adopted child race/ethnicity between the two larger groups, White, Hispanic and Black, non-Hispanic ($t(66) = -1.25, n.s.$).

Analyses for cultural socialization revealed no significant group differences based upon cohort ($t(78) = .584, n.s.$). However there were significant sex differences in cultural socialization practices ($t(78) = -2.47, p < .05$). Adoptive parents of girls reported engaging in more cultural socialization practices ($M = 74.10, SD = 25.33$), than adoptive parents of boys ($M = 61.27; SD = 20.85$). There were also significant differences in the cultural socialization practices of adoptive parents of White, Hispanic and of Black, non-Hispanic children ($t(70) = -3.80, p < .01$). Adoptive parents of Black, non-Hispanic children reported engaging in more cultural socialization practices ($M = 73.49, SD = 18.99$) when compared to adoptive parents of White, Hispanic children ($M = 54.30, SD = 23.46$). Further analyses were performed in an effort to clarify these findings. For instance, all adoptive parents were asked about their similarity, and the other adoptive parent's similarity, to their child in terms of race/ethnicity. The adoptive parent who answered the question reported less similarity with their Black, non-Hispanic children when compared to their White, Hispanic children ($t(32) = -4.83, p < .00$). These adoptive parents also reported less similarity between the other adoptive parent and their Black, non-Hispanic children when compared to their White, Hispanic children ($t(30) = -6.31, p < .00$).

Preliminary analyses

Correlations among study variables. Correlations among study variables are presented in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1
Correlations among study variables for sample

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Child sex		.08	-.01	.03	.09	.27*	-.09	.10	-.11	.13
2. Child race/ethnicity			-.01	.21	.25*	.21	.12	.12	.00	.20
3. Adoptive mother age				-.14	.06	.02	-.05	-.02	-.25*	.16
4. Perceived social support					.24*	.09	.13	-.07	-.01	.09
5. Parenting self-efficacy						.09	.17	-.03	.05	.07
6. Cultural socialization							-.08	.07	-.17	.29*
7. Openness								.38**	-.03	.08
8. Satisfaction with the adoption									.21	.02
9. Racial awareness										-.05
10. Reasons for adopting transracially										

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Perceived social support was positively correlated with parenting self-efficacy. Specifically, higher levels of perceived social support were related to higher levels of parenting self-efficacy. Cultural socialization was positively related to reasons for adopting transracially, meaning that greater engagement in cultural socialization was associated with more child-centered reasons for adopting transracially. Greater openness in the adoption was associated with higher satisfaction with the adoption.

Correlations were also examined separately by cohort to allow for cohort or child age differences. These correlations are presented in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1
Correlations among study variables by cohort

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Child sex		.00	-.24	.14	.25	.08	.10	.26	-.19	.08
2. Child race/ethnicity	.14		-.05	.13	.19	.30	.17	.08	.09	.34*
3. Adoptive mother age	.19	.02		-.34*	.13	.14	.09	-.02	-.22	-.08
4. Perceived social support	-.05	.26	-.02		.30	.03	-.20	-.05	.31	-.17
5. Parenting self-efficacy	-.09	.31	-.08	.20		.34*	.03	.00	-.12	.04
6. Cultural socialization	.46**	.15	-.11	.14	-.17		.18	.03	-.25	.44**
7. Openness	-.28	.08	-.16	.40*	.41*	-.34*		.39*	-.14	.28
8. Satisfaction with the adoption	-.03	.15	-.01	-.07	.07	.10	.37*		.20	.24
9. Racial awareness	-.04	-.06	-.25	-.23	.24	-.09	.06	.20		.17
10. Reasons for adopting transracially	.18	.09	.45**	.33*	.09	.09	-.15	-.23	-.29	

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Note. Cohort I is above the diagonal and Cohort II is below the diagonal

For Cohort I only (the older children), parenting self-efficacy was positively correlated with cultural socialization. For Cohort II only (the younger children), perceived social support was positively associated with greater openness, more child-centered reasons for adopting transracially, higher levels of parenting self-efficacy was related to greater openness, and, finally, cultural socialization was negatively related to openness. Openness and satisfaction with the

adoption was the only correlation that was significant and in the same direction across both cohorts. There were no other significant correlations that emerged as identical across cohorts. There was no general pattern in the direction of the non-significant correlations between the two cohorts. That is, the non-significant correlations were not in the same directions in both cohorts.

Correlations among adopted child-related characteristics. Child sex was positively correlated with adoptive parent cultural socialization (Table 5-1). That is, adoptive parents with female children were more likely to engage in cultural socialization practices. Child race/ethnicity was also positively associated with parenting self-efficacy (Table 5-1). Greater parenting self-efficacy was associated with having a Black, non-Hispanic child. Closer examination of the correlations by cohort revealed that child race/ethnicity was positively associated with reasons for adopting transracially for Cohort I (Table 6-1). Specifically, adopting a Black, non-Hispanic child was associated with more child-centered reasons for adopting.

Results from Hypothesis Testing

Results associated with each specific aim will be presented in this section. Linear hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to test hypotheses associated with both Aim 1 and Aim 2. Hypotheses associated with Aim 3 were examined with an approach combining moderation and mediation (Preacher et al., 2007) using Mplus software (Muthén & Muthén, 2010).

Hypothesis 1a: Higher levels of perceived social support will be associated with higher levels of parenting self-efficacy

Parenting self-efficacy was entered as the dependent variable, child age was entered in Block 1 and perceived social support was entered in Block 2 of the regression. This hypothesis was supported as perceived social support predicted parenting self-efficacy (Figure 1-1, path a).

Specifically, adoptive parents who perceived greater social support felt greater parenting self-efficacy ($\beta = 1.79, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 1b: The association between perceived social support and cultural socialization will be mediated by parenting self-efficacy

Next, the hypothesized mediation of the association between perceived social support and cultural socialization by parenting self-efficacy was tested. Three conditions must be satisfied for mediation to exist using the causal steps approach according to Barron and Kenny (1986). First, perceived social support, the independent variable, must be related to parenting self-efficacy, the mediator. Second, perceived social support must be related to cultural socialization, the dependent variable. Finally, the relation between perceived social support and cultural socialization will decrease and/or become non-significant when parenting self-efficacy (the mediator) is included (Figure 1-1). However, there are several concerns with this method (see MacKinnon et al., 2007 for review). More recent research suggests that the relation between the independent variable, perceived social support and the dependent variable, cultural socialization does not need to be significant for mediation to exist (Hayes, 2009). If the path from the independent variable, perceived social support to the mediator, parenting self-efficacy is significant, and the path from the mediator, parenting self-efficacy to the dependent variable, cultural socialization is also significant, then mediation exists (MacKinnon et al., 2007). The variables were examined at the bivariate level first to determine if any associations were present. As shown in Table 5-1, perceived social support was positively related to parenting self-efficacy which satisfies the first condition according to MacKinnon et al. (2007; Figure 1-1, path a). Perceived social support was significantly linked with parenting self-efficacy, with more social support associated with more parenting self-efficacy ($\beta = 1.79, p < .05$). Parenting self-efficacy was not associated with cultural socialization ($\beta = .81, n.s.$; Figure 1-1, path b). Given that the second condition necessary for mediation to exist, parenting self-efficacy being associated with

