



HHS Public Access

Author manuscript

Early Educ Dev. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2018 January 12.

Published in final edited form as:

Early Educ Dev. 2017 ; 28(2): 182–206. doi:10.1080/10409289.2016.1208601.

An Emic, Mixed Methods Approach to Defining and Measuring Positive Parenting Among Low-Income, Black Families

Christine McWayne,

Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, Tufts University

Jacqueline S. Mattis,

University of Michigan

Linnie E. Green Wright,

Independent Researcher

Maria Cristina Limlingan, and

Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, Tufts University

Elise Harris

Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, Tufts University

Abstract

Research Findings—This within-group exploratory sequential mixed methods investigation sought to identify how ethnically diverse, urban-residing, low-income Black families conceptualize positive parenting. During the item development phase 119 primary caregivers from Head Start programs participated in focus groups and interviews. These qualitative data were content analyzed using a three-stage iterative process that resulted in the development of a final set of 72 items for a paper-and-pencil measure. In the measure validation phase of the study initial construct validity of the 72-item measure was assessed with an independent sample of 665 respondents. Common factor analyses revealed five dimensions of positive parenting on the *Black Parenting Strengths in Context* (BPSC) scale that related in expected ways with other parent self-report measures.

Practice and Policy—BPSC dimensions provide initial support for a more nuanced operationalization of positive parenting than currently exists in any single scale for use with this group, and hold promise for better honoring the culture- and context-specific parenting goals and practices that low-income, Black parents subjectively view as important for producing healthy developmental outcomes for their children.

Keywords

parenting; early childhood; Black families; measurement; Head Start

Undeniably, parents (or primary caregivers) play the most powerful socialization role for children. Research documents the critical importance of parenting as it relates to children's

socioemotional and sociomoral outcomes (e.g., Dexter, Wong, Stacks, Beeghly, & Barnett, 2013; Garner, 2006; Mandara & Murray, 2002) as well as academic achievement (e.g., Downer, Campos, McWayne, & Gartner, 2010; Raikes, Vogel, & Love, 2013). For the nearly 6.3 million low-income, Black¹ children in the U.S. today (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013) who are disproportionately impacted by the concomitant risks of poverty (e.g., high parental unemployment, parental depression, under-resourced schools), it is vital to identify and understand positive parenting strategies that parents use to promote their children's development (Lerner, Taylor, & von Eye, 2002). Such an understanding is needed for deepening social inquiry concerning healthy development among low-income Black families, as well as for creating effective parenting intervention and support programming for those low-income Black families struggling to parent well (Kelch-Oliver & Smith, 2015). Importantly, having a better understanding of positive parenting strategies employed by primary caregivers of young children may provide early childhood programs that have national reach (e.g., Head Start) with much needed information about the practices that set low-income parents and their children on strong relational trajectories.

Although researchers agree that parents often provide the most immediate and significant prophylactic supports for their children, research focused on low-income, Black families has tended to disproportionately highlight parental deficits rather than caregiving strengths (see Hill, 1998; Murry, Bynum, Brody, Willert, & Stephens, 2001). Despite a long-standing call for a change in our thinking about the empirical study of Black family life and parenting processes (Billingsley, 1969), studies often continue to compare low-income Black families and children to their White, middle-income counterparts (thus conflating race/ethnicity and SES), characterizing the parenting practices of low-income Black caregivers as “harsh,” “punitive,” “aggressive” and “controlling” and generally of lower quality than middle-income and White caregivers (Lee, 2013; Spencer & Dornbush, 1990). However, we have yet to fully understand what low-income Black parents themselves view as effective or positive parenting (Elliott, Powell, & Brenton, 2015).

Current approaches to understanding and documenting positive parenting leave us with many questions about how to measure this construct as it manifests within normative samples of Black, low-income families. The absence of measures of positive parenting that reflect the subjective realities of low-income Black parents underscores Comfort et al.'s (2011) reminder that given the cultural diversity in the American landscape, and the need for interventions that are tailored to diverse communities, there remains a need for assessment tools that “appropriately assess parenting across diverse racial/ethnic groups” (p. 58). Availability of such tools is especially crucial for work involving young ethnic minority children living in poverty because they often lack high quality resources beyond family relationships, and because service providers who work with low-income, ethnic minority families need a viable evidence base from which to design supportive and culturally relevant family programming.

