Not as Black and White as You May Think: Parents' and Teachers' Reflections on Racial Inequity and Parental Involvement

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Education and Psychology)
in The University of Michigan
2022

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Dedication

To my husband and children for your unconditional love, support, and joy. To my ancestors. Thank you for forging the path and instilling me with the knowledge and perseverance that allowed me to be where I am today. To those who come after me. Let this work be your light on the darkest of days and a constant reminder that you can and will be everything you set out to be. To Keon Washington and all the other Black youth who inspired this work. Keep being your beautiful, excellent selves in body and spirit.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to thank God for being ever present and getting me through this journey. There were many days I felt the world collapsing around me while trying to manage all the things. My prayers were answered more than once, and it was truly amazing witnessing the people and opportunities I did not know I needed come into my life at just the right time. Nothing but God! There are also numerous family members, friends, educators, colleagues, and organizations whose various forms of support and encouragement have been invaluable in helping to make this accomplishment possible.

I would like to acknowledge my husband, my king, my rock: Joseph Channey III. We have been working towards this moment (me becoming Dr. Channey!) since I was an undergraduate student. I remember when I became pregnant with our first child (Jeremiah), and everyone was concerned for my future because I was a "star student." Many people saw my pregnancy as the beginning of the end of my academic career, but we knew we had everything we needed: each other. I do not know where I would be without your love, your support, your accountability, and your constant reminders of where I came from and where I want to go. We push each other to continuously be better and I thank you for who you are as a husband, a father, and my very best friend.

I would like to acknowledge my babies, my loves, my everlasting motivation: Jeremiah Artiaga, Jaeliana Channey, and Jacqueline Channey. You have truly been my motivation to do this work and you have shown me the importance of this work in more ways than one. I thank

you for giving me hugs and a reason to smile when balancing all areas of life became too challenging. Because of you I continuously strive to be the best role model I can be and to show you what we are capable of if we put our minds and our hearts to it.

I would like to acknowledge my parents (and grandparents), my physical and spiritual guides, my role models: Tina Sims, Joseph Artiaga, Jr., Antonio Sims, Ernest Jones, Josephine Ellis, Bishop Joseph Artiaga Sr., and Ernestine Purifoy. Thank you for everything you instilled in me as a child and even still today. Thank you for the positive socialization, the "you can do it!" messages, and for supporting me throughout life. Thank you for ALWAYS showing up when I needed you the most. You are the ones who forged the path that made it possible for me to do this work and to see myself and my community in this work. I hope I have made you proud.

I would like to acknowledge my siblings (a.k.a. my OG best friends): Dorian Sims, Tashana Artiaga, and Javencia Artiaga. Thank you for picking me up when I was down figuratively and literally. Whenever I need a laugh or someone to vent to, I know I can call any of you and we will talk, reminisce, joke, and laugh for hours on end. We have had each other's backs since day one and I am so thankful that God blessed me with the best brother and sisters in the world.

I would like to acknowledge my family (and friends who became family) and my community: Estelle Jozwiak (my Auntie), Tahmyya Johnson, Jazzalin Gee, Katie Schmitt, and the students, faculty, and staff affiliated with the Combined Program in Education and Psychology (CPEP); Drs. Faheemah Mustafaa, Alexandra Skoog-Hoffman, Karryll Phillips, Josefina Bañales, Abunya Agi, Natasha Johnson, Channing Mathews, Latisha Ross, Fantasy Lozada, Aixa Marchand, Seanna Leath, Nkemka Anyiwo, and Sarah McKellar; soon to be Drs. Janella Benson, Bernardette Pinetta, and Saraí Blanco; and so many more. You have been my

unexpected gifts from God. You have inspired me, believed in me, and encouraged me when I felt I was losing hope. You have been my soundboards when I needed one, pulled all-nighters with me, and even fed me when I got too busy to remember to eat. You watched my babies for me so that I could go to school or have a little me time. The list goes on. Many of you helped me to form the very connections that ultimately led me to graduate school.

I want to thank my city, Detroit, especially everyone who contributed to my foundational educational experiences in Detroit Public Schools. Thank you to my teachers, principals, and peers from my first year as a kindergartener at Stellwagen Elementary School with Ms. Martin to my last year of high school at Davis Aerospace High School. Thank you for your love, laughs, and constant support. When I felt challenged you all never stopped affirming me and reminding me that I am a "smart girl."

I want to give a special thanks to Tisha Tyson and the late great Tyrone Winfrey, Sr. You both put UM on my radar and made me want to be a Wolverine. You were intentional in recruiting Detroit students to come to UM and in doing so you had a positive impact on all our lives. Thank you for believing in us when so many others were quick to overlook our potential for greatness. I am forever grateful.

I would like to thank the individuals affiliated with the Center for the Study of Black Youth in Context (CSBYC), especially Hoa Nguyen, Samantha Drotar, Me-Linh Nguyen, and the center's PIs Drs. Robert Sellers, Tabbye Chavous, Stephanie Rowley, Robert Jagers, and Carla O'Connor. My time with you prepared me for graduate school intellectually, mentally, and emotionally. It allowed me to see myself as a scholar.

I would be remiss if I did not give thanks to Drs. Jennifer Myers and Vonnie McLoyd. The knowledge and wisdom you both instilled in me as an undergraduate student at UM helped

to plant the seed that grew to become my program of research today. Dr. Myers, taking Developmental Research Methods with you set the foundation for me becoming a researcher. I remember when you told me, "You write like an academic." You saw something in me early on that I did not have the necessary experience to recognize in myself. Dr. McLoyd, taking your World of the Black Child course really changed the game for me in terms of studying the experiences of Black youth. Until I took your course, I was unaware that people were doing this type of work. I thank you both for your work and dedication to students like me.

Thank you to my dissertation committee! Thank you for your patience and understanding and for pushing me to think deeply about my ideas. Dr. Stephanie Rowley, thank you for being so supportive of me throughout these years. There were many times that I walked into your office feeling hopeless and on the brink of tears, but after each of our meetings I found my way. Everything in the world made sense again. Dr. Robert Jagers, thank you for encouraging me to apply to CPEP and for helping to open doors for me once I joined the CPEP community. Thank you for sharing you passion for this work and for pushing back on my ideas in a way that helped me to become more critically conscious as a scholar and an individual. Dr. Deborah Rivas-Drake, thank you for modeling how to balance your personal and professional life as an academic, while not losing your connection to the communities and the people who matter most to you. You inspire me and give me hope as a fellow #MamaScholar. Dr. Carla O'Connor, thank you for being the brilliant and excellent scholar you are. You too have pushed my ideas and asked me to think about my work in ways that will continue to make me a better scholar and person. Dr. Jamaal Matthews, thank you for being everything I needed to complete my degree. Until you joined my committee, there were many days that I doubted whether I could finish the program. Thank you for your dedication to seeing me finish, your care, your detailed feedback,

and your overall support. I truly believe you rejoined the CPEP community at just the right time and God brought you back to walk with me (and many students to come) all the way to the finish line.

Thank you to the people and organizations that funded my research and time at Michigan: CPEP, Dr. Joseph Morris, the Rackham Merit Fellowship, the Center for the Education of Women+, and the funders for the Mary Malcomson Raphael Fellowship. Being a student parent is not easy. There were times when I thought I would have to leave graduate school to help support my family financially, but with your support I was able to complete my degree.

I would like to acknowledge my community of Black scholars and peers at UM during my time as an undergraduate and a graduate student. I want to give special thanks to the Black Student Psychological Association at UM. With you I found family, understanding, and the best displays of Black Excellence this world has ever seen.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to the parents and teachers who shared their beliefs and experiences and made this research possible.

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Abstract

The critical consciousness framework informs us that for parents and teachers of Black youth to be best positioned to disrupt systemic racism in education they must both critically reflect on the systems that oppress Black youth and become motivated to challenge those systems. Still, little empirical research exists investigating the critical reflection-action process with parents and teachers. The purposes of this dissertation were to extend existing research on critical consciousness with parents and teachers specifically, investigate how engaging in critical and acritical reflection might shape parents' and teachers' parental involvement practices, and examine the moderating role of critical motivation (i.e., school trust and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy) in these associations.

This dissertation consisted of two studies. The data utilized in the first study were a subset of data collected from 179 Black parents of students attending middle schools in the Midwest across three academic school years (from 2015 to 2018). Parents reported their beliefs regarding the causes of the Black-White achievement gap (i.e., critical and acritical reflection), their trust in their children's schools, and their parental involvement practices in the form of traditional home and school involvement as well as racial and academic socialization. The first study employed a latent profile analysis and found that Black parents' critical and acritical reflections fit three profiles: *ambivalent*, *race-conscious*, and *balanced*. Membership in these profiles was differentially associated with school involvement and racial and academic socialization practices. School trust was negatively associated with racial barrier socialization

and positively associated with support/encouragement socialization. However, school trust did not moderate associations between profile membership and parental involvement.

Data utilized in the second study were collected from middle school teachers identifying as African American/Black (n = 2), Hispanic/Latinx (n = 1), Asian American/Asian = (n = 1), and Caucasian/White (n = 49). The teachers taught class sizes ranging from 4 to 40 students (M = 26.60, SD = 7.30) in classrooms with varying percentages of Black students (M = 18.57%, SD = 17.00%). Their teaching took place at one of fifteen different public schools in suburban (n = 34), urban (n = 9), small town/village (n = 8), and rural (n = 2) school districts in the Midwest. Teachers reported on their beliefs regarding the causes of the Black-White achievement gap using a measure similar to that employed for the first study. Teachers also reported their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and how often they solicited involvement from their students' parents. Regression analyses revealed that teachers' critical reflection was unrelated to solicited parental involvement and acritical reflection was negatively associated with solicited parental involvement. Acritical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy did not moderate relations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement.

The findings suggest that it is important to consider critical and acritical reflections together and that parents' trust in their children's schools has implications for their racial and academic socialization. Furthermore, the findings suggest that, for teachers, reflecting acritically on the causes of racial inequity in education has negative implications for parental involvement. Dissertation limitations and future directions are discussed.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In a society that emphasizes individual freedoms and the ideology that anybody can get ahead, Black and white Americans still have drastically different life outcomes. The precursors of these inequities can be observed early in life by examining racial differences in academic outcomes (i.e., high school dropout rates, standardized test scores, and post-secondary degree attainment; NCES, 2022). These early educational disparities, fueled by racism, systematically give rise to racial inequity in access to higher education, occupational opportunities, and upward mobility later in life (Davis & Otto, 2016; Harper et al., 2009). Parents and teachers of Black youth have the potential to disrupt systemic racism through critical actions that support Black youth academically, socially, culturally, and emotionally, thus diminishing racial disparities and moving Black youth closer to liberation.

This dissertation draws on the critical consciousness framework (Diemer et al., 2016; Freire, 1973; Watts et al., 1999), suggesting that awareness of systems of oppression and motivation to challenge those systems prompts individuals to act in ways that support the liberation of those being oppressed. Thus, the critical consciousness framework informs us that for parents and teachers to be best positioned to disrupt systemic racism in education they must both critically reflect on the systems that oppress Black youth and become motivated to challenge those systems. However, there is limited research that examines parents' and teachers' critical reflection, motivation, and action (Jemal, 2017; Marchand et al., 2019). Additionally, throughout existing studies, critical consciousness and its antithesis, racial dysconsciousness (or system justification, have been studied in parallel, but always under the implicit assumption that

individuals endorse elements of one or the other (i.e., they either think and act critically or acritically). This neglects the possibility that individuals may have coexisting beliefs that represent both critical reflection and acritical reflection, as described in King's (1991) and Watts et al.'s (1999) work on critical consciousness and dysconsciousness. To address these gaps, this dissertation uses quantitative methods and draws on social analysis frameworks (Freire, 1973; Watts et al., 1999) and attribution theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980; Weiner, 1972, 1985) to investigate the ways parents' and teachers' analysis of racial inequity in academic achievement relate to their actions and the role of motivation in shaping these relations.

Homes and Schools as Primary Contexts for Black Youth Development

Parents and teachers are the focus of this dissertation because they are the primary socializing agents for homes and schools and they play fundamental roles in shaping Black youth's positive and negative experiences in these environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1999; Coll et al., 1996). In this dissertation, I examine how parents' and teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education shape their actions in ways that may promote (i.e., via critical reflection) or impede (i.e., via acritical reflection) positive learning environments for Black youth.

Parents

Black parents' awareness of racism, evident in their reported experiences of racial discrimination, informs their parental academic involvement. Experiencing racial discrimination from their own teachers increases the likelihood that Black parents who have less positive relationships with their children's teachers will be involved in their child's education (Rowley et al., 2010). Parents who are aware of racism report being physically present in their child's school

environment and having conversations with their children's teachers to ensure they are treated fairly (Posey-Maddox, 2017). They also assist their children more academically outside of school (e.g., with homework) in order to compensate for the experiences they may not get from school (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; McKay et al., 2003). Relatedly, when Black parents are aware of racism and how their children are likely to be negatively impacted by it, they may convey messages to their children involving racial pride and barriers (Rowley et al., 2012; Saleem et al., 2020). This involvement positively relates to Black youth's academic outcomes (Banerjee et al., 2018; Evans et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes et al., 2009). For the purposes of this dissertation, I examine parental involvement in multiple forms: 1) traditional home and school involvement (i.e., school attendance and homework help), 2) racial socialization (i.e., messages of racial pride and barriers), and 3) academic socialization (i.e., messages of academic effort and support/encouragement) as promoting positive educational contexts for Black youth. Often scholars only center traditional measures when examining Black parents' educational involvement and overlook the other important ways that Black parents engage with their children to promote their academic success. Thus, by including multiple measures of parental involvement I hope to obtain a more comprehensive portrayal of the various ways Black parents critically engage with their children.

Teachers

Existing literature highlights the various ways teachers can promote negative and positive learning environments for Black youth. Teachers' low expectations, harsh discipline practices, and racial biases can contribute to Black youth's negative academic outcomes and school experiences (Gregory & Roberts, 2017; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Turetsky et al., 2021). On the other hand, studies have shed light on the potential for teachers to promote positive learning

environments for Black youth by extending academic, social, and emotional support through culturally responsive and relevant teaching practices (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). With this dissertation, I draw attention to teacher solicited parental involvement, an important method of promoting positive learning contexts for Black youth. Teacher solicited parental involvement can not only increase the likelihood of parental involvement-- a known contributor to Black youth's success-- it also has the potential to disrupt the racist exclusion of Black parents from their children's education (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Epstein, 1991; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Kim, 2009; Walker et al., 2005).

Attributions: Measures of Critical and Acritical Reflection

Attribution theory posits that a person's response to a given situation largely depends upon the factors they believe to have caused the situation at hand (Kelley & Michela,1980; Weiner, 1972, 1985). For example, when teachers attribute a student's failure to effort, they are more likely to feel anger toward the student. However, when failure is attributed to student ability, teachers are more likely to feel pity for the student and provide them with assistance (Georgiou et al., 2002). Similar relations have been observed when examining causal attributions for group-based circumstances such as poverty. More specifically, when a person attributes inequity to individual characteristics (e.g., lack of effort) of marginalized groups they are likely to harbor negative feelings and stereotypes about the group, decrease their willingness to work with members of the group, and support restrictive social-reform policies (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013; Weiss, 2006). Conversely, when a person ascribes inequity to structural factors (e.g., discrimination, injustice), they are more likely to have positive feelings toward members of marginalized groups and more likely to provide political support (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009; Tagler & Cozzarelli,

2013; Weiss, 2006). Attribution theory might then suggest that parents' and teachers' causal attributions for the Black-White academic achievement gap (a particular group-based situation) have consequences for their interactions with Black youth.

Similar to attribution theory, the critical consciousness framework connects an individual's beliefs to their actions. However, critical consciousness centers on critical (social justice-oriented) beliefs and actions and highlights the importance of a person's motivation to act in ways that advance social justice (Diemer et al., 2016; Freire, 1973; Watts et al., 1999). Specifically, critical consciousness is a three-part process involving individuals becoming aware of inequities (critical reflection), gaining motivation to act against oppressive forces (critical motivation), and taking action to change those inequities (critical action). Critical consciousness refers to an individual's awareness of multiple systems of oppression (i.e., racism, sexism, and classism). In this dissertation, I focus on the racism awareness aspect of critical consciousness, referred to in the literature and throughout this dissertation as critical racial consciousness (Bañales et al., 2020). Individuals who are critically conscious of racism in education recognize how factors such as racial discrimination and racially biased teachers and tests complement one another to perpetuate racial achievement gaps.

In recent literature, scholars have suggested that attributions for social inequalities can be utilized to determine the critical reflection aspect of critical consciousness development (Watts et al., 2011). Watts and colleagues (2011) explain that an individual's attributions for social inequality represent their critical reflection given that when people attribute social inequalities to structural causes they demonstrate their ability to view inequalities in systemic terms. In this dissertation, I use attributions for a particular social inequality (the Black-White achievement gap) as a proxy for parents' and teachers' engagement in critical reflection. Similar to previous

studies, I operationalize critical reflection using attributions for the Black-White achievement gap that assign blame to structural racism (e.g., Black students having fewer opportunities than white students; Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009).

Conversely, my conceptualization of acritical reflection is guided by theories of acritical thought (Jost & Banaji, 1994; King, 1991; Watts et al., 1999), which highlight the failure of individuals to critically analyze social inequalities. King (1991) refers to this phenomenon as racial dysconsciousness--an acritical way of thinking in which individuals seek to justify racial inequity by attributing it to negative characteristics of people of color, disregarding the ways racial inequity has been "built into the social order." Relatedly, system justification theory proposes that individuals seek to legitimize existing social structures, including those involving race, to satisfy their social and psychological need to rationalize the status quo (Jost & Banaji, 1994). For this dissertation, I operationalize engagement in acritical reflection using attributions for the Black-White achievement gap that attribute it to characteristics and actions of Black students and their families (e.g., Black student effort and Black parent involvement). By endorsing these attributions, individuals demonstrate their belief that negative characteristics of Black people cause racial inequity. Furthermore, endorsement highlights a person's internalization of negative stereotypes about Black people that depict them as having low effort and ability and devaluing education (Reyna, 2000).

It is important to note that the measures of critical motivation and action used in this dissertation diverge from those used in most existing studies of critical consciousness. Traditionally, critical consciousness scholars have examined proxies of personal and collective efficacy along with critical action from a political standpoint in which individuals become motivated to create structural and systematic change and then engage in the personal and

collective political behaviors necessary for change to occur (e.g., voting, protesting, etc.; Chan & Mak, 2020; Heberle et al., 2020; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). In my dissertation, I investigate how Black parents' lack of school trust (a motivator of school involvement; Marchand, 2019), and teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy (a form of political efficacy for teachers) shape their critical actions at the interpersonal level in ways that are likely to create systematic change.

The methodological approach used in this dissertation to measure critical and acritical reflection also differs greatly from most existing studies of critical consciousness. Many other studies have examined critical reflection as a measure of general awareness of inequity, not specific to race (Baker & Brookins, 2014; Diemer et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2014). Furthermore, previous studies using individual attributions have used them alongside structural attributions as an indicator of less critical reflection (Bañales et al., 2020). While it is indeed possible, and logical, that individuals who endorse individual attributions at high levels are not also endorsing structural attributions at high levels, the presence of critical reflection does not guarantee the absence of acritical reflection. Yet, this is the assumption made when both types of attributions are used as a single measure of critical reflection. In order to account for the possibility that parents, and teachers may engage in both critical and acritical reflection, this dissertation employs latent profile and moderation analyses. Latent profile analysis, a person-centered methodological approach, enables me to identify patterns in parents' critical and acritical reflection. Relatedly, moderation analysis allows me to investigate teachers' high and low engagement in critical and acritical reflection in relation to their practices.

Attributions Relate to Actions

For decades, attribution scholars have used the theory to investigate links between adults' attributions for social inequalities and their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors regarding marginalized groups. As previously stated, in general, attributing social inequity to structural factors is associated with a willingness to support marginalized groups (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009; Weiss, 2006). For parents, assistance may come in the form of school-related involvement in the traditional sense (e.g., participation at school and with academic work) and via racial and academic socialization, all of which may assist students in navigating and resisting microaggressive environments (Yosso, 2016). For teachers, assistance is the way they teach, specifically their pedagogical approach. Teachers who are aware of the ways in which schools perpetuate racial inequity may be more likely to implement practices intended to disrupt these systems and promote racial equity and inclusion in their classrooms (Duncan, 2020; Gay, 2018). A part of promoting racial equity and inclusion involves collaborating with students' caregivers and involving them in the education process (Gay, 2018; Muñiz, 2020).

Again, attributing social inequities to the internal characteristics of marginalized groups is negatively associated with support for those groups (Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Valant & Newark, 2016). For teachers of Black youth, attributing racial inequity in education to Black students and families may make them less willing to engage with parents, as seen in a decrease in the likelihood of them soliciting parental involvement. Conversely, Black parents may not be likely to forgo support given their special interest in the success of Black youth. Therefore, despite their lack of awareness of the structural barriers at play, Black parents who attribute the achievement gap primarily to Black children and their families may feel personally responsible for the success of their child and consequently remain physically involved in their child's

education. These parents, however, may be less involved than parents motivated by their critical awareness of racism (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). Additionally, these parents may be less likely than critically race-conscious parents to racially and academically socialize their children in ways that might prepare them for potential racist encounters at school.

Critical Motivation

According to the critical consciousness framework, critical motivation may moderate the relation between critical reflection and critical action (Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Watts & Flanagan, 2007). More specifically, if individuals reflect critically, but are not motivated to act, then critical action is not likely to take place. Existing studies demonstrate mixed results regarding the interaction effect of critical reflection and motivation on critical action (Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Le et al., 2022; Plummer et al., 2022). For instance, Le et al. (2022) found interaction effects between critical reflection (i.e., perceived inequality) and critical motivation (i.e., social responsibility) on critical action (i.e., political activities), while Diemer and Rapa (2016) found no evidence of moderation. In the latter study, measures of egalitarianism and perceived inequality were used to conceptualize critical reflection, a measure of political efficacy was used to examine critical motivation, and questions assessing expected protest participation were used to measure critical action. One possible explanation for the inconsistency in findings is the difference in the measures used. None of the existing studies utilize consistent measures of the three components of critical consciousness when testing for moderation. Still, it is not clear when moderation occurs and when it does not, which warrants further exploration.

This dissertation adds to the research discussed by testing critical motivation as a moderator for parents and teachers of Black youth. For parents, I conceptualize critical motivation as their school trust. I hypothesize that for critically aware parents, having lower trust

in their children's schools (compared to higher trust) will be associated with greater involvement. For teachers, I conceptualize critical motivation as their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. I hypothesize that for critically aware teachers, having greater efficacy in their ability to implement equitable and inclusive classroom practices (compared to less efficacy) will be associated with a greater likelihood of soliciting parental involvement.