cultural socialization, did not occur it was unlikely that mediation took place. However, in order to fully explore Hypothesis 1b, cultural socialization was entered as the dependent variable, parenting self-efficacy was entered in Block 1, and social support was entered in Block 2. This hypothesis was not supported as parenting self-efficacy did not mediate the relation between perceived social support and cultural socialization ($\beta = 4.67, n.s.$; Figure 1-1, path c). There was also no association between perceived social support and cultural socialization ($\beta = 6.38, n.s.$). Analyses examining these associations separately by cohort were consistent with those for the full sample. There was no evidence that parenting self-efficacy mediated the association between perceived social support and cultural socialization in either Cohort I ($\beta = -11.46, n.s.$) or Cohort II ($\beta = 12.86, n.s.$). Parenting self-efficacy did, however, positively predict cultural socialization in Cohort I only ($\beta = 3.50, p < .05$). Thus, parents in Cohort I who felt a higher sense of parenting self-efficacy engaged in more cultural socialization with their adopted child. Finally, when the associations were examined by child race/ethnicity and child sex the findings were consistent with no evidence of mediation by parenting self-efficacy of the association between perceived social support and cultural socialization (White, Hispanic: $\beta = .77, n.s.$; Black, non-Hispanic: $\beta = .49, n.s.$; Male: $\beta = 1.72, n.s.$; Female: $\beta = -1.54, n.s.$).

Hypothesis 2: Greater openness and satisfaction in the adoption will be positively and directly associated with cultural socialization

Cultural socialization was entered as the dependent variable, child sex was entered in Block 1 as a control variable, and openness was entered in Block 2. This hypothesis was not supported in regard to openness in the adoption ($\beta = -1.31, n.s.$). Specifically, openness was not associated with cultural socialization (Figure 2-1, path a) and when examining the associations by cohort. The hypothesis that greater satisfaction with the adoption will be positively associated with cultural socialization was then examined. Cultural socialization was entered as the dependent variable, child sex was entered in Block 1 as the control variable, and satisfaction with

the adoption was entered in Block 2. Consistent with the findings for openness, satisfaction with the adoption was not related to adoptive parent's engagement in cultural socialization ($\beta = .30$, *n.s.*; Figure 2-1, path a) and there were no cohort differences in these findings.

Hypothesis 3a: The association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by reasons for completing a transracial adoption

The approach suggested by Preacher et al (2007) which combines mediation and moderation into the same analyses was used to test the hypothesis that the association among perceived social support, parenting-self efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan. This approach demonstrates the effects of the mediator on the dependent variable across different levels of the moderator, reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan. The independent variable, perceived social support, the dependent variable, cultural socialization, the mediator, parenting self-efficacy and the moderator, reasons for completing a transracial adoption were entered in accordance with the script provided by Preacher et al (2007). Using a general path analytic framework the moderator was tested on paths d and e to test for potential effects (Figure 3-1) in accordance with the recommendations by Edwards and Lambert (2007). Variables were centered prior to entry into the model for moderation to increase the interpretability of findings (Aiken & West, 1991) and analyses were performed using Mplus software (Muthén & Muthén, 2010).

Moderated mediation was first tested on the path between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy (Figure 3-1, path d). This model fit the data well (Table 7-1, model 1) however, there was no evidence of moderation by reasons for adopting transracially for the association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy (Table 8-1, model 1).

Table 7-1
Fit statistics for models associated with Aim 3

Model	Path(s)	Moderator	Chi-square	DF	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
1	d	Reasons for completing a	12.99*	7	1.00	1.00	.00
2	e	transracial adoption	315.67***	7	1.00	1.00	.00
3	d	Child race/ethnicity	24.55***	7	1.00	1.00	.00
4	e		254.34***	7	1.00	1.00	.00
5	d	Racial awareness	10.11***	7	1.00	1.00	.00
6	e		185.22***	7	1.00	1.00	.00

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .10$

Table 8-1
Path estimates for moderated mediation of the association among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization

Model	Moderator	Path	β	SE	95% Confidence interval	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
1	Reasons for completing a	d	.33	.09	-1.43	2.08
2	transracial adoption	e	.17**	.07	.04	.30
3	Child race/ethnicity	d	-.01	.29	-.07	.06
4		e	.02	.04	-.05	.11
5	Racial awareness	d	2.62	2.46	-1.47	8.29
6		e	-.14	.13	-.28	.01

Note. Unstandardized betas are presented. All parameter estimates are based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples. The 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval is presented.

** $p < .01$

Next the path between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization was examined.

Again, the model fit the data well (Table 7-1, model 2). Reasons for adopting transracially significantly moderated the association between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization (Table 8-1, model 2). This suggests that parents with greater child-centered reasons for adopting and those who reported higher levels of parenting self-efficacy engaged in more cultural

socialization practices (Figure 4-1). There was also a main effect for reasons for adopting transracially ($\beta = .94, p < .05$) suggesting that more child-centered reasons for adopting transracially were associated with more cultural socialization.