¹We use the term “Black” here rather than African American in order to acknowledge the diversity of ethnic and cultural identities within this racial group and within our study sample. The term “African American” is reserved for use in reference to particular studies, or a body of literature, in which the samples were explicitly identified that way.

In the present study, we used a within-group (i.e., emic) exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013; Teddlie, & Tashakkori, 2009) to respond to the need for the development of a socioculturally-grounded measure of positive parenting for low-income, Black families (McWayne, Owsianik, Green, & Fantuzzo, 2008). Berry (1999) has asserted:

“The value of the emic approach is threefold: first, it permits an understanding of the way in which a language or culture is constructed, ‘not as a series of miscellaneous parts, but as a working whole’ (p. 41); second, it helps one to understand individuals in their daily lives, including their attitudes, motives, interests and personality...; and, third, the emic approach provides the only basis upon which a predictive science of behavior can be expected to make some of its greatest progress, since even statistical predictive studies will in many instances prove invalid....” (p. 167).

Understanding the value of a within-group, mixed-methods approach to the development of a measure of positive parenting for low-income African Americans requires critical attention to existing work on positive parenting generally, and to the body of literature specifically focused on parenting among ethnic minority and Black families. We address both, briefly.

Problematizing and Extending Prevailing Conceptualizations of “Positive Parenting”

Traditional conceptualizations of parenting styles and practices

Much of the quantitative empirical research that has influenced notions of positive parenting is based on Baumrind’s (1967; 1971) seminal work which identified three dimensions of parenting style: a) authoritative parenting; b) authoritarian parenting; and c) permissive parenting, as well as subsequent work by Maccoby and Martin (1983), which extended Baumrind’s typology to include a fourth parenting style: neglecting/uninvolved. This body of empirical research consistently has suggested that the authoritative parenting style is the most positive and developmentally supportive (Simons & Conger, 2007; Simons, Simons, & Su, 2013). This style has been defined as an interplay between demonstrations of warmth and control and has been shown to manifest in parenting practices that include monitoring, calm communication, and responsive and age-appropriate discipline (see Cuellar, Jones, & Sterrett, 2015; Leidy et al., 2010; Oyserman et al., 2002). As such, the authoritative parenting style has come to be central in how the field of psychology conceives of positive parenting (see Carpenter & Mendez, 2013; Coard, Foy-Watson, Zimmer, & Wallace, 2007; Coolahan et al., 2002; Keels, 2009; McKee et al., 2007).

Regarding the ‘styles’-centered formulation of positive parenting, two issues deserve note. First, in the parenting literature, parenting styles and parenting practices are often conflated. Darling and Steinberg (1993) made an important conceptual distinction between very specific, goal-directed parenting behaviors (*practices*) and the larger context or overall emotional climate in which parenting behaviors are expressed (*styles*) (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). In the present study, the focus is on specific *practices* (identified by parents) that show variability among low-income Black families. Second, a number of scholars have

highlighted the point that parenting is a cultural enterprise² and that parenting styles and practices are informed by an array of cultural processes and values (e.g., racial/ethnic socialization, religiosity; interpersonal style; see Hill & Tyson, 2008; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Murray et al., 2008; Weisner, 2005); contextual factors and demands (e.g., perceived safety of the neighborhood, neighborhood advantage or disadvantage, level of exposure to racial discrimination, SES; see Ceballo & Hurd, 2008; Cuellar, Jones, & Sterrett, 2015; Elliott et al., 2015; Murray et al., 2008; Pinderhughes, Nix, Foster, & Jones, 2001); and by the ethnicity, age, and developmental stage of the child (Ceballo et al., 2008; Garcia Coll et al., 1996; Hill & Tyson, 2008).

Studies demonstrate that parents from various ethnic and class communities value and successfully employ a wide range of parenting styles and practices in raising their children that might not fit exactly within the umbrella of authoritative parenting (e.g., “no-nonsense parenting” Brody & Flor, 1998; Young, 1974; “guan” Chao, 1994). Conceptual work on ethnic minority parenting has highlighted several parenting dimensions that lie outside of the scope of traditional frameworks of positive parenting. These include parents’ efforts to: cultivate interdependence and family loyalty, foster maturity, teach respect for authority, and socialize their children within specific racial and cultural realities (Barnes, 2001; Hale-Benson, 1989; Harrison et al., 1990; Dodge, McLoyd, & Lansford, 2005; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990). Thus, a growing number of scholars contend that the existing body of work is limited in that it reifies extant frameworks that attend to *how* parents parent (e.g., authoritative parenting), while doing little to elucidate the practices or underlying cultural values that may be contextually salient and meaningful for low-income and ethnic minority families (Harwood, Leyendecker, Carlson, Asencio, & Miller, 2002; Murry et al., 2001; Sue, 1999). In sum, there remains a need for focused empirical research on the positive parenting practices most relevant and salient for socioculturally diverse groups.