It is important to note that the measures of critical motivation used in this dissertation are not necessarily related to personal or collective agency to create sociopolitical change, which is how critical motivation was originally theorized (Diemer et al., 2016; Watts et al., 2011). In line with other studies that have conceptualized critical motivation as a factor other than personal or collective agency (e.g., social responsibility: Le et al., 2022), in this dissertation I use measures of critical motivation that, similar to agency, may motivate critically aware parent's and teacher's actions and thus make critical action more likely to occur for these individuals. Furthermore, although measures related to agency are not used in this dissertation, a key aspect of the critical reflection-motivation-action relation is maintained: consistency. The measures of critical reflection, motivation, and action used in this dissertation are all education- and/or race-specific in theoretically relevant ways. Therefore, I employ measures of parent's school trust and teacher's culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy in this dissertation because these factors may be important motivators of action to consider in investigating critical reflection and action relations with an education and race focus.

Purpose of the Study

The aims of this dissertation are to expand existing knowledge of: 1) parents' and teachers' critical consciousness, 2) how engaging in critical and acritical reflection may shape

parents' and teachers' actions relevant to Black youth, and 3) how reflection and critical motivation together may influence parents' and teachers' actions relevant to Black youth.

Research Questions

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate the following research questions:

Study 1

1. What are existing patterns in Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education?
2. Are Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education associated with their parental involvement?
3. Does school trust moderate associations between Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education and their parental involvement?

Study 2

1. Do teachers engage in more critical or acritical reflection when reasoning about the causes of racial inequity in education?
2. Do teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity relate to their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?
3. Does acritical reflection moderate associations between critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?
4. Are teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education related to their solicited parental involvement?
5. Does culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?
6. Does acritical reflection moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?

7. Does acritical reflection moderate any moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?

Procedures

In study one, I used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to confirm the factor structure of the measure used to assess engagement in critical and acritical reflection for parents of Black youth. I used latent profile analysis (LPA) to explore patterns in parents' critical and acritical reflection. Finally, I used regression analyses to explore the relations between parents' profile membership, school trust, and parental involvement.

In study two, I used a similar measure to assess engagement in critical and acritical reflection for teachers. I then used regression analyses to test the unique and collective effects of critical and acritical reflection on teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. I then used moderation analyses to test the unique and interacting effects of critical and acritical reflection on solicited parental involvement as well as the moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and critical reflection. Lastly, I used moderated-moderation analyses to investigate whether acritical reflection moderated any interaction effects of critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on solicited parental involvement.

Significance of the Studies

For Research

These studies will add to the dearth of knowledge concerning parents' and teachers' critical consciousness. Existing studies of critical consciousness have primarily investigated the process in adolescents (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Furthermore, this dissertation will

expand current knowledge of critical consciousness broadly by investigating the thoughts and reported behaviors of individuals engaging in both critical and acritical reflection. Existing studies have primarily investigated critical or acritical reflection alone in relation to action and no existing studies, to my knowledge, have investigated critical and acritical reflection relations using person-centered or moderation analyses.

For Practice

By better understanding how teachers think about the causes of racial inequities in education in relation to their practices, these adults can be made more aware of the ways their beliefs may influence their engagement with Black youth and their parents. More specifically, the results of this dissertation can be used to inform workshops for preservice and in-service teachers with the intent to assist in making them more aware of the effects that their beliefs may have on their teaching practices.

Organization of the Dissertation

This chapter provides an overview of the dissertation. In chapter 2, I provide an overview of the study I conducted to examine relations between Black parents' beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education and their parental involvement as well as the potential for school trust to shape these relations (i.e., Study 1). Chapter 3 provides an overview of the study I conducted to investigate teachers' beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education as they relate to their outreach to parents and the possible influence of teachers' self-efficacy to teach culturally diverse youth on this relation (i.e., Study 2). Finally, in chapter 4, I discuss the results and contributions of the two studies together.

Chapter 2 Understanding Inequity: How do Black Parents' Reflections on Racial Inequity in Education Inform their Involvement?

Black parents' awareness of racism as the root cause of racial inequities in education may enable them to assist their youth in navigating systems of oppression. One way they may try to mitigate the effects of racism in their children's lives is through their involvement in their children's education. For example, some Black parents help their children with academic work at home to compensate for the intellectual resources they may not be receiving at school (Posey-Maddox, 2017). Racially aware parents may discuss with their children the importance of working hard in school and recognizing that as a Black person in America there will be barriers to their success in order to prepare Black youth for experiencing racism and encourage them to persevere in the face of adversity (Hughes et al., 2006; Ross, 2017). Therefore, the current study examined the connection between Black parents' racism awareness and their parental involvement.

Parents' trust in their child's school is also related to their academic involvement (Adams & Christenson, 1998; Beycioglu et al., 2013; Ross et al., 2018; Santiago et al., 2016). Research suggests that, in general, the more parents trust their child's school and teachers, the more likely they are to attend school functions and communicate with their child's teacher (Ross et al., 2018); however, for some Black parents, a lack of trust in their child's school may prompt their involvement. More specifically, Black parents who express concerns regarding the way their child may be treated at school because of their race report visiting their child's schools and

communicating with their teachers frequently as a means of ensuring their children are being treated fairly (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). Their expressed concerns may reflect a lack of trust in their child's school. Marchand and colleagues (2019) call this type of protective involvement, critical parent engagement. Taken together, these results suggest that for some Black parents, their awareness of racism in addition to their lack of school trust may increase their academic parental involvement. Thus, this study considers school trust as a possible moderator of the relation between Black parents' racism awareness and involvement, examining both the possibility that trust in the presence of racism awareness reduces involvement and the possibility that less trust would spur involvement in this context. This research has the potential to further knowledge of the various factors that shape parents' academic involvement, a critical element of youth's academic success (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; James et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020).

Guiding Frameworks

This study was primarily guided by the critical consciousness framework (Diemer et al., 2016; Freire, 1973) and sociopolitical development theory (Watts et al., 1999, 2003). These models lay out processes by which individuals become aware of societal inequities and move toward actions that try to address them. The critical consciousness framework argues that as individuals become aware of systems of oppression in perpetuating social inequality (critical reflection) they will develop competencies in acting against oppressive forces (critical motivation) and take action to change those inequities (critical action; Watts et al., 2011; Freire, 1973). Sociopolitical development theory proposes that prior to reaching the point of critical consciousness (which they name the liberation stage), individuals may go through other stages in which they engage in acritical reflection, and they may employ "predatory, antisocial or

accommodation strategies…to maintain a positive sense of self and to acquire social and material rewards" (Watts et al., 1999, pg. 263). Watts and colleagues name these prior stages the acritical, adaptive, precritical, and critical stages (see Appendix A). Individuals may begin in the acritical stage or elsewhere. Individuals in the acritical stage are described as being unaware of systemic causes of inequity and viewing group inequity as representation of differences in the true capabilities of group members (Watts et al., 1999, 2003). King (1991) coined the term racially dysconscious, which similarly describes individuals engaging in acritical reflection as those who blame inequity on negative characteristics of people of color. According to Watts et al. (1999, 2003), as individuals gain awareness, they move beyond the acritical stage towards the liberation stage. Thus, sociopolitical development theory suggests that some individuals (i.e., those between the acritical and liberation stages) may hold both critical and acritical beliefs. Still, existing studies have largely focused on individuals engaging in critical or acritical reflection alone, neglecting the possibility of people holding both types of beliefs. To address this gap, the current study employs latent profile analysis to examine Black parents' beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education. The use of this person-centered approach allows me to test for profiles of parents engaging in critical and acritical reflection.

In line with the critical consciousness framework, the actions that critically race-conscious parents take to ensure their children's academic success are their critical actions (or critical parent engagement; Marchand et al., 2019). In the current study, I examine Black parents' critical actions in the form of their home and school involvement as well as their racial and academic socialization. Associations between parents' critical reflection or related factors (e.g., racial discrimination) and these forms of parent engagement have been demonstrated throughout literature, which I review in a later section.

The critical consciousness framework proposes that political efficacy may moderate the relation between critical reflection and critical action (Diemer & Rapa, 2016). More specifically, Freire (1973, 1993) asserts that if individuals reflect critically, but are not confident in their ability to act then critical action is not likely to take place. Within the critical consciousness literature, scholars have begun to consider factors other than political efficacy (i.e., critical motivation) that may motivate people to act individually or collectively, in ways that will affect sociopolitical change (Diemer et al., 2016; Jemal, 2017; Mathews, et al., 2020; Rapa & Geldhof, 2020). For some Black parents, a lack of trust in their children's school in conjunction with their racism awareness may further motivate them to act in ways to support their children's academic success, thus contributing to sociopolitical change (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). In this way, a lack of school trust may represent a motivator of action for critically race-conscious parents and strengthen positive associations between their critical reflection and critical actions. In this study, school trust is tested as a moderator of reflection and action associations for critically race-conscious parents.

This study was also guided by attribution theory (Kelley & Michela, 1980; Weiner, 1985). According to attribution theory, the attributions a person makes for social inequity inform the actions they take in response to inequity. When a person attributes inequity to individual characteristics (e.g., effort) of the underperforming groups they are likely to hold negative stereotypes about the underperforming group and express a decreased willingness to work with members from the group (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006). Conversely, when a person ascribes inequity to societal and systemic issues (e.g., discrimination, injustice), they are more likely to have positive feelings toward the group and provide necessary support (Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009; Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013).

For Black parents, the attributions they make for the Black-White achievement gap (a specific category of social inequity) may inform the actions they take to support their child's academic success. In the current study, I use Black parents' achievement gap attributions to operationalize their engagement in critical reflection and acritical reflection in relation to their parental involvement. I consider Black parents' structural attributions for the Black-White achievement gap (e.g., racial discrimination and bias) to be indicative of their critical reflection: an awareness of the ways racism systematically works to disadvantage Black students, especially in comparison to their white peers (Watts et al., 2011). Conversely, I consider Black parents' attributions for the Black-White achievement gap that assign blame to characteristics of Black students (i.e., individual attributions) and their families or cultural norms (i.e., cultural attributions) to be indicative of their acritical reflection and internalization of the negative stereotypes against Black people (Reyna, 2000).

Reflecting on Inequity

To my knowledge, only attribution studies have examined factors which I conceptualize as critical and acritical reflection together. In these studies, researchers typically use quantitative measures and ask participants to indicate how much they attribute a given social inequity (e.g., poverty/wealth, racial differences in academic achievement) to various structural (i.e., racist/classist individuals, policies, and institutions within the society), individual (i.e., characteristics internal to the marginalized group), and cultural factors (i.e., aspects of the familial environment or group "culture").

Within attribution studies, there is an abundance of research demonstrating that in the United States people are more likely to attribute social inequities to the characteristics and/or culture of individuals as opposed to structural and societal issues (Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Feagin,

1972; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Robinson, 2009; Rytina et al., 1970; Smith, 1985; Smith & Stone, 1989). This research also finds that individuals from marginalized groups are more likely than members of more socially privileged groups to endorse structural attributions (Bobo, 1991; Furnham, 2003; Hunt, 1996, 2004; Lee et al., 1990). Women, Black (or African American) and Latinx, and individuals who have a lower income or education level are more likely to endorse structural attributions for inequity than their more privileged counterparts. Furthermore, a few studies have found that individuals from marginalized groups sometimes endorse more structural attributions for inequity than individual or cultural attributions (Bañales et al., 2020; Bullock, 1999; Bullock & Limbert, 2003; Hunt, 1996; Kluegel & Smith, 1986). Much of this research has centered the attributions people make for economic inequality (i.e., poverty and wealth). In more recent years, scholars have begun to quantitatively investigate the attributions people make for racial inequality in academic achievement (Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Kuhn, 2016; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009; Sperling et al., 2017; Valant & Newark, 2016). Still, little is known regarding the attributions people from marginalized groups make for inequity concerning members of their social group and how their attributions may inform their actions. The current study extends this knowledge by examining the attributions Black parents make for the Black-White achievement gap and how their attributions relate to their parental involvement.

In studies centering critical or acritical reflection alone, it is not clear how the two forms of reflection may be related to each other. However, studies examining attributions for inequity reveal two phenomena that may be important to consider in the current study. First, studies investigating structural and individual attributions together demonstrate that some people believe structural and individual factors both contribute to inequity (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Hunt, 2004; King, 1991; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Robinson, 2011). For instance, through his investigation of

U.S. teachers' and social workers' beliefs about the causes of poverty, Robinson (2011) discovered that individual (e.g., drug abuse and personal effort) and structural (e.g., prejudice, low wages, poor quality jobs and schools) factors were endorsed by a majority of the study participants as an important explanation for poverty. A majority of participants in the study also believed factors resembling cultural attributions (e.g., family values) were important causes of poverty. Similar majority endorsement of structural attributions along with individual or cultural attributions has been observed in other studies involving causal attributions for poverty (Hunt, 2004; Kluegel & Smith, 1986). These studies all examined beliefs about a different type of social inequity (i.e., economic). Nonetheless, it is possible that some people reflect similarly when thinking about racial inequity in education. Qualitative studies have also found evidence of individuals engaging in critical and acritical reflection (i.e., endorsing both structural and individual attributions; Godrfrey & Wolf, 2016; King, 1991). For example, Godfrey and Wolf (2016) interviewed low-income immigrant Dominican and Mexican and native African American mothers from a large Northeastern city and inquired about the mothers' perceptions of economic inequality. They found that although all the mothers attributed inequality to individual characteristics, some mothers' explanations of economic inequality included both structural (e.g., job quality and availability and tax codes) and individual factors. These studies demonstrate that some individuals have an understanding of inequity that is not purely critical or acritical. Their engagement resembles a stage of sociopolitical development that is in between the acritical and liberation stages (Watts et al., 1999, 2003).

The second phenomenon identified in studies employing both structural and individual attributions to examine beliefs about the causes of inequity is that for some people the two types of attributions may be positively correlated (Bañales et al., 2020; Bobbio et al., 2010; Bullock,

1999; Hunt, 1996). Positive correlations have been identified in studies concerning attributions for poverty and in one study examining Black parents' attributions for the Black-White achievement gap. Hunt (1996) described this phenomenon as "dual consciousness" when he observed it for both Black and Latino participants in his study, but not for white participants. The positive correlations suggest that greater engagement in critical reflection is associated with greater engagement in acritical reflection. Thus, this research demonstrates that individuals may engage in both forms of reflection, as implied by Watts et al's. (1999, 2003) stages of sociopolitical development. However, greater critical reflection may not entail less acritical reflection.

In the current study, I considered structural and individual attributions as two distinct forms of reflection (critical and acritical, respectively) that people can engage in simultaneously. I used profile analysis to account for the fact that there may be patterns of parents' reflections relating to their involvement differently. Based on the theory and empirical work described above, I hypothesized that at least three profiles of parent reflection are likely to exist. First, one profile is likely to represent the theorized critically race-conscious parent. This parent is highly engaged in critical reflection and not at all engaged in acritical reflection. In other words, they attribute racial inequity to structural factors (e.g., racial discrimination and bias) as opposed to negative characteristics and actions of Black students and parents (e.g., effort and involvement). The second profile should represent the theorized racially dysconscious parent. This parents' engagement is the exact opposite of the critically race-conscious parent in terms of engagement: they are unaware of the role of racism in perpetuating racial inequity and instead view inequity as a product of the inferiority of Black students' and their parents'. Finally, the third parent profile is likely to be engaged in both forms of reflection and attribute racial inequity to

structural and individual/cultural factors (i.e., their endorsement of neither factor would be low). Thus, I hypothesized that there would be at least three profiles for parents' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education: 1) high critical and low acritical reflection, 2) low critical and high acritical reflection, and 3) mixed critical and acritical reflection.

Reflection and Parent Involvement

Critical parent engagement is defined as "parents' recognition of issues related to race and racism in schools that informs the actions they take to ensure their children's academic success" (Marchand et al., 2019, pg. 367). Black parents who have experienced racial discrimination or are otherwise aware of the possibility that their children may experience racial discrimination at school, parents I consider race-conscious, report being involved in traditional ways (e.g., communicating with teachers and providing additional academic enrichment) in order to ensure their children are treated respectfully and to compensate for the academic experiences they may not get at school (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). Furthermore, race-conscious parents engage in racial and academic socialization practices with their children as a means of teaching them ways to manage microaggressions (i.e., racial socialization) and to make their high expectations clear, especially when teachers do not, (i.e., academic socialization; Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; McNeil et al., 2016; Reynolds, 2010). The actions involved in critical parent engagement have been positively linked to various academic and psychological outcomes in youth including student GPA, school and classroom engagement, academic competence, and school adjustment (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Harris-Britt et al., 2007; James et al., 2019; Neblett et al., 2008; Ross, 2017; Wang & Huguley, 2012; Wang et al., 2020). In this study I investigate critical parental engagement by examining associations between Black parents' reflection profiles and three types of parental involvement practices: 1)

traditional school-based involvement, 2) racial socialization, and 3) academic socialization.

Traditional School-Based Involvement

Black parents' awareness of racism and racial discrimination in the school setting may influence how they involve themselves in their children's education at school and at home (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; McKay et al., 2003; Posey-Maddox, 2017; Ross et al., 2018; Rowley et al., 2010). Black parents' awareness of racism may be positively associated with their at-home involvement (e.g., homework assistance) or unrelated (McKay et al., 2003; Ross et al., 2018; Rowley et al., 2010). In regard to school involvement, some scholars have found negative associations with parents' racism awareness, while others have found no association at all (McKay et al., 2003; Ross et al., 2018; Rowley et al., 2010). Specifically, although McKay et al.'s (2003) research suggests that for Black parents, being attuned to the existence of racism may discourage involvement at school, Ross et al.'s (2018) and Rowley et al.'s (2010) studies found no direct associations. In their study, Rowley and her colleagues (2010) discovered that parents' previous experiences of racial discrimination (a factor related to one's knowledge of racism) were not associated directly with their school involvement. However, parents' positive experiences with their child's teachers moderated the link between parents' recalled experiences and their school involvement such that parents who reported having fewer positive relationships with their child's teacher and who remembered receiving discrimination from their own teachers were more involved than parents who recalled similar discrimination. Relatedly, in a study using semi-structured interviews with Black parents whose children were attending schools in predominantly white suburban school districts, some parents expressed that their concerns regarding their children experiencing racism at school and the school not meeting their children's needs motivated them to supplement their children's learning at home and monitor their

children's schooling more closely through unannounced visits (Posey-Maddox, 2017). Collectively, these findings suggest that the association between parents' racism awareness and school-based involvement may vary as a function of other factors, including the quality of the parent-teacher relationship. Specifically, when Black parents are aware of racism and do not have a positive relationship with their child's school, they may be especially motivated to be actively involved at the school.

In their study, McKay et al. (2003) did not account for variables indicating the quality of the parent-teacher relationship so it is not clear how such factors may have impacted the parents' involvement at school. However, in their study parents' racism awareness was positively associated with their home involvement, demonstrating that although the race-conscious parents were less involved at their children's schools they were highly involved in their children's education at home. It is possible that similar to parents in Allen and White-Smith's (2018) study, the parents in McKay et al.'s study experienced exclusionary practices from their children's schools that prevented them from being involved in the school, despite their awareness; thus, these parents focused their involvement at home. This research illustrates the complex associations between parents' racism awareness and their involvement at home and school in traditional ways, which may be influenced by factors related to family-school relationship quality such as trust. Thus, I did not have a priori hypotheses concerning the associations between profile membership and home and school involvement; however, I hypothesized that for parents in the critically race-conscious profile, school trust would moderate the association between parents' awareness and involvement. Specifically, I hypothesized that parents with lower levels of school trust would be more involved at home and school than parents with higher levels of school trust.

At least one study has examined parents' achievement attributions in relation to their parental involvement practices. Georgiou and Tourva's (2007) studied Greek Cypriot parents' attributions for their children's achievement in relation to their parental involvement (i.e., assisting with homework, monitoring the child's non-academic activities, and developing the child's interests/hobbie). For the parents in their study, attributing achievement to their child's effort was negatively associated with parental involvement, while attributing achievement to their own actions and efforts was positively associated with parental involvement and their attributions involving teachers were unrelated to their involvement.

It is important to note that the parents in Georgiou and Tourva's study were asked to make attributions regarding their own child's achievement as opposed to the achievement of a racially marginalized group to which they and their child belong. For Black parents making attributions about the Black-White achievement gap, although the target group for their attributions may be Black children in general, their child is a member of the target group. Indeed, Black parents in one study were more likely to make structural attributions when reflecting on the causes of racial inequity in education (Bañales et al., 2020); however, for Black parents engaging in acritical reflection alone, their parental involvement may depend on the extent to which they attribute racial inequity to Black students compared to Black parents. The goal of this study is to investigate associations between profiles of parents' reflection (i.e., critical and acritical together). Although these groups of attributions are conceptually different, they both represent a parent engaging in acritical reflection. Therefore, in the current study attributions involving Black students and parents are combined into a single measure (i.e., individual/cultural attributions). Georgiou and Tourva's study suggests that parental involvement activity in relation to acritical reflection alone; however, it does not speak to possible associations when accounting

for critical reflection.

Racial Socialization

Racial socialization refers to the messages parents send to their children regarding race (Hughes et al., 2006; Lesane-Brown, 2006). Parents' awareness of racism and racial discrimination through their own experiences and those of their children influences how they socialize their children around race (Banerjee et al., 2016; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; McNeil et al., 2016; Saleem et al., 2016; White-Johnson et al., 2010). Specifically, when Black parents or their children personally experience racial discrimination, parents are more likely to discuss race with their children (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Neblett et al., 2006). Following these discriminatory experiences, parents may be especially likely to send messages aimed at preparing their children for experiences of racial bias, encouraging them not to trust white people, and reinforcing a sense of racial pride (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Saleem et al., 2016). These conversations are important for Black youth because they have the power to lessen the negative effects of racial discrimination on youth's school-related outcomes (i.e., GPA and educational aspirations), self-esteem, and mental health (Harris-Britt et al., 2007; Neblett et al., 2008; Reynolds & Gonzales-Backen, 2017; Wang & Huguley, 2012) by teaching them how best to navigate and resist racism.

Only one known study has used parents' achievement gap attributions as a means of examining their critical reflection in relation to their racial socialization practices (Bañales et al., 2020). Bañales et al. (2020) investigated changes in Black adolescents' attributions for the Black-White achievement gap from 10th grade to 12th grade in relation to their parents' attributions for the gap and racial socialization practices. They found that for parents, endorsing structural attributions (i.e. critical reflection) was positively related to their concurrent

preparation for bias and racial pride socialization with their children. Furthermore, parent-reported structural attributions were predictive of their child's structural attributions two years later.