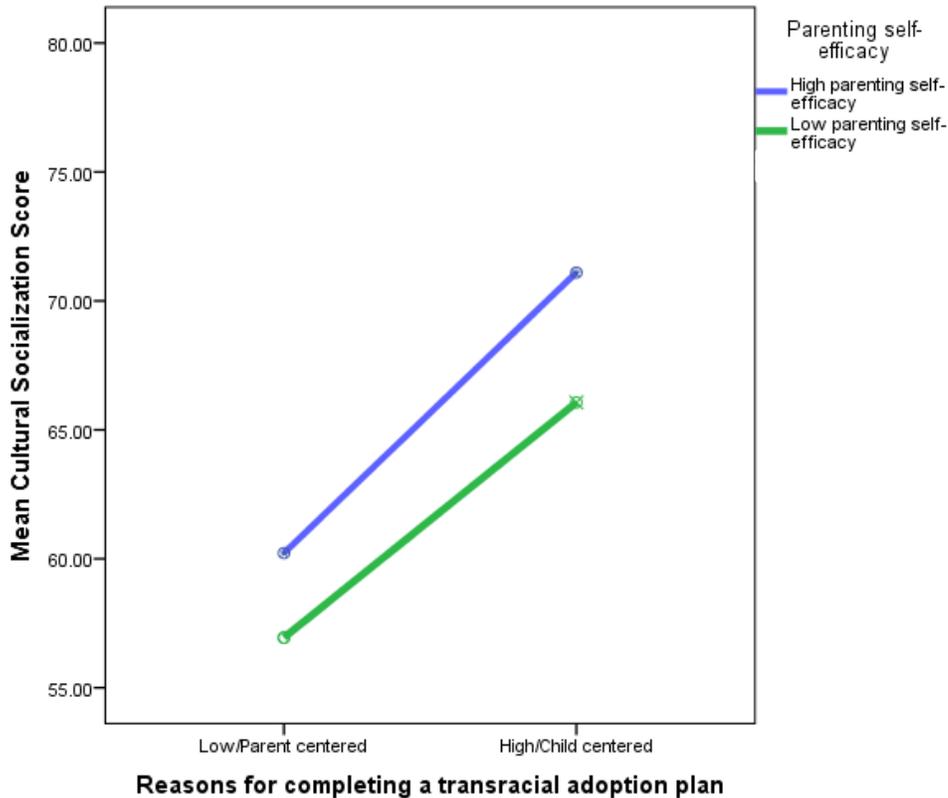


Figure 4-1. Interaction of parenting self-efficacy and reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan predicting cultural socialization.

Hypothesis 3b: Child race will moderate the association among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization

This hypothesis was tested using the same approach as was used for testing Hypothesis 3a, above. Moderated mediation was first tested on the path linking perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy (Figure 3-1, path d). Fit statistics suggest a good fit (Table 7-1, model 3), but child race/ethnicity did not significantly moderate this path (Table 8-1, model 3). The path

between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization was next examined (Figure 3-1, path e). Again, the model fit the data well (Table 7-1, model 4), but there was no evidence of moderation by child race/ethnicity (Table 8-1, model 4).

Hypothesis 3c: Associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by racial awareness

Finally, the hypothesis that the association among perceived social support, parenting-self efficacy and cultural socialization will be moderated by racial awareness was tested using the same approach as above. Moderated mediation was first tested on the path between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy (Figure 3-1, path d). Fit indices indicate a good fit (Table 7-1, model 5) however, racial awareness did not significantly moderate this path (Table 8-1, model 5). The path between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization was tested next (Figure 3-1, path e). The model fit the data well (Table 7-1, model 6), but racial awareness did not moderate the association between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization (Table 8-1, model 6).

Chapter 11

Discussion

Family processes in transracial adoptive families can differ from those in biological and other adoptive families because of the challenges they can encounter. The purpose of this study was to examine relations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy, cultural socialization and specific adoption and personal factors which impact family functioning and well-being within families who have completed transracial adoption plans. Perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and socialization practices are important characteristics of transracial adoptive family functioning and well-being given that adoptive parents face many unique challenges which can be stressful. One of the challenges is that adoptive parents involved in a transracial adoption can encounter more racial and ethnic hostility (Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Suter 2008; Tessler et al., 1999). As such these circumstances can be stressful to adoptive parents and may increase their need for adequate social support in particular in transracial adoptions where controversy sounds racial and social issues and cultural ideals that may stigmatize these adoptive families. Overall, few clear associations were found among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization. The association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy was evident. There was evidence of a link between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization however this was only found for Cohort I. These findings and their implications are discussed in more detail below. Quotes from participating parents are also provided when relevant to help to illustrate and emphasize particular aspects of the findings.

Associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization

The first aim of this study was to examine the associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization within families who completed a transracial adoption. First, I explored the link between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy. This aim was informed by efficacy theory which suggests that perceived self-efficacy beliefs can be created through verbal persuasion and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1997). Given that a relation exists between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy it was hypothesized that perceived social support would be positively related to parenting self-efficacy. This hypothesis was supported such that parents who perceived greater social support also reported higher parenting self-efficacy. This study is the first of its kind to demonstrate a positive association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy. This finding is consistent with the literature on the positive association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy in biological families (Coleman & Karraker, 1998; Cutrona & Troutman, 1986). It is likely that support from the other adoptive parent, family and friends positively contribute to the responding parent's parenting self-efficacy beliefs through a variety of pathways as discussed below.

Social support influences several child and family developmental outcomes, is an important element in family functioning and is therefore a crucial component in understanding the development and functioning of adoptive families. Social support through verbal persuasions can be provided in the form of reinforcing, encouraging, supportive statements from family and friends. Vicarious experiences can be manifested though, for instance, observing other adoptive parents parenting their children, or attending adoption-related classes and workshops. The literature suggests that social support from spouses, family members, and friends is positively associated with levels of parenting self-efficacy (Elder, Eccles, Ardel, & Lord, 1995; Suzuki,

Holloway, Yamamoto, & Mindnich, 2009) and with a more positive self-view as a parent (Cochran & Niego, 1995). For example, women who receive sufficient support from their spouses are likely to report greater parenting self-efficacy when compared to women who do not (Cochran & Niego, 1995). Social support also has implications for parenting. Parents are also more likely to demonstrate more positive behaviors toward their children when they perceive adequate amounts of support (Crnic & Greenberg, 1987). Supportive statements from friends and family concerning child-rearing skills can be validating, and this has direct implications for parenting self-efficacy. Emotional support can also reinforce parenting self-efficacy by helping mothers negotiate feelings associated with parenting (Cobb, 1976). The literature on perceived social support suggests that individuals develop different working models based on the likelihood of receiving support from particular individuals rather than having one dominant working model of all relationships (Pierce, Baldwin, & Lydon, 1997). For instance, adoptive parents' own families have been identified as one of the most important sources of support (Bird, Peterson, & Miller, 2002). However, some adoptive parents may be less likely to receive support from their own families in comparison to biological parents, in particular when they complete a transracial adoption (de Haymes & Simon, 2003). In fact, one adoptive mother of a Black, non-Hispanic male reported, "[We didn't realize] how much racism by family members ... would affect us." For some families, then, it may be that their support, if any, may come from friends and community members. It is possible that adoptive parents would seek support from sources familiar with adoption, and from others in non-adoption related contexts, for instance people who are open to and support transracial adoption.

Social support may also be associated with parenting behaviors such as cultural socialization. Cultural socialization involves teaching a child about his or her racial or ethnic history (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes & Chen, 1999) and can positively contribute to minority child development (Feigelman, 2000; Huh & Reid, 2000). The association between perceived

social support and cultural socialization may be mediated by parenting self-efficacy. In this study perceived social support was related to parenting self-efficacy but parenting self-efficacy was unrelated to cultural socialization. Hence, the hypothesis that the association between perceived social support and cultural socialization would be mediated by parenting self-efficacy was not supported. This research does contribute to the literature, despite the lack of findings, because it examined perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization at two different developmental periods and can provide some understanding as to what family processes may be important for cultural socialization during these times.