Limitations of existing research on positive parenting among Black families

A relatively nascent and skeletal body of qualitative work exists that has sought to clarify African Americans’ conceptualizations of positive parenting. These studies have asked African American parents and/or their children to identify parenting assets and competencies as well as attributes of effective families (e.g., Barnes, 2001; Hurd, Moore, & Rogers, 1995; McCreary & Dancy, 2004). Consistent with theoretical frameworks offered by several prominent family researchers (e.g., Barnes, 2001; Dodge, McLoyd, & Lansford, 2005; Hale-Benson, 1989; Harrison et al., 1990; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990), the findings of these qualitative studies suggest that positive parenting within Black families centers on fostering children’s emotional and physical well-being, as well as on preparing young people to embrace cultural and community values, and to confront effectively the everyday contextual demands and complexities of ethnic minority status. For example, Hurd et al. (1995) identified eight themes related to competent and effective parenting among a sample of low, middle, and upper income African American caregivers. Specifically, competent and effective parents: 1) cultivate strong connections with family; 2) emphasize effort and

²Here we reference Geertz’s (1973) conceptualization of culture as denoting “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life” (p. 89).

achievement among their children; 3) help their children to understand the importance of being respectful to others; 4) cultivate spirituality and a sense of faith in their children; 5) foster a sense of self-reliance; 6) emphasize the importance of education; 7) help children to recognize that life will be painful and challenging even while they help their children to learn to cope effectively with those challenges; and 8) help their children to develop both racial pride and a sense of self-respect. McCreary and Dancy (2004) found that low-income African American parents associated good parenting with: 1) providing emotional nurturing; 2) fostering good communication with children; 3) doing things together; 4) helping each other; and 5) socializing children and helping them to develop the life skills that they will need to become functional adults. Finally, most recently, Elliott, Powell, and Brenton (2015) found that Black, single mothers of teenagers and young adults privileged sacrifice, self-reliance, and protection of children as central in their construction of what it means to be a good mother.

Although these studies of positive parenting among African American families represent an important advance over more narrow or deficit-based approaches, the efforts to more broadly define and sharpen our understanding of positive parenting through qualitative research also have limitations. For example, qualitative studies have yielded broad domains and goals of positive parenting (e.g., the need to foster self-reliance) but have not identified specific practices that parents employ to actualize those goals. Moreover, extant qualitative work has not been used to advance the development of empirical measures of positive parenting that might be utilized in larger-scale research focused upon low-income families generally and low-income Black families, specifically.

On the other hand, a small number of parenting measures do exist that were developed for and validated specifically with low-income families (e.g., *The Parenting Behavior Questionnaire* (PBQ); Coolahan, McWayne, Fantuzzo, & Grim, 2002; Child Rearing Practices Report [Block, 1986]; as per Abell, Clawson, Washington, Bost, & Vaughn, 1996). However, four major issues limit their utility. First, these measures tend to rely on the prevailing frameworks of parenting styles (e.g., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful parenting) that, as argued above, might be inadequate for capturing a broader spectrum of practices and goals that seem to characterize parenting within low-income, Black families (see McWayne et al., 2008). Second, in the effort to identify culturally meaningful, within-group patterns of parenting, a few studies have explored existing ideas about parenting by pairing prevailing measures of parenting styles with other (perhaps more culturally relevant) measures (e.g., measures of racial socialization). The dimensions of parenting that these studies reveal often are nuanced variants of the traditional typologies on which they are based. For example, in their work with African American adolescents from various income backgrounds, Mandara and Murray (2002) found three family types: cohesive-authoritative, conflictive-authoritarian and defensive-neglectful family types. Therefore, though these studies provide slightly more nuanced versions of the traditional typologies validated with Black families, they do little to extend our understanding of positive parenting beyond the traditional conceptualizations. Third, some within-group studies of parenting have noted the conspicuous absence of middle-class and upper-middle class African American families from this area of research, and have developed culturally grounded conceptualizations of parenting that seek to cut across income segments of the

population (e.g., Mandara & Murray, 2002). This approach has great merit. However, these mixed income studies do not allow us to develop nuanced understandings of normative views and practices of positive parenting among low-income African American families, who parent in a particular context that differs from that of their middle income peers (Abell et al., 1996).