Academic Socialization

Parental academic socialization refers to the ways in which parents communicate the role and importance of education to their children (Hill & Tyson, 2009). As noted, parents' awareness of structural oppression that their children may experience is likely to lead them to talk more about race and the importance of academic achievement. Academic socialization is another way that Black parents get involved in their children's education. Messages that relay the importance of hard work and effort in school and encourage youth to believe in themselves academically have been positively linked to youth's academic outcomes such as classroom engagement, academic self-esteem, well-being, and academic persistence (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Ross, 2017). Thus, existing research highlights the importance of academic socialization for youth's educational outcomes. Some qualitative research suggests that Black parents may be especially likely to engage in academic socialization with their children when they feel excluded by their child's school (Allen & White-Smith, 2018). Still, there is limited knowledge of the factors that may prompt parents to engage in academic socialization. Therefore, the current study builds upon existing literature by examining how Black parents' beliefs about racial inequity and their school trust relate to their academic socialization.

Based on the literature discussed thus far, I did not have a priori hypotheses concerning the associations between profile membership and home and school involvement; however, I hypothesized that membership in the critically race-conscious profile would be positively associated with engagement in racial and academic socialization. Furthermore, I hypothesized

negative associations between membership in the racially dysconscious parent profile and socialization. Finally, given the dearth of research investigating the consequences of engaging in critical and acritical reflection, I did not have a priori hypotheses for parents in a profile with mixed critical and acritical reflection.

The Role of Parent Trust

Parent school trust entails having confidence that teachers and schools will care for their children's safety and welfare while assisting them in building the academic skills necessary for living a "responsible personal and civic life" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). School trust is enhanced by positive family-school interactions, students' feelings of belonging at school, and parents' perceived influence on school decisions (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Adams & Forsyth, 2007; Adams et al., 2009). Although parent trust tends to be positively associated with parental involvement (i.e., school visits and academic assistance at home; Adams & Christenson, 1998; Beycioglu et al., 2013; Ross et al., 2018; Santiago et al., 2016), it may operate differently for different parents. For some parents, a lack of trust in schools --or, more specifically, concerns that school personnel may pose threats to their children's learning and well-being-- in addition to their racism awareness may also motivate their involvement (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). This relation was observed in the study conducted by Rowley and her colleagues (previously described) using variables related to racism awareness (i.e., racial discrimination) and school trust (i.e., parent-teacher relationship quality).

Guided by the above research, the current study explored school trust as a moderator in the relations between Black parents' reflection on racial inequity in schools and their involvement. I hypothesized that within the critically race-conscious profile, parents with low trust would be engaging in more home and school involvement and racial and academic

socialization than parents with high trust. Furthermore, given that racism awareness is likely to increase involvement for parents with low trust, I hypothesized that school trust would not moderate associations for racially dysconscious parents (i.e., parents in a profile characterized by low critical and high acritical reflection). Finally, parents with mixed reflections may have high or low engagement in critical reflection. Thus, I hypothesized that for parents with mixed reflections consisting of high critical reflection, school trust would moderate the associations between reflection and involvement in a manner similar to critically race-conscious parents.

Current Study

The current study examined patterns in Black parents' beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education in relation to parental involvement practices and school trust. Much of the research involving parents' awareness of racism and the implications of it for their interactions with their children's schools has been based on parents' personal experiences of discrimination (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; McNeil et al., 2016; Rowley et al., 2010; Saleem et al., 2016). While personal experiences with discrimination may certainly increase an individual's awareness of racism in schools, the consequences of Black parents' general knowledge (or lack thereof) regarding educational inequities are also likely important predictors of the actions parents take to prepare their children to be successful at school. By primarily focusing on parents' experiences with racial discrimination, current research negates the possibility that parents with little experience with interpersonal racial discrimination may be aware of the presence of racism in broader society. To address this gap, the current study examines associations between one type of racism awareness assessed as patterns in Black parents' beliefs surrounding the causes of racial inequity in education (structural vs. individual and cultural attributions) and their parental involvement.

As previously stated, Bañales et al.'s (2020) study is the only known study to have used parents' achievement gap attributions as a means of examining their critical reflection in relation to their parenting practices (i.e., racial socialization). Their study adds to our understanding of how critical reflection may relate to racial socialization for Black parents but leaves the question of how their reflection may inform other forms of involvement more specific to school (i.e., actions and academic messaging). Furthermore, their study considered parents' structural and individual attributions separately and thus could not account for that possibility that some parents might endorse both types of attributions. The current study extends this research by using latent profile analysis to explore how Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in schools may relate to their racial and academic messaging and behaviors. The research questions that guided the current study were as follows:

1. What are existing patterns in Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education?
2. Are Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education associated with their parental involvement?
3. Does school trust moderate associations between Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education and their parental involvement?

Method

Participants

Data were collected as part of a longitudinal study examining the racial beliefs, and experiences of African American youth and their parents/guardians (referred to henceforth as parents) as they relate to the youth's achievement in STEM courses. The sample was drawn from three school districts in southeast Michigan. The districts are near one another, and students move relatively freely between the districts through Michigan's Schools of Choice program. The

three districts tended to be working class, with median family incomes ranging from $32,000 to $46,000 compared to the state average of about $52,500 (US Census Bureau, 2016). One-third to one-half of the students in the school districts were African American and most of the other students in the schools were white.

To reach the parents of African American students, sealed envelopes containing a cover letter explaining the study and a parental consent form were sent home with students listed in school records as Black or African American. Completed consent forms were returned to the school. Contact information was used to call parents to give further information about the study and to schedule a time for the student to participate in the survey at school. The parent survey was administered online, with a paper option upon request, during the 2015 - 2016, 2016 - 2017, and 2017 - 2018 academic school years. Parents were instructed to respond to the questionnaire items with the target child (i.e., the child also participating in the study) in mind. Parents responded to demographic questions about themselves, including their age, sex, and education level. The most recent wave of questionnaire data for each parent was used in the current study.

The total sample included 179 caregivers (referred to henceforth as parents) of middle school students (sixth grade, n = 14; seventh grade, n = 42; eighth grade, n = 123; 57% female) attending schools in southeastern Michigan. The parents ranged from 28 to 74 years of age (M_{age} = 41.79, SD = 8.33). Eighty-four percent of the parents (n = 151) identified as female. Seventy-nine percent (n = 142) were the biological mothers of the target child. The remaining participants were fathers (n = 20), stepmothers (n = 2), grandmothers (n = 11), grandfathers (n = 2), one aunt, and one legal guardian who did not specify their relationship further. All participants identified as either African American/Black (n = 169) or multiracial, including African American/Black (n = 10). The participants reported education levels ranging from junior high school or less to

professional degrees, with about half (n = 92, 51%) reporting some college or less. Seventy-nine percent of the participants reported being either single (n = 74) or married (n = 69). The remaining participants self-reported as single and living with a partner (n = 8), divorced (n = 17), separated (n = 7), or widowed (n = 3). Over half of the participants reported working full-time (n = 109, 61%).

Measures

The internal consistency (i.e., reliability) of the following measures was determined using Cronbach's alpha (α) and mean inter-item correlations (IIC). Unlike Cronbach's alpha, IIC calculations are not influenced by the number of items in a measure and therefore may be important to consider when using measures containing few items (DeVellis, 2012). An acceptable IIC value ranges from .15 to .50 (Clark & Watson, 1995).

Critical and Acritical Reflection

Critical and acritical reflections were assessed using 20 items (7 critical, 13 acritical) that asked parents to indicate how much they think the Black-White achievement gap is caused by structural, individual, and cultural reasons. Items used in previous studies influenced the development of the items used to assess Black-White achievement gap beliefs (Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009). Therefore, the items used in the current study have similar wording to and reflect similar ideas as those used in previous studies. The items used a nine-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "a lot" with a "somewhat" midpoint. Critical reflection items were structural attributions that centered aspects of the educational environment hindering the success of Black students (e.g., "Tests are biased against Black students"). Acritical reflection items were divided into two subcategories: individual attributions emphasized characteristics of Black students (e.g., "Lack of Black student effort") and cultural attributions

emphasized the role of their families (e.g., Black parents are less involved at school). This measure has not been validated with previous studies (i.e., no Cronbach's alpha available).

The items were not originally developed with the purpose of measuring critical and acritical reflection. When using measures of inequity beliefs to assess critical and acritical reflection it is important for the source of blame to be clear. Therefore, items that did not clearly identify characteristics of schools and/or society, Black students, or Black families as causes for the Black-White achievement gap were not included in the final measures for the current study. For example, three of the items mentioned Black parents or families "not having good experiences" with academic subjects. It was not clear from these items if Black parents/families or some other source (e.g., teachers) were the implied cause of the quality of their experiences. I tested correlations between the ambiguous items and the other study items that clearly identified a source of inequity. This analysis revealed that all the ambiguous items were highly correlated with structural and individual or cultural attributions, suggesting they were not uniquely associated with any one dimension and could not be accurately categorized. Table 2.1 provides the full list of original items. Furthermore, although individual and cultural attributions are qualitatively different from one another, they both represent what King (1991) defined as racial dysconsciousness (i.e., acritical reflection). The inter-item correlations and alpha coefficient also suggested that the items could be used to measure a single construct. Therefore, individual and cultural attributions were combined to form a single measure for analysis. The two subscales demonstrated sufficient reliability (structural α =.84, IIC = .46; individual/cultural α = .90, IIC = .42).

School Trust

School trust was measured using seven items that asked parents to report their sense of trust in their children's teachers and other school personnel. This scale demonstrated satisfactory reliability (α = .86) with a sample of Black parents and was correlated with parents' public regard (*r* = .27), home (*r* = .15) and school (*r* = .20) involvement, and perceptions of child preparation for academic tasks (*r* = .26), as reported by Ross et al. (2018). The measure included four items regarding racial trust (e.g., "My child's teachers treat children of all races the same.") and three items capturing more general trust (e.g., "I would feel comfortable talking with my child's teachers about his/her performance in school."). A previous study using exploratory factor analysis with a large sample of Black parents showed that a single factor model was a better fit than a two-factor model for these seven items and the single measure demonstrated satisfactory reliability (α = .86; Ross et al., 2018). Parents responded to questions on a 4-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 4 = "strongly agree"). Internal consistency was satisfactory with the current sample (α = .88, IIC = .51).

School Involvement

In order to measure parents' school involvement parents were asked to report how often they had participated in the following activities related to school involvement that directly involved their child: In the past school year (including summer school), (1) how often have you set up a time to talk with your child's teacher/principal/counselor?; (2) how often has your child's teacher/principal/ counselor set up a time to talk with you about your child?; (3) how often have you participated in organizing or helping with the activities of those organizations your child belongs to? and (4) how often have you visited your child's school? Parents responded to a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = "0 times a year" to 5 = "more than 6 times a year". This scale demonstrated satisfactory reliability (α = .73) with a sample of Black parents (Ross et al., 2018).

The goal of the current study was to measure parent-initiated involvement. Therefore, the second item was excluded from the measure. The resulting items demonstrated marginal reliability using Cronbach's alpha and sufficient reliability using IIC (α = .62; IIC = .36).

Home Involvement

Parents' home involvement was assessed using three items that asked parents to report how frequently during the past school year (including summer school) they had: (1) helped their child with his or her homework, (2) checked their child's homework and assignments, and (3) talked to their child about what goes on at school. Parents responded using a 4-point scale ranging from 1 = "never" to 4 = "all the time". This scale demonstrated satisfactory reliability (α = .76) with a sample of Black parents (Ross et al., 2018). The home involvement scale demonstrated satisfactory reliability in the current study with an alpha of .71 and an IIC of .43.

Racial Socialization

Three subscales of the Racial Socialization Questionnaire-Parent (Lesane Brown et al., 2008) were used to assess how frequently in the past year parents had told their child a statement encouraging them to take pride in their cultural heritage (4 items; racial pride) or preparing them for experiencing racial adversity (4 items; racial barriers). Racial pride messages were measured with items including, "Told your child that he/she should be proud to be Black." Racial barrier messages were assessed using items such as, "Told your child that some people try to keep Black people from being successful." Parents rated each item on a 3-point scale (0 = "never"; 1 = "once or twice"; 2 = "more than twice"). In previous studies, internal consistency has been demonstrated with a sample of Black fathers (racial pride α = .80; racial barriers α = .89; Cooper et al., 2015). The alpha reliabilities and average inter-item correlations for the scales in the current study were satisfactory (racial pride α = .73, IIC = .41; racial barrier α = .79, IIC = .49).

Academic Socialization

I assessed the ways parents socialize their children regarding academics in two ways: effort (4 items) and support/encouragement (5 items). For both academic socialization scales, parents were instructed to indicate how well each statement described something they did or said during interactions or conversations with their children about school during the last three months. The effort subscale of the Educational Socialization Scale (Bempechat et al., 1999; Ross, 2017) was used to assess parents' effort socialization. This measure demonstrated satisfactory reliability with samples of Black (α = .72) and Latinx (α = .76) parents (Cross et al., 2019; Ross, 2017). An example item for effort socialization is, "I tell my child that hard work is the key to success." The support/encouragement subscale consisted of items assessing how likely parents were to communicate messages of academic support to their child and encourage them to try their best (Ross & Rowley, 2019). Example items include, "I tell my child that it is ok to come to me for help with any schoolwork (e.g., homework, school reports, papers, project, study for tests" and "I encourage my child to feel confident about his/her schoolwork." The support/encouragement measure was validated in a previous study with Black parents in which it demonstrated satisfactory reliability (α = .83; Ross & Rowley, 2019). Parents responded to all academic socialization items using a 5-point scale ranging from (1 = "not at all like me" to 5 = "just like me"). The alpha reliability and average inter-item correlation for effort was sufficient (effort α = .74, IIC = .44) The alpha reliability for support/encouragement was marginal and the IIC was sufficient (support/encouragement α = .63., IIC = .30).

Analysis Plan

The data were first checked for missingness. The distribution of the data was then checked for non-normality and outliers. Further preliminary analysis consisted of obtaining

descriptive statistics and performing correlational analyses on the study variables using SPSS Version 28 (IBM Corp, 2021).

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted using MPLUS software version 8 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010). First, the factorial structures of the structural and individual/cultural achievement gap attribution measures were checked using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Multiple fit indices were used to evaluate the model: Chi-square (χ^2), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). For a good fitting model, χ^2 should be nonsignificant; however, it may be significant due to large sample size. Additionally, the RMSEA should be .06 or lower, the CFI and TLI should be .90 or higher, and the SRMR should be .08 or lower (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2010; Marsh et al., 2004; Martens, 2005). The maximum likelihood robust (MLR) estimator was used. This estimator is useful when analyzing continuous data that do not have a normal distribution, such as in the current study. Missing values were handled with full information maximum likelihood (FIML) (Dong & Peng, 2013; Enders, 2010). FIML handles missing data by using all available data for each case to compute missing data casewise. FIML is a preferable method for handling missing data in comparison to methods such as listwise and pairwise deletion due to its ability to produce unbiased parameter estimates when data are missing completely at random (Enders & Bandalos, 2001). Factor scores were extracted from the CFA and used in the latent profile analysis (LPA).

Second, the LPA was performed using the extracted factor scores for structural attributions and individual/cultural attributions as indicators. Models assessing up to 7 profiles were estimated using 7000 random sets of start values with 300 iterations each and the 200 best solutions were retained for the final stage optimizations to avoid selecting a local solution (Hipp

& Bauer, 2006). Several statistical tests and indices were used to select the model with the optimal number of profiles (McLachlan & Peel, 2000): the Bayesian information criteria (BIC), the sample-size adjusted BIC (aBIC), the Akaike-information criterion (AIC), the bootstrap likelihood ratio test (BLRT), and the likelihood ratio test (LRT). The aBIC was used in addition to the traditionally used AIC and BIC indicators because the aBIC is stricter than the AIC in identifying models but less strict than the BIC (Dziak et al., 2020). Lower values of AIC, BIC, and aBIC indicate a better fit. The different LRTs consisted of comparing a k-profile model with a k-1 profile model. A significant *p*-value indicates that the k-profile model should be retained. In addition, the posterior probabilities of profile membership and entropy values were used to determine classification accuracy. Classification is accurate when posterior probabilities are dissimilar across classes and the entropy value is greater than 0.80 (Tein et al., 2013). Finally, I considered the theoretical meaning of the profiles to determine the best solution to retain. When conducting LPAs with small sample sizes, it is possible for the best fitting model to contain at least one profile with few cases. Therefore, models containing profiles with less than 1% of the sample and/or numerically $n < 25$ were also considered but needed to be rigorously grounded in theory and research to be retained (Bauer & Curran, 2003; da Silva et al., 2019). Once the best fitting model was selected, the corresponding profile indicator variable was extracted and imported into SPSS for further analysis.

Next, demographic (i.e., parent's age and education level and child's sex and grade level) variation across profiles was tested followed by profile comparisons of critical and acritical reflection and school trust. These tests were performed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with post-hoc comparisons between identified profiles using Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels.

Finally, hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis with two steps was used to examine the effects of parents' profile membership, school trust, and the interaction of the two variables on involvement (i.e., traditional home and school involvement and racial and academic socialization). There were six models in total (i.e., one for each parental involvement variable observed). In the first step, parents' age and education level and child's sex, age, and grade level were entered as covariates. The parent's sex was not included as a covariate due to the small subgroup sample size for males. Two dummy coded variables representing the parent profiles (with profile 1 parents as the reference group) and school trust were also entered at this step. In the second step, the interaction variables were added to the models. Significant interaction effects ($\alpha = 0.10$) were further examined by comparing mean parental involvement for parents with low (-½ standard deviation) and high (+½ standard deviation) school trust in each profile.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

The data were first analyzed for missingness by computing dummy variables that captured the amount of missing data for each participant across all variables of interest and then observing variable descriptives. Missing data for each participant ranged from zero to fifty-four percent, with nearly sixty-nine percent of the participants having no missing data. All variables of interest (i.e., critical and acritical reflection, school trust, and all measures of parental involvement) had less than ten percent missing data. Nine participants needed to be removed from the final sample because they did not respond to the items encompassing the achievement gap attribution measure, thus the MPlus software would have excluded them from the latent profile analysis. Prior to removing these participants, Little's (1988) test was used to test if the data were missing completely at random (i.e., MCAR). The test was not significant, chi-square =

554.97, df = 505, $p > .05$, confirming that observed missingness was missing completely at random and the nine participants were removed from the dataset.

All variables of interest were tested for outliers that might significantly change the analytical results using Cook's test. Any participant with a Cook's d value greater than 1 is likely to significantly impact analysis and the researcher should consider removing them from the study (Cook, 1977). Thus, four participants were removed from the final sample as a result of having a large Cook's d value (i.e., greater than 10) while conducting the latent profile analysis. All analyses were performed again without these individuals. Little's (1988) test was used again to test if the data in the final dataset were MCAR. The test was not significant, chi-square = 369.93, df = 330, $p > .05$, thus observed missingness was determined to be missing completely at random.

Preliminary analyses were also conducted with the final sample on the study variables (see Table 2.2). There was a wide range in parents' critical (min. = 1.00, max. = 7.57) and acritical (min. = 1.00, max. = 5.85) reflection scores. On average, parents were more critical ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.65$) than acritical ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.20$), $t(178) = 12.23$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, zero-order correlations indicated that while critical and acritical reflection were moderately and positively correlated, their associations with school trust and the different measures of parental involvement differed in some ways. Critical reflection was moderately and negatively correlated with school trust, but acritical reflection did not have a significant association with school trust. Critical reflection was also positively associated with racial pride and barrier socialization and was not significantly associated with home and school involvement or academic socialization. Acritical reflection was positively associated with school involvement and racial barrier socialization, negatively associated with support and encouragement socialization, and

unassociated with home involvement, racial pride socialization, and effort socialization.

CFA: Achievement Gap Attributions

I conducted the CFA by entering the structural and individual/cultural achievement gap attribution items into a single model and testing the fit of a two-factor structure. Initial model fit was poor: Chi-square = 480.78, df = 169, p < .001; RMSEA = .10 90% CI [.09 - .11], p < .001; CFI = .74; TLI = .71; SRMR = .08. Modification indices suggested shared error variances between multiple items. Typically, modification indices are not used to improve model fit during measure validation; however, given that the measure used in the current study has not been validated previously, modification indices were considered in order to obtain a well-fitting model. The modification indices (M.I.) suggested that six pairs of items with M.I. values ranging from 25.67 to 58.61 should be allowed to correlate: PAGA24 and PAGA22 (M.I. = 27.15); PAGA03 and PAGA01 (M.I. = 58.61); PAGA07 and PAGA03 (M.I. = 31.22); PAGA14 and PAGA10 (M.I. = 28.46); PAGA19 and PAGA16 (M.I. = 25.67); PAGA25 and PAGA21 (M.I. = 28.21). All the suggested modifications involved items within the same factor and were justified given the similarities in items. For example, PAGE03 (i.e., "Black students lack math ability.") and PAGA01 (i.e., "Blacks are less intelligent.") had the largest M.I. value. Both items represent individual attributions and refer to conceptually related characteristics of individuals (i.e., intelligence and ability; Nicholls et al., 1986). Therefore, all the suggested modifications were accepted and the new model was tested. This model was a good fit to the data: Chi-square = 271.44, df = 163, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .06 90% CI [.05 - .07], $p > .05$; CFI = .91; TLI = .90; SRMR = .07. The factor scores were extracted and used in the following analysis.

Latent Profile Analysis: Parent Reflection Profiles

Latent profile analysis (LPA) were performed using factor scores extracted from the CFA model. As shown in Table 2.3, the different indicators suggested a mix of possible profile solutions. First, the AIC, BIC, and aBIC dropped in value with each additional profile added to the model. For this reason, change in the value of each indicator was also considered in identifying the best profile solution. When examining information criteria for models with increasingly more profiles, a small change in AIC, BIC, or aBIC between two models indicates that the model with fewer profiles is likely to be the best fitting model (Ferguson et al., 2020). Through examining the changes, I found that the AIC, BIC, and aBIC each dropped considerably while moving from a one to two, two to three, and three to four profile solution. The changes in these values were small when moving from a four to five profile solution, suggesting that the four-profile solution fit the data best. Second, I considered the BLRT values. These values were significant for all models except the seven-profile model, suggesting that the seven-profile model was not a better fit to the data than the six-profile model and the six-profile model should therefore be retained. Third, I examined the LRT values. The value for the four-profile model was not significant, suggesting that the four-profile model was not a better fit than the three-profile model and thus the three-profile model should be retained.