Preliminary results examining how parenting self-efficacy functions revealed that parenting self-efficacy differed by cohort status. Adoptive parents of children in Cohort I, who had older children, reported higher levels of parenting self-efficacy when compared to adoptive parents of children in the second cohort who were on average 3 years younger. There were no differences between the cohorts on the age at which parenting self-efficacy was examined, and other demographic factors such as maternal education, family income, and the number of children in the home. Hence this finding may simply be a cohort effect and a reflection of the different periods in time, for instance economic circumstances or current attitudes and beliefs among adopters, when the adoptions took place.

Perceived social support was also unrelated to cultural socialization within the current study. Despite this lack of finding it is important to note that investigating constructs related to the cultural socialization practices in transracial adoptive families advances our understanding of this process. Results demonstrated that perceived social support experienced by adoptive parents involved in a transracial adoption, one of the key constructs examined in this project, differed by the race/ethnicity of the adopted child. There may be hesitancy for some non-minority parents to adopt African American children (Brodzinsky & Pinderhughes, 2002; Goldberg & Smith, 2009), because they may anticipate a non-supportive network of family and friends. But, for those

parents who do chose to complete a transracial adoption it is important to understand their perceptions of social support.

In this study preliminary analyses demonstrated that adoptive parents reported greater perceived social support for transracial adoptions involving Black, non-Hispanic children as compared to White Hispanic children. There could be several reasons for this finding. First, it may be that these families perceive more challenges for a variety of reasons and consequently seek out more support. In at least one study, parents report that visible racial differences raise curiosity and questions, often times negative, from people in the general community without knowledge of the adoption (de Haymes & Simon, 2003). Similarly, in the current study one adoptive father of a Black, non-Hispanic male commented, "I have to protect my son. It is like going out with an umbrella everyday even when there is no rain." An adoptive mother of a Black, non-Hispanic female stated, "I wish I had realized that we'd be a poster family for adoption, because transracial adoption makes it so obvious. I wasn't especially prepared for that." Based on these anecdotal statements from adoptive parents participating in the EGDS, it appears that adoptive parents find these situations stressful. Given that adoptive parents of Black, non-Hispanic children may perceive challenges, they may be more likely to seek support from their families and friends, community agencies, or local support groups in how to negotiate these conditions, and in providing a safe, accepting environment for their child.

Second, it may be the case that adoptive parents felt they already had the support necessary prior to completing a transracial adoption, in particular one in which there would be very visible racial differences. Some research suggests that adoptive parents who perceive that they have diversity and support in their social networks feel better equipped to adopt transracially (Goldberg, 2009). For instance, adoptive parents who report having racial/ethnic minority friends and family members, living in diverse communities, and being able to relate to the child's culture of origin are more open and have the support necessary to complete a transracial adoption plan.

Information sharing, that is, knowing about the support that adoptive parents who completed a transracial adoption plan have could be helpful to other adoptive parents planning or who have completed this same type of adoption. Furthermore, this information could also be beneficial in planning education and training programs conducted by adoption agencies as parents could share their challenges, how they managed them, and thoughts about resources and strategies that could have been useful had they been available. Also, it could potentially impact the number of non-minority parents open to completing a transracial adoption plan as they would be exposed to this information with the knowledge that support systems are available.

Parenting self-efficacy was not a mediator between perceived social support and cultural socialization as hypothesized. There are a number of explanations for this lack of association. First, this hypothesis was exploratory as the literature on these processes within a transracial adoption context has just begun. The associations among perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization are not clearly documented in the literature. It is possible that other factors, such as familiarity or experience with the child's culture may be more important for cultural socialization. It could be that a better understanding of the culture may make it easier for parents to engage in, for instance, cultural festivals. Second, the measure of perceived social support used in this study may not have been sensitive enough to index the types of support most relevant for adoptive parents who completed a transracial adoption. Specifically, the items on this measure assess social support in general not support specific to adoption and transracial adoption. It is possible that if parents were asked about the support that they received from their family and friends specifically related to a transracial adoption, for instance information about minority skin and hair care, rather than more general sources of support then their responses may have been more relevant to cultural socialization. Finally, it may be that adoptive parents' social networks are not racially or ethnically diverse enough to function as a resource for cultural socialization. One adoptive parent stated when thinking about what she and

her family need for their child, "...love is not enough. We need to find and cultivate friendships with Black families for our child." Another commented on the need to find new supportive networks to help with the cultural socialization process by stating, "[We need] more ways to get involved with culture or support groups." Overall there may be other factors which may be more proximal to indexing cultural socialization that should be explored.

Openness and satisfaction with the adoption

Cultural socialization has been linked to less positive child outcomes (e.g., lower ethnic identity) in adoptive families who report minimal efforts to expose their child to the child's birth culture (Huh & Reid, 2000). Therefore, it is important to develop a better understanding of what factors related to the adoption which can influence cultural socialization. Openness and satisfaction with the adoption may be two of these factors. It is likely that satisfaction with the adoption and openness will facilitate information sharing about the cultural background of the birth family. The second aim of this study was to examine how openness in the adoption and satisfaction with the adoption affected cultural socialization. This research makes a unique contribution to the literature as there is limited research on cultural socialization practices in families who have adopted transracially. In this study openness and satisfaction with the adoption were unrelated to adoptive parents' cultural socialization. One potential reason why these adoption-related factors were not associated with cultural socialization may be that any contact or communication that birth and adoptive parents have may surround issues which may be more salient to both parties, such as arranging in-person visits, more so than exchanging information on cultural histories and heritage of the birth families. It may also be the case that adoptive parents may not be comfortable discussing issues of cultural background with the birth parents, in particular if the birth parents are of a different racial or ethnic background (DeBerry et al., 1996). There is some research to suggest that there is a perception that socialization

objectives and practices between Whites and African Americans are incompatible (DeBerry et al., 1996). This perception may lead to both the adoptive and the birth parents feeling reluctance to discuss issues such as cultural histories, beliefs, and practices. It is also possible that the age of the child may be an important aspect of this process. In the current study, openness was assessed when the child was 18-months-old. It is possible that the openness in the adoption at that time was centered around the developmental issues of the child thus far rather than on cultural issues, which may not seem as critical during the toddler years. For instance, they may have talked about the child's developmental milestones and behaviors such as sharing positive experiences (e.g., what the child may laugh at, the child's first teeth), activity, emotionality and sociability levels (Janson & Mathiesen, 2008), word learning during this early toddlerhood period (Hollich, Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, Brand, Brown, Chung, Hennon al., 2000), or the child's understanding about gender, that is, about being a boy or girl (Fagot & Leinbach, 1989). Alternatively, communication may be about less positive aspects for instance disruptive behaviors such as aggression, defiance and temper tantrums which can peak during early toddlerhood (Degnan, Calkins, Keane, Hill-Soderlund, 2008), sleep patterns or sleep difficulties (Byars, Yolton, Rausch, Lanphear, & Beebe, 2012), and their effortful control which is more rudimentary during this time (Spinrad, Eisenberg, Gaertner, Popp, Smith, Kupfer, Greving et al., 2007). In this study no information was collected on the content of communication. Future research may need to examine more specifically the content of parents' communication to determine if a relation exists between this contact and cultural socialization practices.