Finally, when studies have employed new measures (e.g., Strengths and Stressors Tracking Device (SSTD), Berry, Cash, & Mathiesen, 2003; Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS) Confort, Gordon, & Naples, 2011) to assess parenting efficacy among low-income parents, including low-income African American parents, they have been developed for use with fragile or highly vulnerable (e.g., “at-risk”) populations, such as clinical samples with a history of physical abuse or neglect (e.g., Berry, Cash, & Mathiesen, 2003; Comfort, Gordon, & Naples, 2011). Often these measures reflect the interests and intentions of child service workers and paraprofessionals rather than the cultural values, experiences, and perspectives of families with respect to what it means to parent well. In addition, the tendency to study family processes among low-income, Black families by focusing disproportionately on families recruited from social service programs for child maltreatment and abuse puts social science at-risk for conflating poverty and ethnic minority status with “at-risk parenting,” and for equating poor peoples’ parenting with poor parenting.

The Present Study

Our goal, then, was to fill a critical gap in the existing research on positive parenting by taking an initial step to develop a culturally relevant measure that assesses parenting strengths for low-income, Black families who are parenting children in the early childhood period of development. Given the state of knowledge in this area, we took an exploratory sequential mixed-methods approach to allow parents themselves to define the areas of critical relevance for parenting preschool-aged Black children in the context of urban poverty, and used the content of those dialogues to frame, develop, and test a paper-and-pencil measure. Noting the value of emically-driven, mixed-methods approaches to measure development, Onwuegbuzie, Bustamante, and Nelson (2010) state: “. . .it is important for the instrument developer to ensure that the voices of key informants, which include those on whom the instrument will be administered, are heard, with a view to understanding their cultural milieu. Individual interviews, focus groups, and direct observations can play an important role here. . . . A key goal . . . is the development of an instrument that possesses cultural sensitivity (Banks & McGee Banks, 2001), so that, when developed, it will yield data that are optimally reliable and valid” (p. 63).

Importantly, the goal of this work was to solicit a definition of positive parenting. As such, we did not privilege pre-existing definitions in this study. In crafting the language for our study we took note of Jacobson’s (2004) focus on the notion of “good” parenting as a lexical equivalent to positive parenting. Further, we noted Seay et al.’s (2014) focus on “effectiveness” in achieving particular goals as central to what it means to parent positively. Then, we asked low-income, Black parents to describe what it means to be a “good” and/or “effective parent,” and invited them to reflect on the ways that gender, race, ethnicity and urban living influence the strategies that “good” or “effective” parents use.

Consistent with guidelines for exploratory sequential mixed methods approaches (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Fetters et al., 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), we first conducted in-depth semi-structured individual and focus group interviews with a heterogeneous sample of Black³ parents of children enrolled in Head Start⁴ programs across New York City. Working iteratively and collaboratively with parents, we elicited their views of the specific practices that are emblematic of positive parenting, and translated the findings into a set of items for a paper-and-pencil measure of parenting strengths. Following that work we explored the psychometric properties, including the dimensionality, of this parent-derived measure.

Method

Participants

The participants in the *item development phase* of this study were a multi-ethnic group of 119 Black caregivers who were recruited from 11 Head Start programs, which served 75% or more Black children. Head Start sites were located in three boroughs of New York City (i.e., Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn). Participants in the *measure validation phase* of the study were 665 caregivers of children enrolled in one of the 11 participating Head Start programs in the same three boroughs of New York City the following year. Specific demographic information for each sample is listed in Table 1. The average age of children across the samples was 47.9 months ($SD = 11.4$).