Finally, I considered whether each possible solution contained at least ten percent of the sample in addition to the theoretical meaning and classification accuracy of the profile solutions. As previously stated, models containing profiles with a small number of cases were considered as possible best fitting models given that the small sample size used in the current study made it possible to have an inadequate representation of the true profiles. Still, for a model fitting this description to be considered, the profile with few cases needed to be characteristically distinct

from all other profiles in the model. All models with more than three profiles contained at least one profile with less than ten percent of the sample. In comparing the three- and four-profile models I determined that the four-profile model did not contain a profile that was distinct from the three-profile model. The additional profile in the four-profile model was similar to the third profile in the three-profile model. Both profiles were characterized by their similar levels of critical and acritical reflection (Profile 3 of three-profile model: critical $M = 4.39$ and acritical $M = 4.36$; Profile 4 of four-profile model: critical $M = 4.92$ and acritical $M = 5.14$) and above average acritical reflection. The fourth profile appeared to emerge as a result of the third profile of the three-profile model being split. Similarly, models containing five, six, and seven profiles contained profiles that resulted from profiles within the three-profile solution being split, suggesting that models with four or more profiles did not contain profiles of parents' reflections distinct from those in the three-profile model. Additionally, the posterior probabilities and entropy of the three-profile model suggested that parents were classified into distinct profiles with sufficient accuracy. Taken together, the results of the LPA suggested that the three-profile model was the best fitting model.

Identification of Parent Reflection Profiles

Figures 1 and 2 and Table 2.4 summarize the characteristics of the three parent profiles identified by critical and acritical reflection. The graphs depicting standardized and raw score values for the profiles are both provided because each graph provides unique and valuable information regarding profile characteristics. The standardized score graph depicts the reflection scores in relation to the mean scale scores. These scores are useful when comparing the profiles to one another, as they are the basis for statistical software identifying distinct profiles. However, standardized scores are not useful when comparing profiles across studies using the same

measures or when visualizing how participants responded to each measure relative to the scale options (Wormington & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2017). In these cases, raw scores are needed. The raw score graph depicts the reflection scores as being low, moderate, or high in relation to the range of possible scores. The profiles in the current study were named primarily based on their average raw score values. Since the measures of critical and acritical reflection were on the same 1 to 9 scale, the raw scores provide a more accurate depiction of how participants considered the structural and individual/cultural items in comparison to one another. The level of engagement in critical reflection expressed in the profile name is based on the standardized score since this score illustrates the profiles engagement relative to the other participants and thus allows profiles to be distinguished from one another.

Profile 1, which included about 67% of the parents (n = 120), was labeled *ambivalent* and was characterized by low critical reflection and low acritical reflection (see Table 2.4). Profile 2, which included around 17% of the parents (n = 31), was labeled *race-conscious* since it was defined by moderate critical reflection and low acritical reflection. Finally, profile 3, which included 16% of the parents (n = 28), was labeled *balanced* and was characterized by moderate critical reflection and moderate acritical reflection.

Predictors of Profile Membership

Parent and child demographics associated with profile membership were tested using an ANOVA (i.e., for parent age and education level and child age) and chi-square tests (i.e., for child sex and grade level). Profile membership was associated with parent education level, $F(2, 175) = 3.14$, $p < .05$ (see Table 2.5). Specifically, *race-conscious* parents (M = 5.32, SD = 1.92) tended to have a higher education level than *balanced* parents (M = 4.18, SD = 1.72). *Ambivalent* parents did not differ from *race-conscious* or *balanced* parents in education level. Profile

membership was unrelated to parent age and child age, sex, and grade level.

Consequences of Profile Membership

School Trust

The parent profiles did not differ significantly in school trust, $F(2, 176) = .90$, $p > .05$. School trust was relatively high for all the parent profiles (*ambivalent* $M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.56$; *race-conscious* $M = 2.85$, $SD = .52$; *balanced* $M = 3.05$, $SD = .72$), with all parents agreeing, on average, that their child's school was a comfortable and supportive place with trustworthy people.

Parent Involvement

The means and standard deviations for each parental involvement outcome were calculated for each parent profile (see Table 2.6).

Step 1 of the multiple linear regression models estimated how parents' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education (i.e., profile membership) and school trust were associated with parental involvement (see Tables 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9). The dependent variables for the models were traditional home and school involvement, racial socialization (i.e., racial pride and racial barrier), and academic socialization (i.e., effort and support/encouragement). Parent age and education level and child's sex and grade level were included as covariates in each model. The child's age was not included as a covariate in the models due to the relatively large amount of missing data for the child age variable (i.e., eighteen percent of the data were missing) and the risk of multicollinearity given the high correlation between the child's age and grade, $r(147) = .82$, $p < .001$. Step 2 of the hierarchical linear regression models examined the interactions between parents' school trust and the three parent reflection profiles.

School Involvement. As shown in Model 1, *balanced* parents reported being

significantly more involved at their children's schools than *ambivalent* parents ($b = 0.60$, $p < .01$), while *race-conscious* parents did not ($b = 0.16$, $p > .05$). School trust was not significantly associated with school involvement ($b = -0.08$, $p > .05$). Furthermore, the interaction terms of the *race-conscious* ($b = 0.11$, $p > .05$) and *balanced* ($b = -0.50$, $p > .05$) parent profiles with school trust were not significant, indicating that the associations between school trust and school involvement for *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents were not significantly different from those of *ambivalent* parents.

Home Involvement. As seen in Model 2, *race-conscious* parents ($b = 0.13$, $p > .05$) and *balanced* parents ($b = 0.07$, $p > .05$) did not report home involvement that was significantly different than *ambivalent* parents. Furthermore, school trust was not significantly associated with home involvement ($b = 0.14$, $p > .05$) and the two interaction terms were not significant. Given that the parents in each profile reported frequent home involvement on average (i.e., more than "once or twice a week"), these results suggest that all parents were frequently assisting their children with homework, irrespective of their beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education and how much they trusted their child's school.

Racial Pride. As demonstrated in Model 3, *race-conscious* ($b = 0.20$, $p > .05$) and *balanced* ($b = 0.10$, $p > .05$) parents did not report racial pride socialization different from *ambivalent* parents. Furthermore, school trust was not associated with racial pride socialization ($b = -0.04$, $p > .05$) and the two interaction terms with school trust were not significant. Given that the parents in each profile reported frequent racial pride socialization on average (i.e., more than "once or twice" in the past year), these results suggest that all parents were sending their children messages that encouraged them to take pride in their cultural heritage without regard to their engagement in critical and acritical reflection or how much they trusted their children's

school.

Racial Barriers. As shown in Model 4, *balanced* parents reported more racial barrier socialization ($b = 0.30$, $p < .05$) compared with *ambivalent* parents. Reported racial barrier socialization did not differ between *race-conscious* and *ambivalent* parents ($b = 0.14$, $p > .05$). School trust was negatively associated with racial barrier messaging ($b = -0.19$, $p < .05$). The interactions between school trust and the *race-conscious* ($b = 0.41$, $p > .05$) and *balanced* ($b = 0.02$, $p > .05$) parent profiles were not significant.

Effort. As shown in Model 5, compared with *ambivalent* parents, *race-conscious* parents reported more effort socialization ($b = 0.33$, $p < .05$). *Balanced* parents did not report significantly different effort socialization compared to *ambivalent* parents ($b = -0.27$, $p > .05$). Furthermore, school trust was not significantly related to effort socialization and neither of the interaction terms were significant. It should be noted that although *ambivalent* parents ($M = 4.33$) reported less effort socialization than *race-conscious* parents ($M = 4.67$), *ambivalent* parents also reported relatively high effort socialization (i.e., more than "somewhat like me").

Support/Encouragement. As demonstrated in Model 6, while *race-conscious* parents did not differ from *ambivalent* parents in their reports of support/encouragement socialization ($b = 0.04$, $p > .05$), *balanced* parents reported less support/encouragement socialization ($b = -0.33$, $p < .05$) than *ambivalent* parents. Furthermore, school trust was positively associated with academic support/encouragement socialization ($b = 0.21$, $p < .05$) and neither of the interaction terms were significant. Importantly, although *balanced* parents reported less support/encouragement socialization than other parents, their reported socialization was relatively high (i.e., $M = 4.17$, corresponding to more than "somewhat like me").

Additional Analysis. The initial hierarchical regressions allowed for comparisons

between *ambivalent* parents and the other parent profiles, but they do not capture comparisons between the *race-conscious* and *balanced* parent profiles. Therefore, the regression analysis was conducted again with the *balanced* parent profile as the reference group. *Race-conscious* parents were significantly less involved at their children's schools than *balanced* parents (b = -0.44, p < .05). They were also engaged in significantly more academic socialization than *balanced* parents (effort socialization: b = 0.60, p < .01; support/encouragement socialization: b = 0.37, p < .05).

Discussion

This study aimed to examine patterns in Black parents' engagement in critical and acritical reflection regarding the causes of racial inequity in education and the ways their reflection relates to their involvement. Based on research demonstrating the complex association between parents' awareness of racism and the quality of their relationships with their child's school (Rowley et al., 2010), this study further examined whether school trust moderated associations between parent reflection and involvement. This research contributes to existing research in several ways. First, few empirical studies have investigated critical consciousness with Black parents, causing a lack of knowledge in the ways Black parents think about social inequity and how these thoughts relate to their actions (Marchand et al., 2019). Second, the LPA employed for the current study allowed critical and acritical reflection to be observed together at the individual level. Existing studies have examined critical and acritical reflection separately, ignoring the possibility that as suggested by sociopolitical development theory, individuals may be engaged in both. Finally, this study adds to existing research relating parents' critical reflection to their racial socialization while also considering other forms of parental engagement (i.e., home and school involvement and academic socialization).

Preliminary Findings

Average reports of structural and individual/cultural attributions were low relative to their response scales. The achievement gap attribution measure utilized a 9-point scale and average endorsement for structural and individual/cultural attributions were 3.67 (*SD* = 1.65) and 2.15 (*SD* = 1.20), respectively. Other measures of Black-White achievement gap attributions have used 5-point scales and reported sample means of 2.73 (*SD* = 0.91) and 3.55 (*SD* = 0.86) for structural attributions, 2.05 (*SD* = 0.74) for individual, and 3.43 (*SD* = 0.92) for cultural attributions (Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Kuhn, 2016). It is difficult to make comparisons across studies considering differences in scale ranges and items encompassing the subscales. However, it is possible that the relatively low endorsements observed for the items used in the current study are due to the items themselves. In other words, on average, Black parents may not believe the specific factors included are major contributors to racial inequity in education.

In line with previous studies demonstrating that individuals from marginalized groups endorse more structural attributions than individual attributions for social inequity, the current study found that Black parents attributed racial inequity in education significantly more to structural barriers for Black students than to individual and cultural factors (Bullock, 1999; Hunt, 1996; Kluegel & Smith, 1986). Furthermore, there was a moderately positive correlation between structural and individual/cultural attributions, similar to that observed in previous studies (Bañales et al., 2020; Bobbio et al., 2010; Bullock, 1999; Hunt, 1996). It is not entirely clear why critical awareness may be positively associated with attributing inequity to factors such as individual efforts for some people. One potential explanation is that people who are increasingly aware of barriers to achievement for marginalized groups believe these groups must work even harder to overcome existing barriers (e.g., pull themselves up by their bootstraps;).

Some research suggests that Black parents who are critically aware of racism may visit their children's schools as a means of protecting their children from threats to their well-being (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Posey-Maddox, 2017). Other research suggests that critically aware parents may disengage with their children's schools, possibly due to them having negative racial experiences (e.g., experiencing microaggressions; McKay et al., 2003). Still other research has found no direct association between parents' awareness and school involvement (Ross et al., 2018). Similar to the latter research, critical reflection was not significantly associated with parents' school involvement in the current study, though the association approached significance. Acritical reflection was positively associated with school involvement. It is possible that, similar to the parents in Georgiou and Tourva's (2007) study, parents who attribute child achievement to parental involvement (i.e., cultural attributions) may be involved because they believe it is their personal responsibility.

Some research suggests that parents who are aware of racism provide academic support at home in order to compensate for the academic support their children may not receive at school (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; McKay et al., 2003; Posey-Maddox, 2017), while other research has found no direct association between parents' racism awareness and home involvement (Ross et al., 2018). In alignment with the latter research, the current study found no relation between racism awareness (i.e., critical reflection) and home involvement. Acritical reflection was also unrelated to home involvement, suggesting that parents' beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education (whether structural or individual/cultural) do not always relate to how frequently they engage with their children academically at home. For the parents in the current study, other factors identified as determinants of parental home involvement (e.g., parents' sense

of efficacy and beliefs about their academic role) may have been more important in determining how frequently they engaged with their children in this manner (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

In line with past research, this study provides evidence for the positive association between parents' racism awareness and their racial pride and barrier socialization (Bañales et al., 2020; Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Neblett et al., 2006; Saleem et al., 2016). There was also a low positive correlation between acritical reflection and racial barrier socialization. This was a striking observation considering scholars have found positive associations between parents' positive beliefs about their racial group (i.e., private regard) and preparation for bias socialization (a form of racial socialization similar to racial barrier socialization), yet the measure of acritical reflection used in the current study in many ways represents parents' negative beliefs about members of their racial group (Kulish et al., 2019). One possible explanation for the low positive correlation observed is that the measure of racial barrier socialization used in the current study partially represents the belief that Black people must work twice as hard as white people to get ahead. Thus, acritical reflection and racial barrier socialization may share a low correlation because parents who believe racial inequity is caused by the efforts and actions of Black people may be more likely to relay this racial message to their children.

No existing research has examined the link between parents' critical and acritical reflection in relation to their academic socialization. However, attribution studies suggest that critical reflection may be positively associated with supportive parental involvement practices such as effort and support/encouragement socialization and acritical reflection may be negatively associated with these forms of parental involvement. The current study found no relation between critical reflection and academic socialization. Furthermore, in alignment with attribution

literature, acritical reflection (i.e., endorsing individual/cultural attributions) was negatively associated with support and encouragement socialization (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006). Acritical reflection was unrelated to effort socialization. Given the supportive nature of effort socialization, I expected acritical reflection to also be negatively associated with effort socialization.

Main Findings

Based on frameworks and empirical studies of critical consciousness and racial dysconsiousness, I hypothesized that one profile would be defined by high critical and low acritical reflection (i.e., critically race-conscious), another profile would be defined by low critical and high acritical reflection (i.e., racially dysconscious), and a third profile would be defined by engagement in critical and acritical reflection. Contrary to my hypothesis, none of the profiles identified in the latent profile analysis fit the characteristics of critically race-conscious or racially dysconscious. A possible explanation for the absence of a racially dysconscious parent profile is that for Black parents their personal experiences with racism in schools and their unique positionality in raising Black youth increase their awareness of the ways racism might operate in schools, making it unlikely for them to be completely unaware of the structural causes of racial inequity in education.

In the current study, Black parents' reflections on the causes of racial inequities in education could be categorized into three distinct profiles: *ambivalent*, *race-conscious*, and *balanced* parents. Two profiles (i.e., *ambivalent* and *race-conscious*) were qualitatively similar to one of my hypothesized profiles in that these profiles engaged in more critical reflection than acritical reflection. Most of the parents were in the *ambivalent* parent profile. These parents had low awareness of structural barriers and placed relatively no responsibility on Black students and

families for inequity compared to *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents. Contrary to the other parent profiles, *ambivalent* parents had an average acritical reflection score that was below the sample mean.

Race-conscious and *balanced* parents were more critical than *ambivalent* parents, yet with their heightened awareness of structural barriers they still attributed racial inequity partially to the characteristics and actions of Black students and families. Both parent profiles exhibited reflection on inequity that was characteristic of someone in between the acritical and liberation stages of Watts et al.'s (1999) sociopolitical development model. Although *race-conscious* and *balanced* parent profiles have not been explicitly identified in existing literature, there is empirical research suggesting how these parents may reason about inequity. Similar to individuals throughout literature on economic and racial issues, *balanced* and *race-conscious* parents may be aware of the structural and systemic causes of inequity and simultaneously hold ideologies involving overcoming social barriers such as "pulling oneself up by their bootstraps" and "working twice as hard" (Doucet et al., 2018; Smith & Stone, 1989). Therefore, when thinking about racial inequity in schools, *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents may attribute it to structural barriers to Black students' success as well as the efforts of Black students and their families. Parents in the *balanced* profile had the highest acritical reflection of the three parent profiles (i.e., nearly two units above the mean). These parents also reported similar personal engagement in both critical and acritical reflection. It is possible that *balanced* parents have internalized ideologies that emphasize hard work so much that they place equal weight on structural and individual/cultural factors as causes of racial inequity.

Differences in reflection-action associations for the parent profiles point to the importance of examining critical and acritical reflection together. If either form of reflection

alone determined an individual's actions, then differences between profiles with similar engagement in either would not exist. However, differences were observed for profiles with similar engagement in critical reflection. *Race-conscious* and *balanced* parents reported similar critical reflection, but *balanced* parents reported being more involved at their children's schools and engaging in less academic socialization than *race-conscious* parents. Observed differences in acritical reflection may help to explain differences in parental involvement for these parent profiles. More specifically, it is possible that for *balanced* parents, their awareness of racism prompts their school involvement, similar to *race-conscious* parents. However, for *balanced* parents, their belief that Black parent involvement is also a determinant of racial inequity (i.e., cultural attributions) may further motivate their school involvement (Georgiou & Tourva, 2007). Thus, *balanced* parents may be involved for dual purposes: to protect their children against racism and to fulfill their personal obligation to eliminate race differences in achievement. Regarding academic socialization, it is possible that for *balanced* parents' their relatively high engagement in acritical reflection also explains their lower likelihood of engaging in effort and support/encouragement socialization. Despite *balanced* parents' awareness of structural barriers that their children may encounter, their beliefs regarding Black students' personal effort and motivation may interfere with the likelihood of them extending these forms of support to their children.

Furthermore, *ambivalent* parents were less engaged in both critical and acritical reflection than *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents. These differences in reflection were paired with differences in some forms of parental involvement. Namely, *race-conscious* parents reported more effort socialization than *ambivalent* parents and *balanced* reported more school involvement, more racial barrier socialization, and less support/encouragement socialization than

ambivalent parents. It is not clear how differences in reflection may relate to differences in involvement for *ambivalent* parents as compared to *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents. More research is needed to further explore the apparent complex links between parents' beliefs regarding racial inequity in education and their parental involvement. Mixed methods approaches may be particularly useful in these explorations.

The last notable finding of the study is that school trust did not moderate the association between parent reflection profiles and involvement. I hypothesized that school trust would moderate the association between reflection and parental involvement for critically race-conscious parents. This profile was not observed in the current study. Thus, my hypothesis was unsupported. Moreover, I hypothesized that moderation would be observed for a profile with engagement in both critical and acritical reflection if high critical reflection was a defining characteristic of the profile. This hypothesis was also not supported. None of the parent profiles had high critical reflection relative to the response scale and moderation was not observed for the two profiles with high critical reflection relative to the sample average (i.e., *race-conscious* and *balanced* parents). A potential explanation for the latter observation is that moderation only occurs in the absence of acritical reflection (i.e., low school trust motivates parental involvement when critical reflection is high and acritical reflection is low). For both the *race-conscious* and *balanced* parent profiles critical reflection was high relative to the sample average, but acritical reflection was also greater than the sample average. More research is needed to further explore the potential for school trust to moderate relations between parent's reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education and their involvement.

Other Findings

Although the current study only sought to examine school trust as a moderator, there were several findings related to school trust that are worth discussing. First, on average, the parents in the current study reported having high trust in their children's schools and their trust was not associated with their profile membership. One possible explanation for the disconnect between profile membership and school trust is that for these parents their knowledge of structural barriers in schools and their general beliefs about the causes of racial inequity have been shaped by other factors and experiences -- such as their experiences as a student (Rowley et al., 2010) or with their children's previous schools. For parents in the current study, trust in their children's current school may be positive, on average, due to them having more positive and fewer negative experiences with school personnel.

Other noteworthy observations were the relations between school trust and parental involvement observed in the regression models. Specifically, school trust was negatively associated with racial barrier messaging and positively associated with support and encouragement socialization. Racial socialization is often cited as being a reactive form of socialization, meaning parents typically engage in racial socialization in response to an event. Low school trust, especially in the context of race, may signify negative race-related interactions between parents and school personnel and thus a perceived need for parents to engage in racial barrier socialization with their children. Conversely, when school trust is high, parents may feel less of a need to convey racial barrier messages and instead prioritize other forms of socialization (i.e., support/encouragement). The positive family-school relationship suggested by high levels of school trust (Adams & Christenson, 2000) may also promote support/encouragement socialization. One aspect of support/encouragement socialization entails offering academic

support. When the family-school relationship is positive, parents may have a better understanding of the school's expectations for parents and students, thus making parents more likely to offer support to their children.

Limitations and Future Research

This study had a few limitations that should be noted. First, this study used a smaller sample size than the 500-participant sample recommended for LPA (Nylund et al., 2007; Spurk et al., 2020). Relatedly, LPA may be a limiting statistical method due to potential issues such as lack of representation in the data causing failure to identify true profiles in the population of interest (Tein et al., 2013). Even still, research suggests that degree of separation between profiles in the LPA matters more than the sample size when attempting to correctly estimate the number of profiles (Tein et al., 2013). The profiles identified in the current study differed significantly on one or both indicators used in the LPA, suggesting separation amongst the profiles. Furthermore, the parent reflection profiles derived from the LPA were highly dependent on the measures of reflection employed. Therefore, future research should consider other measures to assess critical and acritical reflection in individuals.

The current study is also limited in that the results are based on self-reported survey data from parents representing a few school districts in one midwestern state. Thus, the findings might not be generalizable to Black parents nationally. Relatedly, the current study only considered parent reports of their involvement. Previous research has demonstrated the importance of considering both parent and child perspectives when examining parenting practices (Ross, 2017). Future studies should utilize parent- and child-reported parental involvement data.

An additional limitation of the current study is that it used a sample consisting of mostly mothers. Previous research finds that men and women often differ in their analysis of social inequities, with men typically endorsing more individual attributions than women (Hunt, 1996, 2004). Based on this, it is possible that additional profiles may have emerged if men were better represented in the study. Furthermore, caregivers may differ in motivations for their parental involvement. The overrepresentation of mothers in the current study could represent reflection-action associations that are typical for mothers and not necessarily for other caregivers (e.g., fathers, aunts, grandparents). In future research scholars should consider using larger samples with better representation of the various caregivers for Black youth.