Satisfaction with the adoption was also unrelated to cultural socialization. Given the literature on satisfaction with the adoption it was likely that adoptive parents would feel comfortable engaging in contact with the biological parents, which could facilitate information sharing about the biological family's cultural background. For instance higher satisfaction with the adoption is positively associated with adoptive parents' having a more positive impression of

their child's biological parents (Berry, 1991; Hollenstein, et al., 2003) and self-disclosure (Mendenhall et al., 1996). Given the likelihood of more positive impressions of the biological parents and adoptive parent self-disclosure then communication involving cultural histories and heritage is possible. However, this was not the case with this sample. It may be more likely that satisfaction with the adoption is related to other adoption-related factors, for instance openness in the adoption. In fact, there was a positive association between satisfaction with the adoption and openness in this study. This result is consistent with other research which suggests that higher levels of satisfaction with the adoption are positively associated with higher openness in the adoption (Etter, 1993; Grotevant et al., 1994; McRoy et al., 1988).

Adopted child and adoptive parent personal factors as moderators

The third aim of the study was to examine how the association between perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization would be moderated by personal factors such as child race/ethnicity, racial awareness and reasons for completing a transracial adoption plan. Both child race/ethnicity and racial awareness did not moderate any of the direct or mediated pathways tested. However, there was a direct association between child race/ethnicity and cultural socialization. Results from preliminary analyses show that adoptive parents of Black, non-Hispanic children reported engaging in more cultural socialization practices relative to those who adopted White Hispanic children. This finding is consistent with research which suggests that an adopted child's appearance is a motivator for participating in cultural activities related to the child's birth culture (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001; Vonk et al., 2010). Adoptive parents who have distinctly different physical features from their adopted child report more cultural socialization behaviors than those with adopted children who have similar features to them (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). It may be that the racial/ethnic differences between Black,

non-Hispanic children and their adoptive White, non-Hispanic parents are quite apparent to these parents and this visibility is the impetus for them to engage in greater cultural socialization.

Alternatively, these adoptive families may experience more of what Docan-Morgan (2011) referred to as “intrusive interactions” (p.5) which challenges family identity, the child’s personal identity, and are reported as offensive by the adoptive parents. These identity threats can fall within three categories, the first being mistaken identities, e.g., newly arrived immigrants. This calls into question the adopted child’s identity as an American citizen. Second, cases of mistaken relationships, for instance labeling the adopted child as the child of the housekeeper, undermine the child’s relationship with family members. Finally, intrusive encounters that occur in the absence of family members, for instance school projects, e.g., family trees, and peer inquiries e.g., “Where did your parents find you” can be distressing to the adopted child. While adoptive parents may or may not have the tools to handle these situations, they can use engaging in cultural activities in several ways. For instance, they can use their participation as a buffer against these types of negative interactions to reinforce to their child the importance of his/her cultural heritage and that they are actively acknowledging the significance of these activities. Other child characteristics could also be important for understanding the cultural socialization process.

One of the broader implications for the findings for cultural socialization is that, given such practices have positive implications for child development, children adopted internationally who are more visibly similar to their adoptive parents may not be receiving as much cultural socialization and thus, less of the related benefits. This is particularly important for agency practice and family support as it may have implications for development, for instance in the domain of identity development. Research suggests that children, even those who are visibly similar to their adoptive parents, may get some type of exposure to cultural socialization practices although notably less than children who are not visibly racially similar to their adoptive parents

(Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). What is unclear at this point is whether what these adopted children, who are visibly racially similar to their adoptive parents, are receiving is of some benefit to them, at what stage or stages of development this occurs if it does, and if it has any impact on their developmental processes.

There is limited literature on how adoptive parents socialize their children around cultural issues, and even less so on whether cultural socialization differs by child sex. Preliminary results from this study show that adoptive parents tend to engage in cultural socialization practices with their female children more frequently as compared to their male children. This finding is consistent with other research with transracial adoptive families demonstrating that parents engage in more cultural socialization (e.g., listening to music and attending cultural events) with their female children, rather than their male children (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). Other research has found that, transracial adoptive parents tend to engage in more sport related activities with their male children (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). In the current study adoptive parents of female children reported attending more classes, cooking more foods, and reading more books related to their child's birth culture more so when compared to adoptive parents of male children. Findings from the current study are also consistent with biological children's reports of cultural socialization, that is, female children report engaging in more cultural socialization activities than their male counterparts (Huynh & Fuligni, 2008). However, there is some inconsistency with other adoption research which suggests that child sex does not predict cultural socialization (Johnston, Swim, Saltsman, Deater-Deckard, & Petrill, 2007). Given the mixed findings, it may be useful to review the broader socialization literature on minority child cultural socialization. Doing this could possibly provide a greater understanding as to what may be taking place in these adoptive families.

Parents may use different socialization strategies depending on the sex of their child (Best, 2010). For instance, assuming that the parents are the agents of socialization, they will

determine how their children dress, and what appropriate behaviors are. These differences may appear because males and females encounter different sets of challenges as they mature, and because parents may have different expectations for their child's male and female future adult roles. More specifically, the minority feminine stereotypical role of "kin keeper" could suggest that females are socialized more around cultural traditions (Hagestad, 1986). Hence this may be why adoptive parents tend to engage in more cultural socialization with their female children. Minority males, however, may more frequently experience racial discrimination (Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis, 2002) and therefore, parents may be more concerned about preparing them for such experiences. The items on the cultural socialization measure used in the current study focused on social activities, such as participating in seminars, religious activities and listening to music, rather than preparation for discrimination. Hence, in order to capture different types of socialization strategies which may be gender related it will be useful to have such a measure.

The association between cultural socialization practices and an individual's ethnic identity is established in the literature (Hughes et al., 2006). These parenting strategies have implications for children's cultural/ethnic identity because making culture salient, providing information about cultural practices, and prominent group members can build pride and knowledge in one's ethnic group. Therefore, adoptive parents who culturally socialize their female children more may be engaging in these strategies, and inadvertently not exposing their male children to these types of information. These practices could have implications for minority child development, and warrants future investigation.

Some models of gender socialization focus on parents as interactive partners in socialization, and may provide an explanation as to why there were sex differences in cultural socialization in the current study. Specifically, these socialization models concentrate on how parents manage their children's daily activities (Parke, Ornstein, Rieser, & Zahn-Waxler, 1994),

and parental cognitive and affective processes which can influence their own behavior and parenting practices (Bugental & Goodnow, 1998). For instance adoptive mothers report more externalizing behaviors in their male children rather than in their female children (Johnston et al., 2007). Adoptive parents may have to spend more time attending to these issues and have less time for cultural socialization. Hence, adoptive parents may find engaging their female children in cultural socialization less challenging when compared to their male children. Several studies suggest that male adopted children report more behavioral difficulties than female adopted children (see Lee, 2003 for review). Furthermore, engaging in cultural socialization practices could be viewed as additional parenting responsibilities over and above what may be considered as everyday parenting tasks. Child behavioral difficulties could impact the likelihood that adoptive parents would take on these “additional” parenting responsibilities.

There was no association between the cultural socialization and adoptive parent’s racial awareness, one of the other moderators tested. Racial awareness is an integral part of understanding adoptive parents’ cultural competence, or their ability and or willingness to engage in cultural socialization (Vonk, 2001). It involves an awareness of the role that culture, race and ethnicity play in the lives of their children from another birth culture (Andujo, 1988). There is some discussion in the literature that parents actually need to have the ability to acknowledge racial differences between themselves and their transracially adopted children (McRoy, Zurcher, Lauderdale, & Anderson, 1984). However, this can create additional parenting responsibilities which some adoptive parents may not be willing to take on. Some adoptive parents in the current study did minimize racial differences. For instance, one adoptive mother stated, “My child is not really a minority. She is half Caucasian.” The distancing, or resistance to acknowledge racial differences may make it challenging for some adoptive parents to appreciate the importance of cultural traditions to minority groups (Hardiman, 2001).

Other constructs, measurement issues, or reasons may also have played a role in the lack of association between racial awareness and cultural socialization. The relationship between cultural socialization and psychological well-being can be mediated by the strength of the child's ethnic identity (Yoon, 2001). This is an interesting possibility but given the age of children in this study assessing ethnic identity would have been a less practical solution. Perhaps adoptive parents' racial identity may have been a more useful construct to examine. White racial identity as defined by Helms (1990) involves various stages or attitudes that a White person can have in the evolution of a nonracist identity. However, adoptive parent racial identity has been shown to be unrelated to cultural socialization (Berbery & O'Brien, 2011).

How cultural socialization was measured could have played a role in its lack of association with most of the other variables of interest. Cultural socialization was measured by the activities that the parents reported that they engaged in. It is possible that measuring adoptive parent belief in the importance or lack of importance in engaging in cultural socialization, in addition to their cultural socialization behaviors, may also have been important to measure. It may be that parents believe engaging in cultural socialization is important but may not engage in these activities directly. The literature has yet to examine if adoptive parents' belief in the importance of cultural socialization and their practice of cultural socialization, that is their beliefs and behaviors, are associated. If adoptive parents' beliefs and behaviors are associated then the next step may be to examine if either or both have any implications or associations with family processes and child development. This is an area which requires additional attention so that the impact of adoptive parent attitudes can be disentangled from the actual practices of cultural socialization in regard to their impact on child development.

Some adoptive parents may practice cultural socialization indirectly, that is by exposing their child to the child's birth culture by sending their child to a culture camp (Lee & Quintana, 2005). Perhaps items asking about activities that the child engaged in without the parents, but

under the direction of the parent(s) may be useful. Given the ages of the children in this study child responses to these types of questions may not have been feasible. Finally, some adoptive parents may not want their child to be exposed to the elements of the child's birth culture (Scroggs & Heitfield, 2001). There may be other reasons why racial awareness, and perhaps the other variables, was unrelated to cultural socialization which have yet to be explored in the literature. However, there are other adoptive parent personal factors which can affect cultural socialization.

The next moderator tested reasons for completing a transracial adoption, did moderate the association between parenting self-efficacy and cultural socialization and also had a direct effect on cultural socialization. This study is unique because it also provides insight into the reasons why adoptive parents chose to adopt transracially and how their reasons impact their cultural socialization practices. Parents with higher parenting self-efficacy and more child-centered reasons for adopting transracially were more likely to engage in cultural socialization compared to parents with lower parenting self-efficacy and more parent-centered reasons for adopting transracially. Additionally, greater child-centered reasons were positively associated with adoptive parents' cultural socialization of their children.

Motivation to adopt transracially is an important factor for understanding parent-child interactions within this context (Goldberg & Smith, 2009). Few studies have examined parents' reasons for adopting transracially, in particular of Black children (e.g., Brooks & James, 2003; Zhang & Lee, 2011) or wanting to adopt transracially (e.g., Goldberg, 2009; Goldberg & Smith 2009) and even fewer have looked at the relation between reasons for adopting transracially and cultural socialization. Some adoptive parents who complete a transracial adoption have reported a shorter waiting time as a greater motivation to adopt transracially rather than interest in the different culture (Bergquist et al., 2003). However, this finding refers to international adoption. Others cite concerns about engaging in socialization practices around racial issues, and social

stigma for their reluctance to adopt transracially (Goldberg & Smith, 2009). But, for those who do adopt transracially, child-centered motivations are built upon a match between the child's needs and the ability and desire of the adoptive parents to meet those needs (Steinberg & Hall, 1998). Post-adoptive parents report several reasons for adopting transracially but when discussing child-centered reasons for adopting children parents focus more on cultural differences, and discuss them in positive ways (Zhang & Lee, 2011). Parents tended to stay away from race related reasons, besides acknowledging that minority children are the group in most need of adopting (Zhang & Lee, 2011). It is possible that parents who perceive themselves as completing a transracial adoption for greater child-centered reasons may feel a responsibility or commitment to engage in cultural socialization.

There are several predictors of cultural socialization which include child factors such as child's age and sex, and parent factors such as their socioeconomic status, immigration status, their experiences of discrimination, and their racial identity (Hughes et al., 2006). Three of these factors, immigration status, experiences of discrimination, and socioeconomic status were not directly examined in association with cultural socialization in this study but may be relevant for this process in families who have adopted transracially. Parents' immigration status in relation to the length of time that they have spent in this country could influence their sense of what types of cultural socialization processes are necessary for adequate functioning in society. Parents who experience discrimination may be more likely to prepare their children for discrimination (Hughes et al., 2006). The majority of adoptive parents in this sample are White and they may not have experience with bias related to their racial or ethnic group. However, it is unlikely that all parents who adopt transracially are White. There may be heterogeneity in the racial/ethnic composition of parents who adopt transracially and assessing if they have experiences with discrimination would be beneficial to understanding the cultural socialization process. Finally, parents with higher socioeconomic status generally report engaging in more cultural socialization

practices (Hughes & Chen, 1997). In this study adoptive parent median household income suggested a high socioeconomic status. Other factors which could predict cultural socialization may include peer group influence, or opportunities for cultural socialization based on the region of the country. Community demographics/neighborhood characteristics, school activities or other social groups, changes in family characteristics for instance the addition of a sibling, divorce, remarriage, or the creation of a blended family may be other influential factors. Finally, parents own comfort level and interest in engaging in cultural socialization may or may not change as they move from one developmental stage to another.