Table 2.1

Original Achievement Gap Attribution Items

Blacks are less intelligent.
Black students lack math ability.
Tests are biased against Black students.
Teachers are less effective in teaching Black students.
Black students lack science ability.
Black students are less motivated than White students.
Black parents are less involved at school.
Black students lack English ability.
Blacks value science less than Whites.
Lack of Black student effort.
Racist/biased teachers against Blacks.
Blacks value math less than Whites.
Teachers have low expectations for Black students.
Blacks value English less than Whites.
Whites have more opportunities than Blacks.
Genetic differences between Blacks, and Whites.
Racism in the past has made it harder for Blacks to graduate from high school.
In general, Blacks do not value education as much as Whites do.
In general, Whites have more opportunities than Blacks, and that makes it easier for them to graduate from high school.
There are genetic differences between Blacks and Whites that make it easier for Whites to graduate from high school.
*The mismatch between classroom culture and home culture for Black students.
*Lack of access to learning materials in Black households.
*Black families not having good experiences with math.
*Black parents not having good experiences with English.
*Black parents not having good experiences with science.

Note. Asterisks (*) denote items that were removed from the final measure due to them having significant correlations with structural and individual/cultural attributions.

Table 2.2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Age	41.79	8.33	-												
2. Pedu	-	-	.09	-											
3. Child Age	12.76	.75	.04	-.02	-										
4. Child Grade	-	-	.02	.03	.82***	-									
5. Critical Reflection	3.67	1.65	.01	.20**	.02	.05	-								
6. Acritical Reflection	2.15	1.20	-.06	-.10	-.04	-.11	.34**	-							
7. School Trust	2.95	.58	-.03	-.03	.03	.00	-.35***	-.01	-						
8. School Involv	2.69	.83	.00	.11	.01	.00	.13	.22**	-.03	-					
9. Home Involv	3.26	.60	-.04	.04	-.15	-.15	.02	.06	.14	.31***	-				
10. Pride	1.52	.48	.01	.05	.00	-.01	.25***	.05	-.05	.21**	.11	-			
11. Barriers	1.09	.62	-.02	.00	-.09	-.09	.46***	.18*	-.17*	.14	.01	.55***	-		
12. Effort	4.36	.74	-.23**	.02	.06	-.06	.00	-.05	.09	.19*	.22**	.10	.11	-	
13. Supp/Encou	4.52	.65	-.11	.21**	-.01	.00	.02	-.23**	.15*	.06	.23**	.20**	.19*	.60***	-

Note. *$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Sex: Male = 1, Female = 2.

Supp/Encou = Support/Encouragement.

Table 2.3

Model Fit Statistics for Latent Profile Analysis Reflection Measures

	#1	#2	**#3**	#4	#5	#6	#7
Entropy	-	0.92	**0.90**	0.92	0.82	0.88	0.88
Posterior probabilities	-	.93 - .99	**.92 - .97**	.89 - 98	.79 - 95	.84 - .98	.81 - .95
Log-likelihood	-485.31	-434.68	**-416.04**	-402.66	-396.65	-376.51	-371.25
LRT *p* value	-	$p < .001$	$\mathbf{p = .04}$	$p = .09$	$p = .52$	$p = .06$	$p = .21$
BLRT *p* value	-	$p < .001$	$\mathbf{p < .001}$	$p < .001$	$p = .02$	$p < .001$	$p = .07$
AIC	978.62	883.35	**852.09**	831.32	825.31	791.02	786.49
BIC	991.37	905.66	**883.96**	872.76	876.3	851.58	856.61
aBIC	978.70	883.49	**852.29**	831.59	825.63	791.41	786.94
Δ AIC	-	-95.27	**-31.26**	-20.77	-6.01	-34.29	-4.53
Δ BIC	-	-85.71	**-21.70**	-11.20	3.54	-24.72	5.03
Δ aBIC	-	-95.21	**-31.20**	-20.70	-5.96	-34.22	-4.47

Note. The bolded text indicates the model determined to have the best fit.

LRT = Likelihood ratio test; BLRT = Bootstrap likelihood ratio test; AIC = Akaike-information criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criteria; aBIC = Sample-size adjusted Bayesian information criteria.

Table 2.4

Mean Value for Reflection Variables by Parent Profiles

Variables	*Ambivalent* $n = 120$, 67%	*Race-conscious* $n = 31$, 17%	*Balanced* $n = 28$, 16%	Bonferroni's *t*-test
Critical Reflection	3.20 (1.60)	4.86 (1.22)	4.39 (1.36)	2 > 1, 3 > 1
Acritical Reflection	1.46 (.50)	2.80 (.50)	4.36 (.68)	3 > 2 > 1

Note. Bonferroni's multiple comparison *t*-test was used ($p < .05$).

Standard deviation in parentheses.

Table 2.5

ANOVA and Chi-square Tests for Profile Membership by Demographic Variables

Variable	*n*	*F*	χ^2	*df*	*p*-value
Parent Age	177	0.21	-	2	0.81
Parent Education	178	3.14	-	2	< 0.05
Child Age	147	1.02	-	2	0.36
Child Sex	177	-	.77	2	0.68
Child Grade	179	-	5.91	4	0.21

Table 2.6

Mean Value for Parent Involvement Variables by the Three Parent Profiles

Variables	*Ambivalent*	*Race-conscious*	*Balanced*
School Involvement	2.57 (0.77)	2.77 (0.81)	3.12 (0.95)
Home Involvement	3.22 (0.62)	3.34 (0.55)	3.33 (0.58)
Pride	1.48 (0.51)	1.67 (0.39)	1.54 (0.43)
Barriers	1.03 (0.62)	1.19 (0.57)	1.29 (0.60)
Effort	4.33 (0.75)	4.67 (0.41)	4.15 (0.89)
Supp/Encou	4.57 (0.62)	4.64 (0.47)	4.17 (0.81)

Note. Standard deviation in parentheses; Supp/Encou = Support/Encouragement.

Table 2.7

Regression Analyses of Parent Profiles and School Trust on Traditional Parental Involvement

	Model 1: School Involvement		Model 2: Home Involvement	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Parent Age	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Parental Education	0.07* (0.04)	0.08* (0.04)	0.02 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Female child (ref. male child)	0.06 (0.13)	0.06 (0.13)	0.03 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)
Child grade	0.07 (0.10)	0.06 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.07)	-0.14 (0.08)
Race-conscious (ref. *Ambivalent*)	0.16 (0.17)	0.18 (0.17)	0.13 (0.12)	0.14 (0.12)
Balanced (ref. *Ambivalent*)	0.60** (0.18)	0.63*** (0.18)	0.07 (0.13)	0.09 (0.13)
School trust	-0.08 (0.11)	0.03 (0.14)	0.14 (0.08)	0.21* (0.10)
Race-conscious * School Trust		0.11 (0.33)		0.08 (0.24)
Balanced * School Trust		-0.50 (0.27)		-0.32 (0.20)
R^2	0.08	0.10	0.05	0.07

Note. Unstandardized coefficient; Standard errors in parentheses.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 2.8

Regression Analyses of Parent Profiles and School Trust on Racial Socialization

	Model 3: Racial Pride		Model 4: Racial Barriers	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Parent Age	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Parental Education	0.01 (0.02)	0.01(0.02)	0.00 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)
Female child (ref. male child)	0.03 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)
Child grade	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.07 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.08)
Race-conscious (ref. *Ambivalent*)	0.20 (0.10)	0.23* (0.10)	0.14 (0.12)	0.18 (0.12)
Balanced (ref. *Ambivalent*)	0.10 (0.11)	0.09 (0.11)	0.30* (0.13)	0.30* (0.13)
School trust	-0.04 (0.07)	-0.12 (0.08)	-0.19* (0.08)	-0.25* (0.10)
Race-conscious * School Trust		0.35 (0.20)		0.41 (0.24)
Balanced * School Trust		0.16 (0.16)		0.02 (0.20)
R^2	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.10

Note. Unstandardized coefficient; Standard errors in parentheses.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 2.9

Regression Analyses of Parent Profiles and School Trust on Academic Socialization

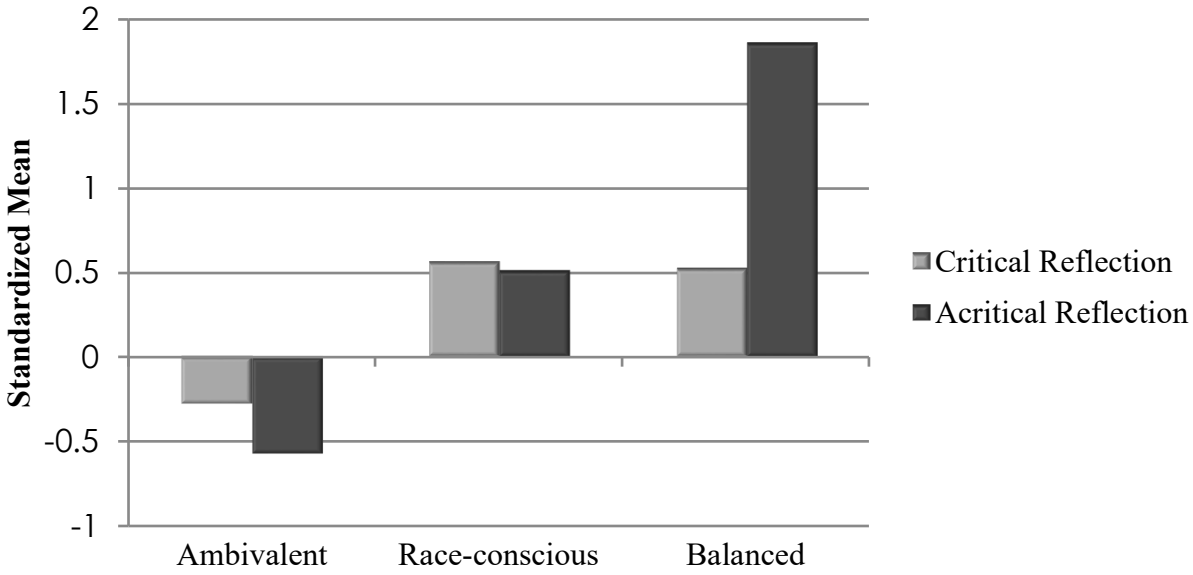
	Model 5: Effort		Model 6: Supp/Encou	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 1	Step 2
Parent Age	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Parental Education	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)
Female child (ref. male child)	-0.28* (0.11)	-0.27* (0.11)	-0.10 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.10)
Child grade	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)
Race-conscious (ref. *Ambivalent*)	0.33* (0.14)	0.31* (0.15)	0.04 (0.12)	0.02 (0.13)
Balanced (ref. *Ambivalent*)	-0.27 (0.16)	-0.26 (0.16)	-0.33* (0.13)	-0.33* (0.14)
School trust	0.16 (0.10)	0.23 (0.12)	0.21* (0.08)	0.22* (0.10)
Race-conscious * School Trust		-0.18 (0.28)		-0.17 (0.25)
Balanced * School Trust		-0.18 (0.23)		0.07 (0.20)
R^2	.15	.15	0.13	0.13

Note. Unstandardized coefficient; Standard errors in parentheses; Supp/Encou = Support/Encouragement.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Figure 2.1

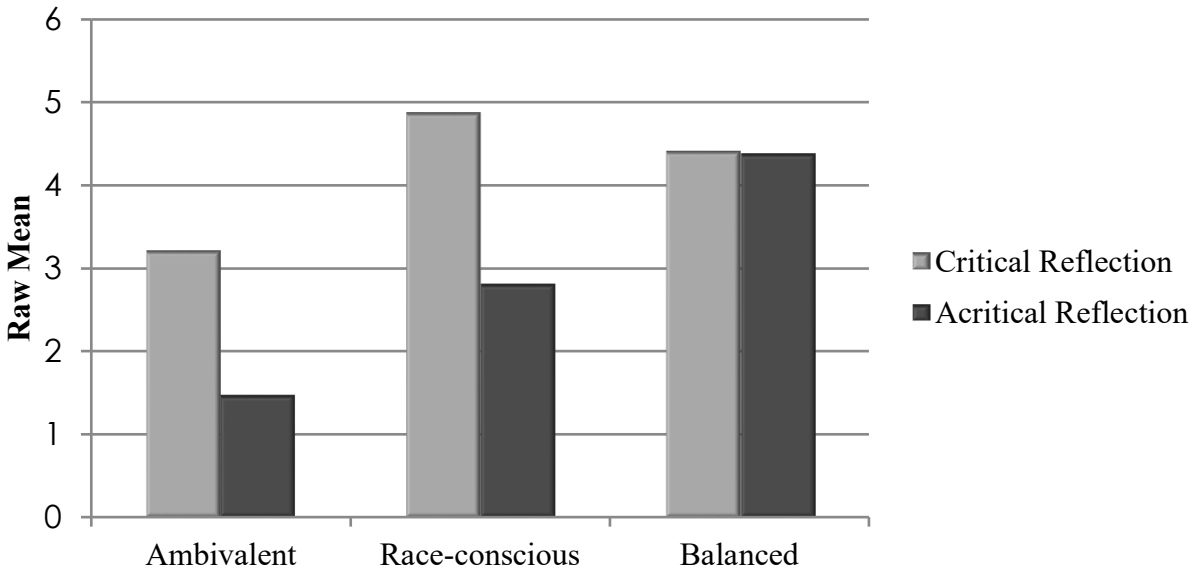
Standardized Mean Reflection Scores According to the Three Identified Profiles



Note. *Ambivalent*: *n* = 120 (67%); *Race-conscious*: *n* = 31 (17%); *Balanced*: *n* = 28 (16%).

Figure 2.2

Raw Mean Reflection Scores According to the Three Identified Profiles



Note. *Ambivalent*: *n* = 120 (67%); *Race-conscious*: *n* = 31 (17%); *Balanced*: *n* = 28 (16%).

Chapter 3 Breaking Down Barriers or Putting Them Up: How Do Teachers' Reflections on Racial Inequity Inform Their Teaching Practices?

Teachers' critical awareness of the sources of educational inequalities may have implications for the practices they enact when teaching youth from marginalized groups. Given the varied socialization opportunities teachers possess, their critical awareness about educational inequality can inform how they prepare youth to navigate systemic and academic challenges (Ferguson, 2003). As teachers critically reflect upon the ways their pedagogy can perpetuate or dismantle racial inequality, they can grow their capacity to honor students' cultural assets and challenge racist systems through implementing equitable practices (Gay, 2018; Shor & Freire, 1987). Scholars can begin to understand how teachers' critical reflection may inform their competencies and motivate critical action by examining existing studies on adults' inequality beliefs. However, these perspectives remain largely theoretical, and more empirical research is needed to better understand teachers' critical awareness development and the practices that emerge in response.

Research with adults generally demonstrates that beliefs about the causes of inequality for marginalized groups are associated with willingness to productively engage with those groups. Attributing achievement disparities to individual characteristics alone (e.g., effort, motivation, intelligence) can lead to negative stereotypes about the underperforming group, a decreased willingness to work with members from the group, and dismissal of policies aimed at

supporting that group (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006). Conversely, when individuals ascribe inequalities to societal and systemic issues (e.g., discrimination, injustice), they are more likely to have positive feelings toward the group and provide requisite support (Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Valant & Newark, 2016). This research may suggest that teachers who are critically aware of the structural factors that negatively affect Black students may be more likely to support these students and less likely to disassociate from them. However, critical awareness may not be enough. Teachers also need to feel efficacious that they can teach in ways that are supportive and inclusive of Black youth. When teachers are both critically aware and efficacious, a variety of actions are likely to follow, namely critical action. One essential demonstration of critical action is solicited parental involvement, given the role of parental involvement in student success (Boonk et al., 2018; Reynolds et al., 2015), coupled with how Black parents have historically been excluded from their children's schools (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Baquedano-López et al., 2013). Critically aware teachers may be likely to solicit parental involvement because they see these efforts as key to supporting Black youths' learning and liberation against systemic oppression.

Although critical awareness of the causes of inequalities has been shown to relate to personal engagement with marginalized groups, little research has investigated the relation between teachers' critical awareness and their practices. Additionally, researchers examining awareness of social inequalities use measures of critical reflection and acritical reflection as though people are either critically aware or acritical (e.g., Seider et al., 2020). For example, Seider et al. (2020) used a measure of critical reflection with a continuum in which higher scores represented structural attributions for poverty and lower scores represented individual attributions for poverty. Unfortunately, this approach negates the fact that individuals may

engage in both forms of reflection, attributing social inequality to structural and individual causes (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Hunt, 2004; King, 1991; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Robinson, 2011). To address these issues, I utilize moderation analysis and examine the unique and interacting effects of teachers' critical and acritical reflection (i.e., teachers' structural and individual/cultural attributions for the Black-White achievement gap) on their solicitation of parental involvement and sense of self-efficacy in culturally responsive teaching. Additionally, I investigate the extent to which teachers' self-efficacy beliefs moderate associations between their critical reflection and solicited parental involvement and the potential for acritical reflection to moderate the interaction. This study has the potential to expand existing knowledge of the ways teachers' critical and acritical reflection on racial inequity in schools and their related beliefs inform their engagement with Black students and parents, interactions that are crucial for Black students' academic success.

Critical Race Consciousness

This study was guided by the critical consciousness framework. Critical consciousness is a three-part process whereby individuals become aware of and critically analyze social inequalities (critical reflection), develop competencies in acting against oppressive forces (critical motivation or political efficacy), and take action to change those inequalities (critical action; Freire, 1973). Critical race consciousness is a process specific to one's developmental understanding of racial inequality (Bañales et al., 2020; Marchand, et al., 2019). For teachers, the structural causes they ascribe to racial inequality in education (e.g., inadequate funding/resources for schools serving Black students, racist teachers, biased testing) may indicate their critical reflection of the ways that racism and discrimination contribute to racial inequalities in education. Teachers' political efficacy may take the form of their self-efficacy for culturally

responsive teaching, which (like political efficacy) reflects a teacher's belief in their ability to teach in ways that disrupt racial inequality in school (Gay, 2018; Siwatu, 2007). Last, solicited parental involvement represents one critical action teachers can take to disrupt racist norms (e.g., excluding parents of color, disregarding the value of their involvement) that perpetuate racial inequality in schools (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Baquedano-López et al., 2013).

Freire (1973, 1993) proposes that political efficacy (i.e., critical motivation) may mediate and moderate the relation between critical reflection and critical action (Diemer & Rapa, 2016). More specifically, Freire asserts that as individuals (particularly those from marginalized groups) critically reflect upon social inequalities they will gain competence in acting against inequalities and therefore act to change them (i.e., mediation). Freire also notes that if individuals reflect critically but are not confident in their ability to act then critical action is not likely to take place (i.e., moderation). However, contrary to Freire's reasoning, existing literature depicts mixed findings regarding the role of political efficacy and other forms of critical motivation in the relation between critical reflection and critical action. While some researchers have found support for critical motivation both as a mediating and moderating factor in the relation (Harrell-Levy, 2018; Le et al., 2022), other researchers have failed to find support for critical motivation being either (Diemer & Rapa, 2016). Using the work of Shor and Freire (1987) as a guide, the current study adds to the existing critical consciousness literature by further exploring the associations among critical reflection, motivation, and action among teachers.

In their 1987 book, *Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education,* Shor and Freire extended Freire's (1973) theory of critical consciousness, applying it more specifically to the educator-student relationship. Shor and Freire provided a conceptual foundation for understanding how teachers develop critical consciousness and enact critical

pedagogies. Critical pedagogies are socially just ways of teaching that are intended to establish more inclusive and equitable spaces by addressing disconnects between white, middle-class cultural norms and values and those that culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse students bring with them to the classroom. These pedagogies represent the critical action element of teachers' critical consciousness development.

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is one of many critical pedagogies informed by Shor and Freire's work. CRT is defined as "using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively." (Gay, 2002, p. 106). This pedagogical approach encompasses eight core competencies: reflect on one's cultural lens; recognize and redress bias in the system; draw on students' culture to shape curriculum and instruction; bring real world issues into the classroom; model high expectations for all students; promote respect for student differences; communicate in linguistically and culturally responsive ways; and collaborate with families and the local community (Muñiz, 2020). Recognizing bias in the system (i.e., critical reflection) and collaborating with families (a critical action) are the two most relevant competencies for the current study. In the current study I use teacher reports of their solicited parental involvement as a proxy for their collaboration with families. Although solicitation in and of itself is not an indicator of teachers' collaborating with students' families, it is the most logical way for teachers to initiate these collaborations. Furthermore, teachers' self-efficacy to carry out CRT practices (political efficacy), though not a competency itself, is a crucial component for implementing all CRT practices, including collaborating with families (Siwatu, 2007). Thus, I consider all the factors in the current study.

Racial Dysconsciousness

This study was also guided by King's (1991) racial dysconsciousness framework. Racial dysconsciousness is the antithesis of critical racial consciousness. However, it is not similarly disaggregated into reflection, efficacy, and action components. Instead, scholars center reflection by defining racial dysconsciousness as a form of acritical reflection (King, 1991). Unlike critically race-conscious individuals, racially dysconscious individuals typically fail to critically reflect on the role of systemic racism in perpetuating racial inequalities and instead justify their existence by stereotyping and placing blame on people who are disenfranchised (Jost & Banaji, 1994; King, 1991; King & McTier, 2015). For teachers, attributing racial inequality to negative characteristics of Black students and their families signifies racial dysconsiousness, or acritical reflection. Similar to individuals who blame other groups for their marginalization (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006), teachers who blame Black students and their families for racial inequality may be less willing to work with them and support them, as may be demonstrated through their infrequent solicitation of parental involvement. Additionally, just as reflecting critically may bolster an individual's confidence in their ability to act in support of marginalized groups (Harrell-Levy, 2018), it is possible that reflecting acritically results in a lack of confidence in an individual's ability to support these groups. Therefore, a teacher's acritical reflection regarding Black students and their families may hinder the development of the teachers' self-efficacy to support Black students. In turn, the teacher's low self-efficacy may decrease the likelihood of supportive actions such as soliciting involvement from Black parents.

Conceptual Framework

In the following sections I discuss the ways attributions for racial inequality, culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy, and solicited parental involvement relate to components of the

critical consciousness and racial dysconsciousness frameworks: the theoretical backbones of the current study.

Attributions as Measures of Critical and Acritical Reflection

Attributions for racial inequity are beliefs individuals hold about why white students perform better academically than Black students, on average. These attributions have been classified as structural, individual, and cultural (Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009). Structural attributions are school-related factors that are external to Black people and systematically work to disadvantage them, especially in comparison to their white peers. Examples of structural attributions include inadequate funding/resources for schools serving Black students and racially biased teachers and testing. Structural attributions embody critical reflection, an awareness of the ways oppressive societal structures and individuals with power work to marginalize groups (Freire, 1973; Watts et al., 2011). Conversely, individual attributions are perceptions of characteristics deemed to be internal qualities of Black people (e.g., effort and intelligence). Cultural, or culture-blaming, attributions are factors related to Black parents or the home environment (e.g., parental involvement, family values, and the number of parents in the home) (Bullock et al., 2003; Feagin, 1975; Hunt, 2004; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009). Both individual and cultural attributions represent acritical reflection, acceptance or justification of inequitable social realities, evidenced in the blaming of marginalized groups for observed social inequalities (Jost & Banaji, 1994; King & McTier, 2015).

Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy as a Measure of Political Efficacy

Within critical consciousness literature, political efficacy has been defined as one's belief in their ability to carry out actions individually or collectively that disrupt systems of oppression through sociopolitical change (Jemal, 2017; Mathews, et al., 2020; Rapa & Geldhof, 2020). Culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy is a teacher's belief in their ability to implement practices that infuse ethnically diverse students' knowledge, experiences, and approaches to learning into curriculum and instruction in order to make learning more relevant and impactful for them (Gay, 2018). Both political efficacy and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy involve an individual's belief in their ability to act in socially just ways. The actions involved in culturally responsive teaching represent a subset of actions that teachers might take to affect sociopolitical change, specifically change necessary to support the academic success of their Black students. In this way, teachers who are efficacious in their culturally responsive teaching practices are dually efficacious in affecting sociopolitical change. In the presence of critical reflection, teachers' efficacy to implement culturally responsive teaching practices may be a critical motivator for them to take a specific critical action: solicit parental involvement.

Solicited Parental Involvement as a Measure of Critical Action

Critical action refers to the specific actions people take individually or collectively to challenge social inequalities and change sociopolitical realities (Mathews, et al., 2020; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). Collaborating with families is one of the core competencies of culturally responsive teaching, among others such as drawing on students' culture to shape curriculum and instruction and modeling high expectations for all students (Muñiz, 2020; Siwatu, 2007). Initiating family-school collaboration is one way that teachers can take critical actions in supporting the learning of their students of color. At the heart of culturally responsive

teaching is the need for teachers to learn about their students -- their interests, their different experiences, their norms and values, their knowledge bases -- and use these "funds of knowledge" to engage youth of color in a way that makes their learning more meaningful to them (Gay, 2002; González et al., 2006). Inherent in this process is the need to involve students' caregivers, as these individuals play a key role in the shaping and creation of youths' knowledge and experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Coll et al., 1996). Teachers' efforts of parental inclusion are also key to them challenging the institutionalized racism in schools that has led to the exclusion of Black parents (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Baquedano-López et al., 2013). Teachers' encouragement of parental involvement through school invitations and clear expectations and recommendations is one of the most influential factors in parents' academic involvement at home and in school (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Gavin & Greenfield, 1998; Patrikakou, & Weissberg, 2000; Simon, 2001). This involvement is crucial to all students' academic achievement (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Hong & Ho, 2005; Wilder, 2014). Therefore, soliciting the involvement of all parents in their student's learning is one way that teachers may act critically to promote a racially inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Coexisting Beliefs

Despite theory suggesting that critical reflection increases the likelihood of critical action while acritical reflection decreases the likelihood of critical action (Freire, 1973, 1993), some empirical research reveals the relations are more complex. More specifically, although many scholars have found positive associations between critical reflection and supportive behaviors for individuals from marginalized groups (Chan & Mak, 2020; Conlin et al., 2021; Weiss, 2006) and negative associations between acritical reflection and supportive behaviors for marginalized groups (Bullock et al., 2003; Osborne et al., 2019; Weiss, 2006), these relations have not always

been replicated (Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013). When replication does not occur, it is possible that an individual's coexisting attributions interfere with one another in such a way that the individual is less likely to act critically. The finding that structural and individual attributions (i.e., critical and acritical reflection, respectively) are conceptually and empirically distinct, but not mutually exclusive provides support for the possibility of individuals having both beliefs. In studies demonstrating the relation between structural and individual attributions, the attributions are positively correlated (Bañales et al., 2020; Bobbio et al., 2010; Bullock, 1999), suggesting that some individuals engage in both acritical and critical reflection, attributing social inequality to characteristics of marginalized groups as well as to societal inequalities. Therefore, to investigate the interactive effects of teachers' beliefs about racial inequality in relation to their efficacy and actions, the current study employs moderation analysis.

Reflection and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-efficacy

Within critical consciousness research, scholars have found a positive relation between indicators of critical reflection and factors related to self-efficacy (i.e., political efficacy in Osborne et al., 2019). In short, the more aware individuals are of group-based injustices, the more they believe people have the power to influence systems. In line with this literature, recognizing oppressive systems may shape teachers' beliefs in their ability to challenge and affect them by teaching in a culturally responsive manner. Relatedly, teachers tend to have more positive self-efficacy beliefs when they reflect on how factors external to their students (i.e., their own teaching) might impact their students' learning (Tan, 2013). Although self-efficacy in these studies has not included measures of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy, this work demonstrates that reflection is positively related to self-efficacy implementing related practices. Given that both critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy involve an

individual's social justice orientation, it is logical that the two would be related in a similar fashion. Thus, based on the above stated research, I hypothesized that critical reflection would be positively associated with culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and acritical reflection would be negatively associated with culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. Additionally, considering the potential negative impact of acritical reflection on a teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and the possibility of teachers engaging in critical and acritical reflection, I hypothesized that acritical reflection would moderate the association between critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. Specifically, I expected the association to be positive for teachers with low engagement in acritical reflection and I anticipated no association for teachers highly engaged in acritical reflection.

Reflection and Action

Critical reflection, or an awareness of the systemic nature of social inequalities and oppression, is associated with a greater willingness to support marginalized groups through participation in personal and collective action (e.g., volunteering, community organizing, protesting) and a general tendency to engage in prosocial behaviors (Bañales et al., 2021; Chan & Mak, 2020; Conlin et al., 2021; Lozada et al., 2017; Weiss, 2006). Conversely, acritical reflection, or blaming marginalized groups and justifying an unjust system, is linked to less motivation to work with disenfranchised groups, endorsement of more restrictive welfare policies, and system-supporting collective action (Bullock et al., 2003; Osborne et al., 2019; Weiss, 2006). Together, these findings show that individuals who critically analyze and question social inequalities are likely to take action to support oppressed groups while dysconscious individuals are likely to either remain inactive and passively accept social realities or engage in actions that uphold the system. Although the empirical relations between critical versus acritical

reflection and action are well established for people in general, the exact nature of these relations for teachers is less understood. Additionally, the nature of teachers' awareness of the causes of racial inequity specifically in relation to their practices is even less understood. The current study sought to extend knowledge of teachers' critical consciousness by examining how teachers' tendencies to reflect critically and acritically on academic racial inequity relate to their educational practices.

It is common for teachers to reflect acritically on social realities – oftentimes proclaiming the existence of social equality and blaming marginalized groups for observed inequalities -- yet few existing studies examine how these beliefs relate to teachers' practices (Houser & Chevalier, 1995; Lynn et al., 2010; Robinson, 2011). In their study, Lynn et al. (2010) used interviews and focus groups to explore teachers' causal beliefs regarding the underperformance of African American male high school students in comparison to their white counterparts in a low-performing suburban school district. They found that teachers largely blamed the African American students and their families, citing factors such as student behaviors and attitudes related to school and a lack of parental involvement and accountability. However, the study did not assess how these beliefs related to teachers' practices (e.g., what teachers did to encourage/discourage parents' academic involvement and accountability). The lack of exploration of these belief-practice relations leaves little knowledge of the implications of such beliefs on teachers' interactions with students and families.

Scholars examining teachers' awareness of racism alongside their teaching practices have also found evidence of teachers being the agents of change discussed in the work of Priestley et al. (2013) and Allen (2015). For instance, Duncan (2020) analyzed interview and teaching artifact data from four Black teachers in a medium-sized town in the southeastern United States,

finding that the teachers intentionally socialized their Black students to navigate systemic racism and white supremacy. The teachers reportedly informed their students that because they were Black, they would undoubtedly experience racism at every level (i.e., interpersonal, institutional, and structural). Knowing this, the teachers interviewed reported supporting their students in seeking out platforms and creating their own so that students could voice their experiences of oppression. This finding underscores how recognizing the structural causes of racial inequity might prompt teachers to implement culturally relevant and liberating teaching practices that can assist their students in succeeding academically while also challenging oppression. Duncan's study provided important information regarding the ways teachers might work to support their racially marginalized students in navigating racism. However, Duncan's study focused solely on the actions teachers took inside the school and did not discuss external outreach the teachers might have been engaging in for similar reasons. The current study addresses this gap by examining how teachers' critical awareness might motivate them to reach beyond the school and solicit involvement from their students' caregivers.

Although there is scarce research examining teachers' critical awareness of social inequity (i.e., structural attributions for social inequity) in relation to their teaching practices, studies concerning teachers' causal attributions for individual student performance in relation to their practices provides some insight into the possible relation (Georgiou et al., 2002; Wang & Hall, 2018). This line of research has found that when teachers attribute student underachievement to something within the student (i.e., effort), they are more likely to withhold support. Conversely, when student underachievement is attributed to external factors (e.g., the teacher's teaching ability and methods), teachers are less likely to withhold support. This work supports the notion that teachers are less likely to support their students academically when they

blame their students for their underachievement, but not when underachievement is believed to be out of the student's control. It is then possible that blaming Black students for apparent underachievement (i.e., Black-White racial inequity) is associated with infrequent use of supportive practices, while attributing racial inequity to factors external and uncontrollable to Black students (e.g., racism and discrimination) is related to more supportive practices.

Drawing on the above literature, I hypothesized that critical reflection would be positively associated with solicited parental involvement and acritical reflection would be negatively associated with solicited parental involvement. Additionally, I hypothesized that acritical reflection would moderate the relation between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement such that there would be a positive association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement for teachers low in acritical reflection and no association for teachers high in acritical reflection.

Moderators of Teacher Belief-Action Relations

Teachers' self-efficacy is a known moderator of belief-action relations and therefore may be an important factor to consider when relating teachers' critical awareness to their practices (Bandura, 1977; Nishino, 2012; Ogan-Bekiroglu & Akkoc, 2009; Tang et al., 2012). In general, teachers are more likely to follow through on their beliefs about an issue when they feel efficacious, or competent, in doing so. Discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and practices are often traced back to their self-efficacy. For instance, teachers in Alvarez & Milner IV's (2018) study acknowledged the importance of discussing issues involving race with students, but this belief was not reflected in the practices of teachers who did not feel efficacious in facilitating conversations around race. This finding highlights the importance of considering the role of teachers' self-efficacy in linking their beliefs and behaviors. It is possible that critically aware

teachers are more likely to solicit parental involvement when their self-efficacy for implementing this type of practice is high and less likely when their self-efficacy is low. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy may moderate the relation between teachers' critical reflection and action as a result of teachers being critically aware of the role of racism in their Black students' education, but not feeling personally capable of implementing practices necessary for establishing racially equitable and inclusive learning spaces. Based on the literature discussed, I hypothesized that culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy would moderate relations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement such that for teachers with high levels of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy the association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement would be significantly more positive than for teachers with lower levels of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. Furthermore, given the stated detrimental impact engaging in acritical reflection may have on culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy, I hypothesized that acritical reflection would moderate the moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on solicited parental involvement such that the association would be significantly more positive for teachers with high culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy, and low acritical reflection compared to other teachers.

Current Study

The current study was designed to examine teachers' reflections on racial inequity in education in relation to their other equity-related beliefs and practices and the ways their collective beliefs might shape these relations. The study aimed to address the following research questions: 1) Do teachers engage in more critical or acritical reflection when reasoning about the causes of racial inequity in education?, 2) Do teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity relate to their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?, 3) Does acritical reflection

moderate associations between critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?, 4) Are teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education related to their solicited parental involvement?, 5) Does culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?, 6) Does acritical reflection moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?, and 7) Does acritical reflection moderate any moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?

Method

Participants

Participants in the study were 53 (20 males, 33 females) middle school teachers ranging from 24 to 65 years of age (M = 45.45, SD = 10.62). Ninety-three percent (n = 49) of the participants identified as Caucasian/White. Of the remaining participants, two identified as African American/Black, one identified as Hispanic/Latino(a), and one identified as Asian American/Asian. The participants taught grades sixth (n = 12), seventh (n = 15), and eighth (n = 26) across the subject areas of math, science, social studies, language arts, physical education, and the fine arts (e.g., music). Many teachers taught multiple subjects. All participants taught at one of fifteen different public schools in suburban (n = 34), urban (n = 9), small town/village (n = 8), and rural (n = 2) school districts in the Midwest. Most of the teachers (n = 35) did not teach at a Title 1 school. Most of the sample (n = 50) consisted of classroom teachers. Three self-reported as specialists for areas such as reading intervention. Their years of teaching experience varied from 2 to 36 years (M = 17.95, SD = 9.16). The size of the schools the participants taught at ranged from 200 to 3400 students (M = 823.02, SD = 403.60) with class sizes ranging from 4 to 40 students (M = 26.60, SD = 7.30). Most of the participants had a master's degree (n = 41).

Eight participants had a bachelor's degree, one had a doctoral degree, and the remaining three had educational specialist degrees. Eighty-one percent of the teachers (n = 43) were not National Board Certified. The teachers reported teaching in classrooms with 0% to 66% (M = 18.57%, SD = 17.00%) Black students.

Procedure

The data used in this study were from a larger study with the goal of developing a measure to assess teachers' beliefs about the causes of racial disparities in academic achievement. The principal investigators identified groups of middle school teachers from 10 different school districts across Michigan. Emails were sent inviting teachers to participate in the study by completing the online questionnaire. The researchers aimed to collect data from teachers in a wide range of contexts (i.e., large, urban districts with high numbers of students of color and small; predominantly White rural districts; schools with large numbers of Native American groups; and suburban districts that varied considerably in terms of ethnic and economic makeup). Multiple attempts were made to contact teachers from districts with initial limited participation. Some districts had teachers that did not respond at all.

Measures

Critical and Acritical Reflection

Critical and acritical reflections were assessed using a 28-item questionnaire that intended to measure the extent to which people endorse three different types of causal attributions for the Black-White achievement gap in Michigan: structural, individual, and cultural. Each item was written to reflect a cause associated with each type of attribution. Critical reflection items were those that highlighted structural causes. A sample item included "Lack of

funding/resources for schools serving Black students." Acritical reflection items were divided into two subcategories: individual attributions that blamed Black students (e.g., "Blacks are less intelligent.") and cultural attributions that blamed Black families (e.g., "Black parents do not get involved at school."). Participants responded to each item using a 9-point scale that ranged from "not at all" to "a lot", with a "somewhat" midpoint.

The development of the items was influenced by those used in previous studies to assess beliefs about racial inequality (Bañales et al., 2020; Sperling & Vaughan, 2009). In previous studies only two of the three types of attributions were assessed together (i.e., structural and individual in Bañales et al., 2020 and structural and cultural in Sperling & Vaughan, 2009). This measure has not been validated (no Cronbach's alpha available). Therefore, several procedures were conducted to ensure reasonable psychometric properties of the structural and individual/cultural attribution scores as measures of critical and acritical reflection in the current study. The items were not originally developed with the purpose of measuring critical and acritical reflection. When using measures of inequality beliefs to assess critical and acritical reflection it is important for the source of blame to be clear. Therefore, items that did not clearly identify characteristics of schools and/or society, Black students, or Black families as causes of racial inequality (i.e., identification of the cause depended on interpretation of the item) were not included in the final measures for the current study (e.g., "Lack of access to learning materials in Black households). I also checked correlations for these ambiguous items to assess whether they were related to multiple distinct categories of attributions (i.e., traditional structural, individual, and cultural items). This analysis confirmed that all the ambiguous items were highly correlated with both structural and/or individual and cultural attributions. See Table 3.1 for the full list of original items. Although individual and cultural attributions are qualitatively different from one

another, they both represent what King (1991) defined as racial dysconsciousness (i.e., acritical reflection). The inter-item correlations and alpha coefficient also suggested that the items could be used to measure a single construct. Therefore, individual and cultural attributions were combined to form a single measure for analysis. The final measure contained 22 items (12 structural; 10 individual/cultural). The subscales demonstrated sufficient reliability with alphas of .87 (structural) and .86 (individual/cultural). Corresponding items were averaged to calculate the two scale scores.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE)

Teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy beliefs were evaluated using items from Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy scale. The measure consists of 25 items related to teachers' level of confidence in carrying out actions that use the "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them." Teachers indicated how much confidence they have in their ability to engage in each of the practices on a sliding scale ranging from 1 to 100 where 1 was "no confidence at all*"* and 100 was "completely confident." Sample items from this measure included "Identify ways that school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture." and "Use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful." The scale showed sufficient reliability (α = .96) among a sample of preservice teachers (Siwatu, 2007). The scale also demonstrated satisfactory reliability in the current study with an alpha of .94. The items were averaged to calculate scale scores.

Solicited Parental Involvement

To assess how frequently teachers reached out to parents and solicited their involvement, 6 items were used. Using a 5-point scale where 1 was "never" and 5 was "everyday," teachers indicated how often they engaged in each of the activities to increase parent involvement in their classroom. Items included "Ask parents to volunteer to help in the classroom or school activities" and "Give assignments that require parent participation to complete." The solicited parental involvement scale demonstrated satisfactory reliability with an alpha of .78. The items were averaged to calculate solicited parental involvement scale scores.

Analytical Strategy

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlations, paired t-tests, and hierarchical regressions using SPSS Version 28 (IBM Corp, 2021). Missing data were addressed by excluding participants from regression analysis if they did not respond to at least 80% of the items encompassing each of the independent and dependent variables. Participants were removed from the final dataset if a mean score could not be computed for them on each of the four variables of interest. Analysis was conducted to compare the demographic characteristics of the individuals included and excluded from analysis. Regression analysis assumptions (i.e., independence of observations, normality, and equal variance) were checked prior to conducting all tests. It is important to check these assumptions because violating any one assumption can cause errors during data analysis, leading the researcher to draw incorrect conclusions (Osborne & Waters, 2002).

To explore RQ1 (i.e., Do teachers engage in more critical or acritical reflection when reasoning about the causes of racial inequity in education?), I conducted a paired t-test and compared teachers' average levels of critical and acritical reflections (i.e., structural versus

individual/cultural attributions). The goal of this analysis was to determine whether teachers differed on average in their critical and acritical reflection.

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the association between teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education and their CRTSE as well as the potential for acritical reflection to moderate the association between critical reflection and CRTSE (i.e., RQs 2 and 3). For this analysis, covariates (i.e., sex and years of teaching experience) were entered in Step 1, followed by the independent variables (i.e., structural and individual/cultural attributions) in Step 2, and the interaction variable (i.e., structural X individual/cultural) in Step 3. All interactions were plotted and probed using simple slopes analysis.

An additional regression analysis using three steps was conducted to examine the associations between teachers' reflections and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on their solicited parental involvement and the interaction effects of teachers' reflections and CRTSE on their solicited parental involvement. All independent variables were standardized (mean-centered) prior to analysis to reduce multicollinearity. I ran one model with four steps and solicited parental involvement as the dependent variable. In Step 1, I entered sex and years of teaching experience as covariates. In Step 2, to investigate RQ 4, I added the independent variables (i.e., structural and individual/cultural attributions and CRTSE) to examine their associations with the dependent variable, accounting for the variables introduced in step 1. In Step 3, to investigate RQs 5 and 6, I added the two-way interaction variables (i.e., structural X individual/cultural; structural X CRTSE; individual/cultural X CRTSE) and examined the interaction effects on solicited parental involvement, accounting for the variables entered in steps 1 and 2. Finally, in Step 4, I added the three-way interaction variable (i.e., structural X individual/cultural X CRTSE) to examine the three-way interaction effect of critical reflection,

acritical reflection, and CRTSE on solicited parental involvement (i.e., RQ7), accounting for the variables introduced in steps 1, 2, and 3.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

There were sixty-seven teachers in the original dataset. Of these teachers, forty-three (64%) had at least one point of missing data. Missing data on variables of interest ranged from twenty-one to twenty-four percent. This was largely a result of twelve participants responding only to demographic questions and two participants responding to only demographic questions and less than half of the attribution items. Due to the secondary nature of this study, I was not aware of potential reasons why these teachers did not complete the survey. These fourteen teachers were removed from the dataset prior to further analysis, including sample descriptives. T-tests and chi-square tests confirmed that the individuals removed from the dataset did not differ significantly from the final sample on any demographic variables (see Table 3.2). There was not sufficient data for the excluded participants to make comparisons based on the variables of interest.

With the fourteen individuals removed, missing data on all variables of interest was less than six percent. Additionally, eighty-one percent (n = 43) of the participants responded to all the items included in the study. Seven of the remaining participants did not respond to one of the fifty-four total study items (i.e., they responded to ninety-eight percent of the items). Little's (1988) test was used to test if the data were missing completely at random (i.e., MCAR). The test was not significant, chi-square = 83.20, df = 88, $p > .05$, thus observed missingness was determined to be missing completely at random.

I compared teachers' endorsements of the structural and individual/cultural attributions at the item level. Teachers endorsed the specific structural (i.e., critical reflection) and individual/cultural (i.e., acritical reflection) attributions at varying degrees (see Table 3.3). The means for structural items ranged from 3.21 to 5.14. The means for individual/cultural items ranged from 1.26 to 5.54. It is noteworthy that the three most highly endorsed individual/cultural items all focused on the role of parents, while the most highly endorsed structural items focused on the roles of poverty, school resources, and class sizes. Furthermore, although there were teachers who reported that some attributions contributed "a lot" (i.e., max response = 9) to the Black-White achievement gap, on average, the teachers reported the causes as contributing "not at all" or "somewhat" to the gap. None of the means for the items represented an average "a lot" response.

Scale descriptive and correlation results are summarized in Table 3.4. On average, teachers reported being confident in their ability to implement culturally responsive teaching practices ($M = 77.36$, $SD = 12.86$) and they reported soliciting the involvement of parents once a semester to once a month ($M = 2.46$, $SD = .60$). While critical and acritical reflections were not significantly correlated with each other, $r(52) = .10$, $p > .05$, bivariate analyses of teachers' reports revealed differential correlates of both variables. The correlation between critical reflection and years of teaching experience was weak and marginally significant, $r(52) = -.26$, $p < .10$. The correlations between acritical reflection and CRTSE, $r(50) = -.33$, $p < .05$, and acritical reflection and solicited parental involvement, $r(51) = -.32$, $p < .05$, suggested that the more teachers engaged in acritical reflection regarding the causes of racial inequity in education the less likely they were to feel efficacious in implementing culturally responsive teaching

practices and the less they solicited the involvement of their students' parents. Finally, CRTSE and solicited parental involvement were positively correlated, $r(51) = .29$, $p < .05$.