There is a growing body of research on the cultural socialization practices of parents who have adopted transracially and their parents which demonstrates the increasing importance of understanding this process and possible implications for child and family development.

Transracial adoption is discussed mainly in the context of White adoptive parents with minority adopted children and it is important to recognize that adoptive parents may also be minorities for a few reasons. First, this illustrates the heterogeneity of the transracial adoptive families and the need for a better understanding, both theoretically and empirically of what it means to culturally socialize an adopted child. Does this process mean that the adoptive parents are actively involved in the process along with their children? For instance, are adoptive parents actively seeking out culturally related events and attending them together with their child? Or, on the other hand, does it mean that they recognize that their child should be exposed to some aspects of the child's birth culture so the adoptive parents find some avenue to achieve this? In one study adopted children described their parents' socialization practices as things that their parents "gave" to them in the form of cultural experiences, books and videos (Smith et al., 2011). Second, an important first step toward this objective is to use an assessment guided by theory, and which incorporates the important dimensions of cultural socialization identified in the literature with biological families, and what it may mean to be a transracial adoptee.

Consideration should also be paid to how cultural socialization is currently measured in the adoption literature. The measure used in this study reflects some activities that parents may engage in specifically related to a transracial adoption. Processes such as racial and ethnic socialization (Phinney, 1990), preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust are important for various aspects of minority individual development, such as their identity development (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Marshall, 1995). Research suggests that cultural socialization be used as a broader term to encompass other socialization processes, such as racial and ethnic socialization (Hughes et al., 2006). Given that research on cultural socialization in transracial adoption is only just beginning it may be helpful to have a very broad conceptualization of cultural socialization which would measure both racial and ethnic socialization. Given some of the challenges related to interracial relations it may also be useful to measure other aspects such as preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust. Therefore, this is another important avenue for future research to explore.

Perhaps the cultural socialization process of adoptive parents should include some form of racial socialization as White adoptive parents and their minority adopted children have difference experiences of race (Samuels, 2009). White adoptive parents are the beneficiaries of White privilege (Smith et al., 2011) and may not experience racism. Given that White adoptive parents may not experience difficulties related to racial discrimination they may find it challenging to socialize their children around racial issues. Hence some adoptive children may not be exposed to racial socialization and this lack of exposure may have consequences for child development. However, there is research to suggest that some White adoptive parents engage in racial socialization of their children and use a variety of strategies to help their children cope with racism and develop a positive racial identity (Smith et al., 2011) despite any possible lack of experience with racial discrimination. These strategies include promoting racial and cultural pride by taking their children to culture camp and fairs, in the face of racially charged situations

suppressing their own feelings in order for the situation not to escalate, and maintaining harmonious relationships even when offensive remarks are made (Smith et al., 2011).

Chapter 12

Limitations

The current study has a number of limitations, many of which were touched upon in the discussion of results above. Parent's individual characteristics and experiences are related to their socialization practices (McHale, Crouter, Kim, Burton, Davis, Dotterer, & Swanson, 2006) so it is conceivable that in some families parents may have different parenting practices. Fathers engage in more gender differentiated socialization of their children (McHale, Crouter, & Whiteman, 2003). For instance, fathers tend to engage in more racial socialization of their male children, rather than their female children (McHale et al., 2006). This research was conducted in families where the children were the same race as the parents so this process may operate differently in transracial adoptive families. Child sex differences in cultural socialization were found between families. However, within-family comparisons of gender differences in cultural socialization may provide a more powerful test of adoptive parents' differential treatment of their male and female children. There were also issues surrounding measurement such as the lack of validity data. Research in the area of transracial adoption is growing and it is reasonable to anticipate that current measures will be validated or new, possibly more valid, measures will be developed. The cultural socialization measure used may need to account for developmental and demographic variations in cultural socialization practices of adoptive parents. Also, it may be that racial awareness, parenting self-efficacy and perceived social support are not by themselves sufficient to predict cultural socialization. Perhaps adoptive parents must conscientiously and specifically think about whether or not they want to engage in cultural socialization with their children. Some adoptive parents report a significant awareness of racial issues prior to their decision to adopt transracially, while others suggest that it was the actual adoption which led them to have greater

racial awareness (de Haymes & Simon, 2003). Since racial awareness was assessed at the same time as cultural socialization it would have been difficult to assess the direction of effect. Additionally, the sample size may have limited the ability to find associations between the constructs of interest. Finally, the sample of adoptive parents who participated are financially affluent and well-educated. Evidence exists to suggest that adoptive parents with less education and fewer resources may be less open to adopting transracially (Ishizawa, Kenney, Kubo, & Stevens, 2006) so the parents in this study may represent a unique population. Preliminary analyses examining adoptive parents who did and did not complete a transracial adoption did not find evidence for this, however.

Chapter 13

Future directions

This study contributes to the literature and advances our understanding of transracial adoption in the following ways. This study is the first to show, to the author's knowledge, a positive association between perceived social support and parenting self-efficacy in families who have adopted transracially. This association has been found in biological families and implied in the adoption literature but not explicitly tested. Limited research exists on the cultural socialization of transracial adoptive families and this work will contribute to that literature. Future research may gain a better understanding of the development of these family processes, in particular cultural socialization, by following these families over time. It is possible that engagement in cultural socialization may vary across the developmental trajectory of the child. Future research may benefit from examining personal, child and social factors in relation to the development of cultural socialization.

Following these families over time may help the field gain a better understanding of the development of perceived social support, parenting self-efficacy and, in particular cultural socialization in families who have adopted transracially. This sample provides a unique opportunity to gain an understanding of developmental differences that may arise related to the constructs of interest across two different cohorts of children. It may also be interesting to explore differences in family processes and child development trajectories, such as identity development, between families who place emphasis on cultural socialization and families who do not. Exploring potential differences or similarities in parenting self-efficacy between adoptive parents who may and may not see the need for cultural socialization would contribute to the literature. Continuous measurement of cultural socialization, along with the addition of new

measures, for instance racial and cultural identity, can provide a prospective understanding into the development of these types of identities for transracially adopted individuals. Given that there are differences in the cultural socialization practices for families with children who are or are not visibly racially similar to their adoptive parents, it may be interesting to examine within family differences. Specifically, if White parents adopt both a Black non-Hispanic child and a White non-Hispanic child, which child, if any, would be engaged in more cultural socialization practices with their parents? How would these practices impact the other child? These are provocative questions which can be addressed in the future. Furthermore, collecting responses from both the adoptive parents and the adopted child may provide a broader understanding of what the cultural socialization process looks like in families who have adopted transracially.