Main Analyses

Critical and Acritical Reflection

To investigate research question 1 (i.e., Do teachers engage in more critical or acritical reflection when reasoning about the causes of racial inequity in education?), I conducted a paired t-test, comparing teachers' endorsement of the structural and individual/cultural items. There were no significant differences between teachers' structural ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.55$) and individual/cultural ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.36$) attributions, $t(51) = 1.16$, $p > .05$, suggesting that, on average, teachers were just as likely to reflect critically as they were to reflect acritically when thinking about the causes of racial inequity in education.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE)

To address research questions 2 (i.e., Do teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity relate to their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?) and 3 (i.e., Does acritical reflection moderate associations between critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy?), I ran a hierarchical regression with three steps. In Step 1, I entered teachers' sex and years of teaching experience as covariates. As seen in Step 1 of Table 3.5, the covariates did not account for variance in CRTSE.

In Step 2, I added critical and acritical reflection to the model to test research question 2. As hypothesized, acritical reflection explained an incremental 12% of the variance and was negatively associated with CRTSE ($b = -3.25$, $p < .05$). The results suggest that the more teachers attributed racial inequality to characteristics and actions of Black people the less

efficacious they felt implementing culturally responsive teaching practices. The main effect of critical reflection on CRTSE was not significant (b = 1.07, p > .05).

Finally, in Step 3, I added the critical and acritical reflection interaction to the model to test research question 3. The interaction was not statistically significant (b = -1.19, p > .05). Critical reflection was not significantly associated with CRTSE for teachers high in acritical reflection (b = -0.90, p > .05) or low in acritical reflection (b = 2.33, p > .05; visualized in Figure 3.1). Although neither association was significant, the trends of the lines suggested that an increase in awareness of structural barriers to racial equity in education might be positively associated with feelings of self-efficacy in implementing equitable teaching practices for teachers who were less likely to attribute racial inequality to Black students and families only.

Solicited Parental Involvement

To address research questions 4 (i.e., Are teachers' reflections on the causes of racial inequity in education related to their solicited parental involvement?), 5 (i.e., Does culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?), 6 (i.e., Does acritical reflection moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?), and 7 (i.e., Does acritical reflection moderate any moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement?), I ran a hierarchical regression with four steps. In step 1, I entered sex and years of teaching experience as covariates. As seen in Step 1 in Table 3.6, the covariates did not account for any of the variance in teachers' reports of solicited parental involvement.

In Step 2, I added critical reflection, acritical reflection, and CRTSE to the model. Acritical reflection was negatively associated with solicited parental involvement (b = -0.14, p <

.05) and explained a significant incremental 18% of the variance in teachers' reports. This finding supports my hypothesis that teachers would be less likely to solicit the involvement of parents when they attributed race differences in achievement to Black students and their families. The main effects for critical reflection ($b = 0.08$, $p > .05$) and CRTSE ($b = 0.01$, $p > .05$) were not significant.

In Step 3, I added the two-way interactions to the model. None of the 2-way interactions were significant (Critical X Acritical: $b = 0.03$, $p > .05$; Critical X CRTSE: $b = 0.00$, $p > .05$; Acritical X CRTSE: 0.00, $p > .05$). I hypothesized that there would be a two-way interaction effect with acritical reflection such that for teachers with low acritical reflection there would be a positive relation between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement and there would be no association for teachers with high acritical reflection. My hypothesis was not supported. Critical reflection was not associated with solicited parental involvement for teachers high in acritical reflection ($b = 0.09$, $p > .05$) or low in acritical reflection ($b = 0.07$, $p > .05$; visualized in Figure 3.2). Furthermore, I hypothesized that there would be a two-way interaction effect with CRTSE such that for teachers with high CRTSE there would be a positive relation between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement and no association for teachers with low CRTSE. My hypothesis was not supported. Critical reflection was not associated with solicited parental involvement for teachers low in CRTSE ($b = 0.03$, $p > .05$) or high in CRTSE ($b = 0.07$, $p > .05$; visualized in Figure 3.3).

In Step 4, I added the three-way interaction to the model. The 3-way interaction was not significant ($b = 0.01$, $p > .05$) and did not add significant incremental variance to the model. Contrary to my hypothesis, simple slopes analysis revealed that the slope of the line for teachers with high CRTSE and low acritical reflection was not significant ($b = -0.01$, $p > .05$; visualized

in Figure 3.4). Although not a hypothesized association, the analysis showed that the association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement for teachers with high CRTSE and high acritical reflection was marginally significant (b = .42, p = .07). The trend suggested that teachers who felt highly efficacious implementing equitable teaching practices and were more likely to attribute racial inequality to Black students and families were more likely to solicit parental involvement as their awareness of the role of structural barriers in perpetuating inequity increased.

Discussion

The present study sought to better understand teachers' reflections on racial inequity in education in relation to their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and solicited parental involvement and the ways their reflections and efficacy might collectively shape their solicited parental involvement. This work adds to existing studies of critical consciousness by investigating associations between critical reflection, motivation, and action with teachers specifically. Furthermore, this study builds on extant literature demonstrating that people engage in critical and acritical reflection when reasoning about social inequities: attributing social inequity to structural as well as individual and cultural factors. The moderation analyses utilized in the current study allowed me to empirically test the potential consequences of teachers engaging in critical and acritical reflection simultaneously.

Preliminary Findings

The results revealed that teachers believed the greatest structural contributors to racial inequity in education were poverty, school resources, and class sizes, while racist/biased teachers and the quality of Black students' schools were the least endorsed structural contributors. Thus,

teachers were more likely to attribute racial inequity in education to factors in which teachers presumably had little control over and they were less likely to attribute it to aspects of the school environment in which teachers had some control over. Moreover, the most highly endorsed individual/cultural attributions for racial inequity in education were those involving parents (i.e., race differences in parenting, parental involvement, and the number of parents in the home) and the least endorsed were attributions involving Black student intelligence and ability. This suggests that when teachers were engaging in acritical reflection, they were more likely to think of Black parents than Black students.

Main Findings

Analyses revealed that the teachers did not differ in their engagement in critical and acritical reflection. On average, teachers reportedly believed racial differences in academic outcomes for Black and white students were somewhat caused by barriers for Black students (i.e., structural attributions) and somewhat caused by negative characteristics of Black people (i.e., individual/cultural attributions). This finding is inconsistent with much of the research demonstrating that people, including teachers, are most likely to attribute social inequity to characteristics and actions of the underperforming group (Lynn et al., 2010; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Robinson, 2009; Smith & Stone, 1989; Tagler & Cozzarelli, 2013).

As hypothesized, engaging in acritical reflection (i.e., attributing the Black-White achievement gap to individual/cultural factors) was negatively associated with soliciting parental involvement. This finding is consistent with causal attribution literature demonstrating that individuals who attribute social inequity to the internal and/or cultural characteristics of people from marginalized groups are less willing to engage with and support people from such

communities (Bullock, 1999; Cozzarelli et al., 2001; Weiss, 2006). The association is also consistent with studies illustrating the importance of teachers' beliefs regarding parent efficacy in determining teachers' outreach to parents (Kim, 2009). Teachers who hold negative stereotypes about Black people and culture (as suggested by their individual/cultural attributions; Reyna, 2000) may be less likely to solicit involvement from parents because these teachers view parents as incompetent and therefore a hindrance to the student learning process. The current study examined teacher solicited parental involvement in general, not that specific to Black parents. Thus, more research is needed to understand why teachers' race-specific beliefs might be associated with a generalized teaching practice.

Based on empirical research demonstrating the positive association between critical reflection and measures of efficacy (Osborne et al., 2019) in addition to the positive association between teachers' critical reflection on their teaching practices and their self-efficacy (Tan, 2013), I hypothesized that acritical reflection would have the opposite association with culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. In line with my hypothesis, the more teachers attributed racial inequity to negative characteristics of Black students and culture the less efficacious they felt implementing culturally responsive teaching practices. For teachers who believe Black people cause racial inequity, it is possible that they feel less efficacious implementing culturally responsive teaching practices because these practices require teachers to incorporate aspects of their Black students' lives and experiences that the teachers' causal attributions suggest they have a negative regard for. These teachers may be too focused on students' assumed weaknesses to feel efficacious leveraging their strengths in practice.

Guided by critical consciousness and causal attribution research (Cozzarelli, et al., 2001; Osborne et al., 2019; Valant & Newark, 2016), I hypothesized that critical reflection would be

positively associated with solicited parental involvement. Contrary to my hypothesis, critical reflection was not associated with solicited parental involvement. One possible explanation for this observation is that teachers who are highly aware of structural barriers and those who are unaware of such barriers both solicit involvement from parents. Thus, a measure of solicited parental involvement that better captures the collaborative efforts of teachers specifically (as proposed by culturally responsive teaching literature) may be needed to better test the hypothesized association. Moreover, research demonstrates that teachers have various beliefs regarding parental involvement that influence the likelihood of them soliciting such involvement, including their beliefs about parents' capacity to be involved and the overall effectiveness of parental involvement (Kim, 2009). These beliefs may or may not relate to a teachers' critical awareness. Therefore, it may be necessary to account for teachers' beliefs of this nature when examining the relation between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement.

Contrary to my hypothesis, critical reflection was not positively associated with culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. This finding contradicts theory and empirical research suggesting that awareness of inequity may foster an individual's efficacy to carry out equity-supportive actions (Diemer & Rapa, 2016; Osborne et al., 2019). It also contradicts research demonstrating that teachers are more efficacious in their ability to effectively teach their students when they reflect on the ways factors external to their students (including their own teaching) may impact their students' learning outcomes (Tan, 2013). One possible explanation for the lack of association observed is that the measure of critical reflection employed in the current study assesses multiple aspects of racism awareness (e.g., interpersonal and policy-related) whereas the culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy measure assesses teachers' self-efficacy to implement practices that are primarily interpersonal, and student-teacher centered. Thus, there

may have been a disconnect between teachers' critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy in the current study because awareness of sources of inequity unrelated to student-teacher relations does not necessarily translate into teachers' feeling more efficacious implementing practices with a student-teacher focus.

Given that self-efficacy for carrying out a particular action moderates associations between related beliefs and those actions (Bandura, 1977; Nishino, 2012; Ogan-Bekiroglu & Akkoc, 2009; Tang et al., 2012), I hypothesized that critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy would interact in a way that significantly increased the likelihood of teachers soliciting parental involvement when both were high. Inconsistent with my hypothesis, culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy did not moderate the association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement. The positive correlation between culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and solicited parental involvement in addition to the lack of moderation observed suggest that teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy alone may increase the likelihood of them involving parents: this association is not augmented by teachers' critical reflection.

Acritical reflection did not moderate associations between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement or critical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy in statistically significant ways. It is possible that the group level approach used to examine these associations does not capture the nuances of teachers' reflections as they relate to their actions and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. Future research should consider person-centered approaches to better examine how critical and acritical reflection may work together to shape teachers' efficacy and actions.

Finally, although the three-way interaction involving both forms of reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy was not significant, the marginally significant association for teachers high in both acritical reflection and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy suggested that these teachers may be more likely to solicit parental involvement with greater critical reflection. Given the negative association observed between acritical reflection and solicited parental involvement, it is likely that for these teachers their critical reflection and/or their self-efficacy may motivate their desire to involve parents. However, the deficit beliefs these teachers seem to hold regarding Black people (i.e., their individual/cultural attributions) brings to question how positive the parent-teacher interactions are likely to be once parents are involved. For example, Black parents in previous studies have reported only receiving communications from their children's teachers to alert them of behavioral or academic problems concerning their children (Allen & White-Smith, 2018). Thus, some teachers may feel efficacious engaging with parents, but they may not solicit parental involvement because they view parents as experts of their children. Instead, they may seek to involve parents in order to share their perceived challenges with no clear desire to collaborate in finding solutions.

Limitations and Future Directions

Though the study discussed adds to the current literature, there are a few limitations that must be noted. First, the measures of solicited parental involvement and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy used in the current study were not specific to engaging with Black parents and teaching Black students, respectively. Thus, the conclusion cannot be drawn that engaging in acritical reflection regarding Black students and parents was associated with soliciting less involvement from Black parents and having lower feelings of self-efficacy instructing Black students specifically. Still, the teachers in the current study reported teaching Black students

and/or teaching schools attended by Black students and therefore had the possibility of soliciting involvement from Black parents. Therefore, for teachers engaging in acritical reflection, their Black students and their students' parents would undoubtedly experience the negative impacts of their beliefs on their engagement with parents, as suggested by the results of this study.

Furthermore, the sample used in the current study was small and included teachers in one midwestern state, thus limiting the generalizability of the study results to teachers nationally and the probability of small effects being detected. Relatedly, teachers were asked to think about the causes of the Black-White achievement gap in Michigan specifically. Attribution literature demonstrates that when people make attributions for a given situation the target group matters (Cozzarelli et al., 2002; Forgas et al., 1982; Furnham, 1983; Wilson, 1996). Therefore, it is possible that teachers may have reported different endorsement for the attributions if they were asked to think about racial inequity in a different context (e.g., in another state). Nonetheless, when analyzing a situation, people are likely to make attributions based on their personal experiences and their stereotypical beliefs; meaning even if the teachers were asked to report their beliefs about racial inequity outside of Michigan it is likely that their reported beliefs would have been informed by their experiences in Michigan as well as any racial stereotypes they held (Reyna, 2000).

An additional limitation of the current study is that I only considered teachers' self-reports of their practices. To reduce the possibility of bias in self-reports, future studies should consider reports of teachers' practices from multiple informants (i.e., teachers, students, and parents) to fully understand associations between teachers' beliefs and practices. The study also used a cross-sectional design and can only provide a snapshot of teachers' beliefs and practices concurrently (i.e., directionality cannot be assumed). As observed in other studies, it is possible

that teachers' practices inform their beliefs and vice versa (Buehl & Beck, 2015). Thus, future research should employ longitudinal designs to explore possible directionality. Finally, as theory suggests, it is possible that some teachers engage in critical and acritical reflection. The nuanced effects of this engagement at the person level may not be accurately captured using moderation analyses. Future studies should address this issue by using person-centered statistical approaches with teachers.

Table 3.1

Original Achievement Gap Attribution

Race differences in parenting
Blacks are less intelligent
Schools that serve Black students are not as good
Black students use school resources (e.g. library) less frequently
Racial discrimination against Blacks.
Black students are less engaged in academic extracurricular activities
Government policies like No Child Left Behind
Black students lack academic ability
Testing that is biased against Black students
Black students have a poorer work ethic
Teachers are less effective in teaching Black students
Lack of funding/resources for schools serving Black students
Large class sizes for Black schools
Bad principals/school administration in predominantly Black schools
Teachers fail to engage Black students in the classroom
Black parents do not get involved at school
Lack of Black student motivation
Lack of Black student effort
Decline in the number of Black two-parent families
Racist/biased Teachers against Blacks
Teachers with low expectations for Black students
Blacks are more likely to be poor
*The mismatch between classroom culture and home culture for Black students
*Lack of access to learning materials in Black households
*Black families not having good experiences with education
*Conflicts with what schools teach/expect and Black family values
*Unsafe school environments for Black students
*There is a mismatch between Black students' learning styles and teacher expectations

Note. Asterisks (*) denote items that were removed from the final measure due to them having significant correlations with structural and individual/cultural attributions.

Table 3.2

T-tests and Chi-square tests Demographic Comparisons of Participants in the Final Sample and Excluded Participants

Variable	*n*	*t*	χ^2	*df*	*p*-value
Age	62	-0.38	-	60	0.71
Years Teach	60	-0.96	-	58	0.34
AvgStuClass	58	-1.09	-	56	0.28
AvgStuSch	60	0.86	-	58	0.40
Sex	63	-	.55	1	0.46
Degree	62	-	4.75	3	0.19
Grade Teach	60	-	2.21	2	0.33
NB Certified	60	-	1.09	1	0.30
Title 1	60	-	0.11	1	0.74
StuOnGrdLvl	59	-	1.66	4	0.80
SchLocation	60	-	0.29	3	0.96

Note. AvgStuClass = average number of students in the teacher's class; AvgStuSch = average number of students in the school; NB Certified = National Board Certified (dichotomous: 0 = No and 1 = Yes); StuOnGrdLvl = number of students reading on grade level at the start of the academic year, SchLocation = location of the school (i.e., suburban, urban, small town/village, and rural).

Table 3.3

Black-White Achievement Gap Measure Item Descriptives

Scale	Item stem: There are many theories about why Black students do less well than Whites in school. Indicate how much you think the Achievement Gap is caused by each of the following statements. Think specifically about causes of the Achievement Gap in *Michigan*.	Min-Max (actual response)	Mean	*SD*
S	Schools that serve Black students are not as good	8	3.21	2.20
S	Racial discrimination against Blacks.	9	3.74	2.24
S	Government policies like No Child Left Behind	9	3.96	2.78
S	Testing that is biased against Black students	9	3.64	2.36
S	Teachers are less effective in teaching Black students	9	3.70	2.42
S	Lack of funding/resources for schools serving Black students	9	5.10	2.45
S	Large class sizes for Black schools	9	5.10	2.77
S	Bad principals/school administration in predominantly Black schools	9	3.35	2.50
S	Teachers fail to engage Black students in the classroom	8	4.52	2.26
S	Racist/biased teachers against Blacks	9	3.21	2.29
S	Teachers with low expectations for Black students	9	4.48	2.59
S	Blacks are more likely to be poor	9	5.14	2.61
I/C	Race differences in parenting	9	5.40	2.35
I/C	Blacks are less intelligent	5	1.26	0.76
I/C	Black students use school resources (e.g. library) less frequently	9	3.78	1.99
I/C	Black students are less engaged in academic extracurricular activities	9	3.96	2.48
I/C	Black students lack academic ability	5	1.34	0.92
I/C	Black students have a poorer work ethic	8	2.68	1.96
I/C	Black parents do not get involved at school	9	5.08	2.13
I/C	Lack of Black student motivation	9	4.56	2.27
I/C	Lack of Black student effort	9	4.15	2.24
I/C	Decline in the number of Black two-parent families	9	5.54	2.49

Note. S = Structural; I/C = Individual/Cultural.

Table 3.4

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	45.45	10.62	-					
2. Years Teach	17.95	9.16	.74**	-				
3. Critical Refl	4.10	1.55	-.20	-.26	-			
4. Acritical Refl	3.79	1.36	.03	.08	.09	-		
5. CRTSE	77.36	12.86	-.10	-.14	.10	-.33*	-	
6. TSPI	2.46	0.60	-.11	.00	.14	-.32*	.29*	-

Note. *$p < .05$ **$p < .01$.

CRTSE = culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy.

Table 3.5

Regression Analyses Predicting Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) From Reflection

Step	Predictor	*b*	*b* (SE)	***β***	Cumulative R^2	Incremental R^2	*t*(49)
1	Sex	1.96	3.77	0.08	0.02	0.02	0.52
	Years teaching	-0.16	0.21	-0.11			-0.78
2	Critical reflection	1.07	1.23	0.13	.14	.12	0.87
	Acritical reflection	-3.25	1.32	-0.35			-2.46*
3	Critical X Acritical	-1.19	0.99	-0.19	.17	.03	-1.20

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

Table 3.6

Regression Analyses Predicting Solicited Parental Involvement From Reflection and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE)

Step	Predictor	*b*	*b* (SE)	***β***	Cumulative R^2	Incremental R^2	*t*(49)
1	Sex	0.07	0.18	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.37
	Years teaching	0.00	0.01	0.01			0.08
2	Critical reflection	0.08	0.06	0.20	0.18	0.18	1.36
	Acritical reflection	-0.14	0.07	-0.30			-2.03*
	CRTSE	0.01	0.01	0.18			1.21
3	Critical X Acritical	0.03	0.06	0.11	0.19	0.01	0.59
	Critical X CRTSE	0.00	0.01	0.05			0.27
	Acritical X CRTSE	0.00	0.01	0.04			0.30
4	Critical X Acritical X CRTSE	0.01	0.01	0.28	0.24	0.05	1.62

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

Figure 3.1

Associations Between Critical Reflection and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) by Acritical Reflection

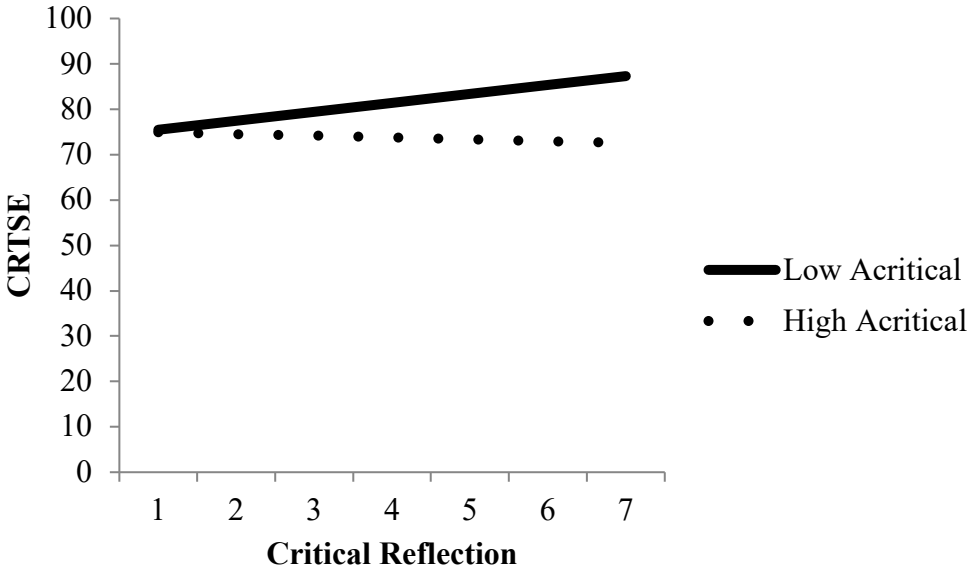


Figure 3.2

Associations Between Critical Reflection and Solicited Parental Involvement by Acritical Reflection

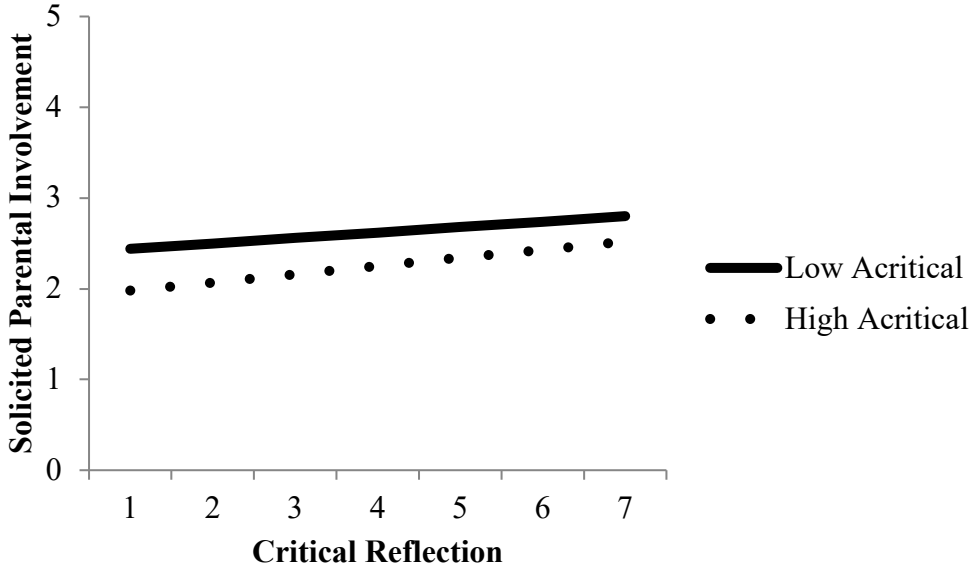


Figure 3.3

Associations Between Critical Reflection and Solicited Parental Involvement by Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE)

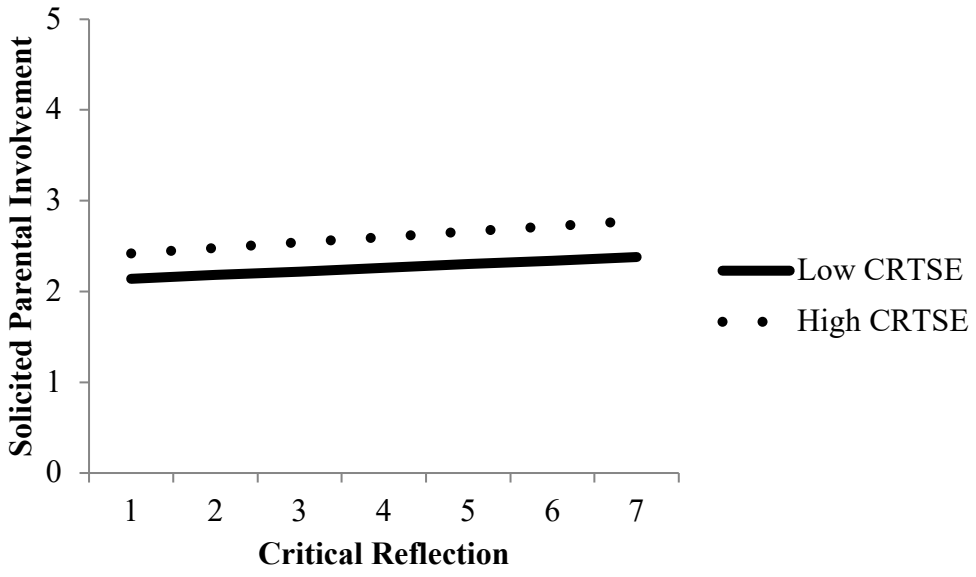
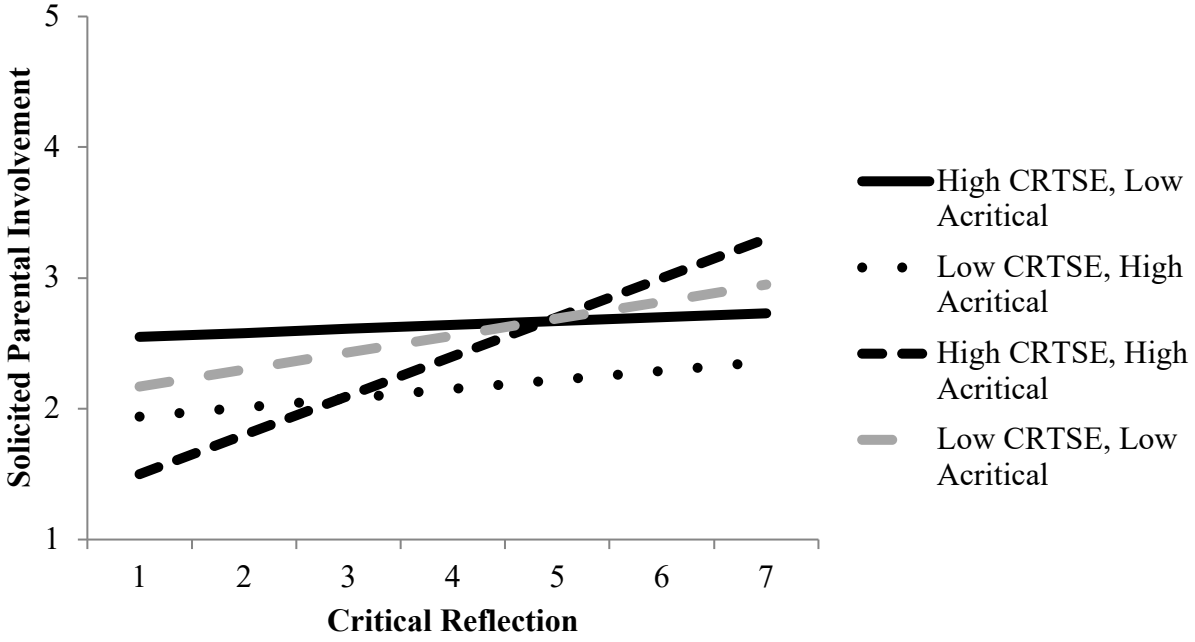


Figure 3.4

Associations Between Critical Reflection and Solicited Parental Involvement by Acritical Reflection and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE)



Chapter 4 Conclusion

Key Findings

This dissertation had several key findings: 1) Black parents beliefs regarding the causes of racial inequity in education could be categorized into three profiles of reflection, 2) their profile membership was not associated with their school trust, 3) their profile membership and school trust were related to their parental involvement, 4) school trust did not moderate associations between profile membership and parental involvement, 5) teachers of Black youth engaged in critical and acritical reflection when thinking about the causes of racial inequity in education, 6) their acritical reflection was associated with their belief in their ability to implement culturally responsive teaching practices, 7) their critical reflection was not associated with their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and their acritical reflection did not moderate this association, 8) their acritical reflection was associated with their solicited parental involvement, and 9) their critical reflection was not associated with their solicited parental involvement and culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and acritical reflection did not moderate this association.

Results Summary

Black parents' reflections on racial inequity in education revealed three profiles of parents: *ambivalent*, *race-conscious*, and *balanced*. *Ambivalent* parents demonstrated low

engagement in critical reflection and low engagement in acritical reflection. *Race-conscious* parents demonstrated moderate engagement in critical reflection and low engagement in acritical reflection. *Balanced* parents demonstrated similarly moderate engagement in critical and acritical reflection. The profiles did not completely align with those suggested by existing theories and empirical studies. More specifically, none of the profiles were defined by high engagement in critical reflection and low engagement in acritical reflection (i.e., critically race-conscious) or low engagement in critical reflection and high engagement in acritical reflection (i.e., racially dysconscious). If critical consciousness is a developmental process beginning with dysconsciousness and ending with critical consciousness, then the defining characteristics of each profile were representative of individuals in between critical consciousness and dysconsciousness. Furthermore, the profiles and correlations demonstrated that more engagement in critical reflection coincided with more engagement in acritical reflection, demonstrating that for some individuals a greater awareness of the ways racism causes racial inequity does not lead to less of a belief that marginalized groups are responsible for inequity.

Parent reflection profiles are associated with parental involvement and school trust. Specifically, *balanced* parents were more involved in their children's schools than *ambivalent* and *race-conscious* parents. Parent school trust was not associated with school involvement. All parents reported frequently assisting their children with homework irrespective of their beliefs about the causes of racial inequity in education and how much they trusted their child's school. All parents reported sending messages to their children that encouraged them to take pride in their cultural heritage without regard to their engagement in critical and acritical reflection or how much they trusted their child's school. All parents were more likely to send messages to their children regarding possible experiences of racial bias when they lacked trust in their

children's schools. *Balanced* parents reported sending their children more of these messages than *ambivalent* parents. Although reported effort socialization was high for all parents, *race-conscious* parents reported sending their children more messages expressing the importance of working hard in school than *ambivalent* and *balanced* parents. For all parents, this socialization did not vary as a function of their school trust. All parents were more likely to encourage their children to have confidence in their schoolwork when they had greater trust in their child's school. Although their reported support/encouragement socialization was also relatively high, *balanced* parents were less likely to engage in this form of socialization than *ambivalent* and *race-conscious* parents. Furthermore, school trust did not moderate any of the associations between parent profiles and parental involvement: within parent profiles, parents with high and low school trust did not differ significantly in their reported parental involvement.

The teachers believed structural and systemic racism (i.e., structural attributions) and negative characteristics of Black students, their parents and their culture or living environments (i.e., individual/cultural attributions) cause racial inequity in education. When endorsing individual/cultural attributions for racial inequity, teachers were likely to report factors related to Black parents as causes (e.g., "race differences in parenting", "decline in the number of Black two-parent families", and "Black parents do not get involved at school") and less likely to report Black students' intelligence and academic ability as causes. When endorsing structural attributions, teachers were likely to report poverty, school resources, and class sizes as causes and less likely to report racist/biased teachers against Black students and the general quality of schools serving Black students as causes.

The teachers did not engage in more critical reflection (i.e., endorsing structural attributions) or acritical reflection (i.e., endorsing individual/cultural attributions) when

reasoning about the causes of racial inequity in education. Teachers were just as likely to attribute racial inequity to Black people and Black culture as they were to attribute it to structural racism. Furthermore, teachers' reflections related to their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. More specifically, engaging in more acritical reflection was associated with teachers feeling less efficacious in implementing teaching practices intended to leverage the cultural knowledge and experiences of ethnically diverse students. Conversely, engaging in more critical reflection was not associated with teachers' reported efficacy in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices and acritical reflection did not moderate this association in a statistically significant way. Teachers who were highly engaged in acritical reflection were soliciting less parental involvement than teachers with low engagement and greater critical reflection was not associated with either group of teachers feeling significantly more or less efficacious in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices. The association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement did not change as a function of acritical reflection.

For teachers, engaging in acritical reflection was related to their solicited parental involvement while engaging in critical reflection was not. Specifically, the more teachers attributed racial inequity in education to Black people and Black culture the less likely they were to report soliciting involvement from parents. Conversely, attributing racial inequity to structural racism was not associated with the likelihood of teachers soliciting involvement from parents. Culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy did not moderate the association. Teachers who were highly engaged in acritical reflection were soliciting less parental involvement than teachers with low engagement. However greater critical reflection did not make either group of teachers significantly more or less likely to solicit involvement from parents. Furthermore, acritical

reflection did not moderate any moderating effect of culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy on the association between critical reflection and solicited parental involvement.

Dissertation Limitations and Future Directions

This dissertation is not without limitations. First, the participants were all parents and teachers of middle schoolers from schools in the Midwest. Thus, the findings might not be generalizable to parents and teachers nationally or parents and teachers of students in other grade levels. Relatedly, both studies used self-reported data for parents' and teachers' actions. Although this information may be important to consider when investigating how an individual's beliefs relate to their actions, it only captures parents' and teachers' views of their own behaviors and may not accurately capture actual parenting or teaching behaviors. Future research should consider adolescents' reports of their parents' and teachers' actions, as well as parent and teacher reports of each other's actions.

An additional limitation of the current dissertation is the lack of alignment between measures of achievement gap attributions and attribution theory. According to attribution theory, multiple aspects of a person's attribution for a given outcome influence their resulting actions: namely locus of causality (i.e., internal vs. external), controllability by self and others (i.e., controllable vs. uncontrollable), and stability (i.e., static vs. dynamic; Weiner, 1972, 1985). People tend to act more favorably toward an individual or group when a negative outcome is perceived as external to the individual or group, uncontrollable by the individual or group, controllable by others, and dynamic. All individual achievement gap attributions are thought to be associated with unfavorable outcomes. However, some individual achievement gap attributions have characteristics theoretically linked to favorable outcomes. For instance, perceived lack of ability is considered uncontrollable by the individual and has been linked to

teachers providing students with more academic support (Georgiou et al., 2002; Wang & Hall, 2018). Still, perceived Black student ability was grouped with individual/cultural attributions in the current studies and hypothesized to be negatively associated with parents' and teachers' critical actions because the ability items demonstrated satisfactory psychometric consistency with other individual/cultural items. Additionally, Black student ability, like other individual/cultural items, represent a person's negative stereotypes about Black people (Reyna, 2000).

Finally, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data presented in both studies, I was unable to explore the reciprocal nature of parents' and teachers' beliefs and actions or how these associations may change over time. The theoretical underpinnings of critical consciousness suggest that as an individual's beliefs (i.e., awareness of social inequity) change their corresponding actions will also change. It is possible that changes in beliefs and actions inform each other. Therefore, longitudinal explorations of parents' and teachers' reflections on social inequity, as well as their critical actions relevant to students, will result in a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which parents' and teachers' critical and acritical reflections influence their actions. Relatedly, this dissertation employed all quantitative data to explore the hypothesized associations. Future work should consider mixed-method designs to leverage the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods in an effort to better understand what belief-action associations exist and why they exist.

Strengths of the Dissertation

This dissertation has many methodological strengths, allowing this work to contribute to the critical consciousness literature, both generally and specific to parents and teachers of Black youth. One such strength is the focus on parents and teachers. Much of the existing critical

consciousness literature focuses on adolescents or adults in general, while few studies have examined components of critical consciousness (i.e., reflection, motivation, and action) or related factors with parents and teachers specifically (Diemer et al., 2015; Heberle et al., 2020; Jemal, 2017; Marchand, 2019). Furthermore, many existing studies focus on the critical reflection (e.g., racism/classism/sexism awareness) and motivation (e.g., political efficacy) aspects of critical consciousness and do not examine them in relation to action, which is arguably the most important component of critical consciousness (Diemer et al., 2021). This dissertation centered on parents' and teachers' actions and demonstrated that, similar to existing studies, their reflection may inform their motivations and actions in important ways.

Another strength of my work is the use of a person-centered approach to study the reflection component of critical consciousness. Although theory and empirical studies suggest that people may engage in critical and acritical reflection when reasoning about social inequity (Godfrey & Wolf, 2016; Hunt, 2004; King, 1991; Kluegel & Smith, 1986; Robinson, 2011; Watts et al., 1999), existing studies have examined engagement in critical and acritical reflection as two extremes with no in between (e.g., Seider et al., 2020). My dissertation demonstrated that people may engage in both critical and acritical reflection and the potential implications of holding theoretically conflicting beliefs. My findings also question existing theory regarding the developmental stages of critical consciousness. Specifically, scholars have proposed that as people reflect critically upon systems of inequity, they will shed the belief that inequity is "a reflection of the inferiority of the oppressed" (Watts et al., 1999, pg. 262). Study 1 revealed that this is not true for all people. Many parents in Study 1 were aware of the ways racism may cause inequity (i.e., they endorsed structural attributions for racial inequity), yet their endorsement of individual/cultural attributions illustrated their lingering belief that Black students' and parents'

abilities, efforts, and values are inferior to those of white students and parents. This phenomenon was demonstrated via the positive correlation between structural and individual/cultural attributions and via the parent profiles (i.e., the more critically reflective profiles endorsed more individual/cultural attributions).

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Appendices

Appendix A: Theoretical Model

Watts' Stages of Sociopolitical Development

(Watts et al. 1999)

Stage of Sociopolitical Development	Key Action Concepts for Enhancing Critical Consciousness
Acritical stage: Resource asymmetry is outside of awareness, or the existing social order is thought to reflect real differences in the capabilities of group members. In essence, it is a "just world" (Rubin & Peplau, 1975).	Challenge internalized oppression: *What contributions have African Americans made to the U.S. and the world?* Critical thinking on class and race inequity: *Why can't kids in this (impoverished all-Black) school take their books home when kids in other (affluent White) schools can?*
Adaptive stage: Asymmetry may be acknowledged, but the system maintaining it is seen as immutable. Predatory, antisocial or accommodation strategies are employed to maintain a positive sense of self and to acquire social and material rewards.	Encourage critical thinking about socialization agents and psychic alienation: *What do rap videos tell us about Black men and their lifestyles?* Decision-making and values clarification: *What's the connection between choices of lifestyle and quality of life and neighborhood?*
Precritical stage: Complacency gives way to awareness of and concerns about asymmetry and inequality. The value of adaptation is questioned.	Cognitive reframing: *How many explanations can we come up with for the differences in the quality of high and low income communities?*
Critical stage: There is a desire to learn more about asymmetry, injustice, oppression, and liberation. Through this process, some will conclude that the asymmetry is unjust and social-change efforts are warranted.	Critical consciousness: *What events now and in the past maintain the differences in the quality of life in some Black and White communities?* Moral reasoning: *Is the inequity a sign that something is wrong with society? Why? Why not?*
Liberation stage: The experience and awareness of oppression is salient. Liberation behavior (involvement in social action and community development) is tangible and frequent. Adaptive behaviors are eschewed.	Community activism, solidarity, and liberation behavior: *What can you do (personally and as a group) to improve the situation?*

Figure A Stages of Sociopolitical Development

Appendix B: Measures

Parents' Black-White Achievement Gap Attributions

Structural Attributions (Critical Reflection)

1. Tests are biased against Black students.
2. Teachers are less effective in teaching Black students.
3. Racist/biased teachers against Blacks.
4. Teachers have low expectations for Black students.
5. Whites have more opportunities than Blacks.
6. Racism in the past has made it harder for Blacks to graduate from high school.
7. In general, Whites have more opportunities than Blacks, and that makes it easier for them to graduate from high school.

Individual/Cultural Attributions (Acritical Reflection)

1. Blacks are less intelligent.
2. Black students lack math ability.
3. Black students lack science ability.
4. Black students are less motivated than White students.
5. Black parents are less involved at school.
6. Black students lack English ability.
7. Blacks value science less than Whites.
8. Lack of Black student effort.
9. Blacks value math less than Whites.
10. Blacks value English less than Whites.
11. Genetic differences between Blacks, and Whites.
12. In general, Blacks do not value education as much as Whites do.
13. There are genetic differences between Blacks and Whites that make it easier for Whites to graduate from high school.

Parent School Trust

1. I would feel comfortable talking with the Target Child's teachers about his/her performance in school.
2. I believe the Target Child has high quality teachers.
3. In general, I trust the Target Child's school.
4. The Target Child's teachers treat children of all races the same.
5. I believe that the Target Child's teachers are sensitive to the racial/cultural needs of Black children.
6. I see the Target Child's school as a supportive place for Black children.
7. I would feel comfortable recommending the Target Child's school to other parents of Black children.

Traditional School-Based Parental Involvement

Home

1. I have helped the Target Child with his/her homework.
2. I have checked the Target Child's homework assignments
3. I have talked to the Target Child about what goes on at school.

School

1. How often have you set up a time to talk with the Target Child's teacher/principal/counselor?
2. How often have you participated in organizing or helping with the activities of those organizations the Target Child belongs to?
3. How often have you visited the Target Child's school?

Parental Racial Socialization

Racial Pride

1. Been involved in activities that focus on things important to Black people.
2. Talked to the Target Child about Black history.
3. Told the Target Child that he/she should be proud to be Black.
4. Told the Target Child never to be ashamed of his/her Black features (i.e. hair texture, skin color, lip shape, etc.).

Racial Barriers

1. Told the Target Child that some people try to keep Black people from being successful.
2. Told the Target Child that some people think they are better than him/her because of their race.
3. Told the Target Child that Blacks have to work twice as hard as Whites to get ahead.
4. Told the Target Child that some people may dislike him/her because of the color of his/her skin.

Parental Academic Socialization

Effort

1. I tell my child that you can get smarter and smarter as long as you try hard.
2. I teach my child that a person feels good when they work hard.
3. I tell my child that he/she could do better in school if he/she worked harder.
4. I tell my child that hard work is the key to success.

Support/Encouragement

1. I encourage my child to feel confident about his/her schoolwork
2. I encourage my child to try new things on his/her own
3. I tell my child that it is ok to come to me for help with any schoolwork (e.g., homework, school reports, papers, project, study for test)
4. I encourage my child to not give up when he/she has difficulty in school.
5. I encourage my child to solve school problems without my help

Teachers' Black-White Achievement Gap Attributions

Structural Attributions (Critical Reflection)

1. Schools that serve Black students are not as good
2. Racial discrimination against Blacks.
3. Government policies like No Child Left Behind
4. Testing that is biased against Black students
5. Teachers are less effective in teaching Black students
6. Lack of funding/resources for schools serving Black students
7. Large class sizes for Black schools
8. Bad principals/school administration in predominantly Black schools
9. Teachers fail to engage Black students in the classroom
10. Racist/biased teachers against Blacks
11. Teachers with low expectations for Black students
12. Blacks are more likely to be poor

Individual/Cultural Attributions (Acritical Reflection)

1. Race differences in parenting
2. Blacks are less intelligent
3. Black students use school resources (e.g. library) less frequently re less intelligent
4. Black students are less engaged in academic extracurricular activities
5. Black students lack academic ability
6. Black students have a poorer work ethic
7. Black parents do not get involved at school
8. Lack of Black student motivation
9. Lack of Black student effort
10. Decline in the number of Black two-parent families

Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy

1. I am able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.
2. I am able to identify ways that school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.
3. I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
4. I am able to assess student learning using various types of assessments.
5. I am able to build a sense of trust in my students.
6. I am able to establish positive home-school relations.
7. I am able to use a variety of teaching methods
8. I am able to develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.
9. I am able to use my students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.
10. I am able to identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms.
11. I am able to design a classroom environment using displays that reflects a variety of cultures.
12. I am able to develop a personal relationship with my students.
13. I am able to communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.
14. I am able to structure parent-teacher conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating for parents.
15. I am able to help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.
16. I am able to revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.
17. I am able to model classroom tasks to enhance English Language Learners' understanding.
18. I am able to communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.
19. I am able to help students feel like important members of the classroom.
20. I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.
21. I am able to explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.
22. I am able to obtain information regarding my students' academic interests.
23. I am able to use of interests of my students to make learning meaningful to them.
24. I am able to implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.
25. I am able to design instruction that matches my students' developmental needs.

Solicited Parental Involvement

1. Send notes/emails home about student progress at school
2. Send notes/emails home regarding classroom or school events
3. Invite parents to visit your classroom
4. Ask parents to volunteer to help in the classroom or school activities
5. Ask parents to talk with you
6. Visit students' homes
   Give assignments that require parent participation to complete