From an ecological perspective consideration should also be paid to other individuals beyond the scope of the immediate families such as the biological parents. Given that these are primarily open adoptions and there is some degree of contact with the biological families, an understanding of how experiences with the biological families have implications for cultural socialization beyond the developmental periods examined here should be explored. Birth parents are the group within the adoption triad who have been least studied in the literature (Baden & Wiley, 2007). Nonetheless, understanding the impact of contact with the birth parents may be critical to the understanding of the development of adoptive family processes and the adopted child. Contact with the birth parents may change over the course of the child's development (Grotevant, Perry, & McRoy, 2005) and may be influenced by individual mental health, geographical distance, cultural differences and, more relevant for an international adoption, language differences (Grotevant et al., 2005; Tieman, Van & Verhulst, 2008). Future research could examine how changes in contact between the birth and adoptive families influence the development of adoptive family processes and child development over time. For instance, adolescence and emerging adulthood are among the important developmental periods for identity

formation (Arnett, 2000). Adopted children may be thinking about their own identities, intimate relationship formation and reproductive choices. Perhaps contact with birth parents may be associated with any decisions or conclusions that adopted individuals make with respect to these issues. Adopted child contact with the birth family is associated with positive identity development (Brodzinsky, 2011). However research is yet to address if contact with the birth family is related to the adopted child's intimate partner selection and future reproductive decisions. Future research would benefit from examining associations between adopted child contact with the birth family and the adopted child's development over time.

The term transracial implies between races and has been used in the literature to refer to adoptive families whose individual members are from different racial backgrounds. Some researchers argue that indeed the concept of race does exist on the basis that visibly apparent racial differences are socially constructed (Thompson 2010). However, other research suggests that race is a socially constructed term because it is not based on genetic differences (Stevens, 2003) but differs based on the society (Khanna & Harris, 2009). For instance in the United States and China race is based on ancestry and in Brazil it is based on skin color (Khanna & Harris, 2009; Thompson 2010). The social construction of race is also based on the perceived differences between groups (Quintana, 1998). Race is associated with both social and psychological implications for well-being (Harris & Khanna, 2010). In fact, reports from adults living within the socially defined boundaries of a particular race, for instance Black, indicate feelings of ambivalence about their attachment to Black individuals and their perception of Black individuals' attachment to them (Harris & Khanna, 2010). This may influence their perception of themselves, and others, as Black. Future use of the term transracial or between races may need to account for findings such as these.

Racial classifications and boundaries are fluid and change over time (Khanna & Harris, 2010). For instance, Southern and Eastern Europeans and the Jews who are currently considered

White were not considered White in earlier categorizations (Goodman, 2001). Researchers may also have difficulty categorizing some groups into different racial classes because they do not conform to an American classification system (Khanna & Harris, 2009). Therefore, the use of the term transracial to label one type of adoption may be useful now, but in the future this may change.

Using the term transracial to categorize an adopted person may contribute to psychological difficulties. Research with biological related individuals suggest that the use of race to classify and stereotype people can be associated with concerns related to identity and belongingness (No, Hong, Liao, Lee, Wood, & Chao, 2008). For instance, the belief framework that Americans of Asian descent are “foreigners” (Devos & Banaji, 2005) can contribute to these challenges. This particular label, transracial, may contribute to mental health issues for some adopted individuals. Future research may benefit from understanding if and how membership into what society currently calls a transracial adoption, and being labeled a transracial adoptee has an association with individual mental health.

There is an emerging literature on adoptive parents’ perceptions of discrimination based upon their choice of adopted child (Lee & The Minnesota International Adoption Project, 2010). Adoptive parent perceived discrimination as a post-adoption risk factor may have implications for the marital relationship, parent-child relationship, parenting practices, and the behavioral and emotional development of transracially adopted children. Finally, although the co-parenting construct has not been applied to the study of cultural socialization within a transracial adoption context, extant literature suggests that when two parents convey the same socialization messages, for instance racial socialization, the messages will be more easily understood by the child and promote positive minority child adjustment (Margolin, Oliver, & Medina, 2001). Therefore, it is conceivable that if both parents are consistent in their cultural socialization messages and

behaviors these may have some impact on the development of minority children involved in transracial adoptions.

Chapter 14

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Appendix A

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES WITH CHILD(REN)

These are some questions which ask about activities that some parents engage in with their transracially adopted children. We are interested in knowing what you and your child do. There are no right or wrong answers. Please answer openly and honestly. Please indicate the choice with best represents your answer.

	Never	Almost never	At least once a year	At least once a month	At least once a week	N/A
1. Eating foods traditional to your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. Interacting with adults from your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. Participating in seminars about your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. Participating in religious activities from your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. Reading books from or about your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. Listening to music from your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. Attending dance, music, or other cultural performances.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. Participating in family support groups for children from your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. Discussing culture-related issues with school.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. Cooking foods traditional to your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. Reading books about international adoption or diversity.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

	Never	Almost never	At least once a year	At least once a month	At least once a week	N/A
12. Participating in dance, sports, or other performance-based activities.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
13. Discussing with your child adoption-related issues specific to your child's birth culture/country.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
14. Participating in local culture groups/events related to your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
15. Attending language classes.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
16. Discussing with your child issues of racism or stereotyping toward his/her birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
17. Participating in family support groups for children adopted internationally.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
18. Participating in charitable initiatives to support people in or from your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
19. Visiting areas in the U.S. that have large communities of your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
20. School or daycare that integrates your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	4	N/A
21. Decorations in home reflect your child's birth culture.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Appendix B
Transracial Adoption Questionnaire

There are many reasons why parents choose transracial adoption and we are interested in your responses to the questions below. Please indicate your answer by choosing the appropriate response.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
1. We/I wanted to make our/my family more diverse.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2. It was the right choice for us/me.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3. We/I were/was concerned for the child.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4. We/I know other adoptive parents with a transracially adopted child(ren).	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
5. We/I wanted to give this child a good home.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. We/I were/was waiting a long time to parent.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
7. We/I live in a diverse community.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. We/I would love our/my child regardless of race.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
9. We/I have the emotional and financial resources to take care of this baby.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
10. We/I knew that there was a greater need for parents to adopt minority children.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. Our/My friends are racially diverse.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
12. Our/My family of origin is diverse.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

13. Please tell us about any other reason(s) you chose to adopt transracially.
14. What do you wish you knew about transracial adoption before you made the decision to adopt transracially?

Curriculum Vita

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- Chester, C.,** Jones, D., Zalot, A., & Sterrett, E. (2007). The Psychosocial Adjustment of African American Youth from Single Mother Homes: The Relative Contribution of Parents and Peers. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, 36*, 356 – 366.
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