Procedures

The first phase of the study, the item development phase, addressed a single research question: How do low-income Black primary caregivers of preschool children conceptualize positive parenting? We addressed this question in three stages. First, in order to access information at increasingly deeper levels of granularity, 10 focus groups ($n = 4$ female-only groups; $n = 4$ mixed gender groups, $n = 2$ male-only groups; total $N = 53$) and 33 individual interviews were conducted at Head Start sites. Using a semi-structured protocol, focus group participants were asked to discuss: 1) their concerns, goals and expectations for their children; 2) their views on what specific practices make a “good” and/or “effective” parent (e.g., “Everyone has their own ideas about what makes a parent a good parent. In your opinion, what makes a person a good parent? What qualities does that person have? What does that person do; what kinds of things do they say?”); and, 3) parenting beliefs or goals that they believe may differ depending on culture or ethnic background (e.g., “Are there particular things that Black parents do that you would think of as good or effective ways of

³We deliberately use the term “Black” (rather than African American) as the organizing social identity category for our population of interest. New York City’s Black population has long been a heterogeneous mix of multigenerational native born African Americans, and first, second, or third generation immigrants of African descent (AfriCaribbeans, continental Africans, etc.) who live in segregated sections of the city, and whose lives intersect in public and private spheres including in neighborhoods, at work, at school, in friendships, and in intimate relationships (Logan & Dean, 2003). Against the backdrop of this complexity, phenotypic identifiability (i.e., being seen and treated as Black) links immigrants of African descent to their African American counterparts (Butterfield, 2004). Identifiability does not erase the meaningfulness of ethnicity, culture, cultural adaptation, or social location (e.g., class and urbanicity). However, it does bind people of African ancestry together under a generic racialized category (“Black”). Therefore, families must contend with structures of power and social institutions (e.g., early childhood programs) that see and respond to them principally as members of that racial category.

⁴Head Start is the largest federally funded early childhood program for low-income children and their families. To be eligible for enrollment, families must meet the federal poverty guidelines for income (i.e., 125% of the poverty line).

parenting? How might low-income, Black families parent differently from other groups?”). Finally, parents were asked to identify people who played a significant role in their child’s life and were given a chance to raise topics that were not discussed during the focus group or interview. Free childcare was provided during the sessions and participants received a \$20 gift card to a local department store as a token of appreciation. Focus group sessions and interviews lasted for 1–2 hours, were video- and audio-taped, and transcribed verbatim.

Four trained graduate students used an open-coding procedure to content analyze transcripts of the focus groups and interviews (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In keeping with the tenets of open coding, no a priori themes were imposed on the data. Instead, an initial set of themes rooted in the subjective experience of participants was generated by conducting independent, line-by-line reviews of the verbatim transcripts with the goal of identifying text that answered the question: how do Black parents conceive of positive parenting?

Through an iterative process of comparing themes, eliminating redundancies, and clarifying the meaning of prospective themes, the team constructed an initial coding scheme to be applied to the data. In the effort to reduce the risk of bias in the coding process, two members of the research team who were not involved in the generation of themes independently “chunked” the smallest meaningful portions of text related to how Black parents perceived positive parenting. A total of 1,822 narrative chunks were identified in the focus group transcripts; 2,812 total chunks were identified from the individual interviews. These narrative chunks became the object of the coding process from this point forward. A doctoral student who did not participate in the initial generation of themes served as an auditor for a random sample of 5% of the narrative chunks (i.e., roughly, 10 pages of focus group text and 15 pages of interview text) to test that the initial codes accurately reflected the data (see Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Using this initial set of codes as a foundation, the first, second, and third authors constructed a coding manual that included codes, their definitions, and rules for their usage. These codes were applied to several randomly selected transcript segments and through detailed discussion of the use of the codes, modifications were made in order to refine the coding scheme. All modifications were made by group consensus. This iterative process resulted in a final list of 33 thematic codes. The reliability of the final coding scheme was assessed following the strategies outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). Inter-rater reliability reached for this study (i.e., 82%) exceeded the rate of 80% identified by Miles and Huberman (1994) as the minimum acceptable level of inter-rater reliability.

Themes were organized from most frequently occurring to least frequently occurring, and chunks for all themes were used to construct representative items for the paper and pencil measure. One hundred and fifty initial draft items, rooted in the chunks, were developed to represent the 33 codes for the paper-and-pencil measure. For example, Cultivating Religious Values & Practices emerged as one of the 33 thematic codes. A direct quote (chunk) for this theme was “On Sundays, I take them to church, because I believe that the foundation is in the church ...” A sample survey item developed from the exemplar chunk was: “I take my child to religious services.” See Table 2 for more examples. Anchors for the items were developed in accord with a four-point Likert-type scale to decrease the tendency of

respondents to gravitate toward a midpoint score: 1 = “Never,” 2 = “Sometimes,” 3 = “Often,” 4 = “Almost Always.”

Finally, in order to verify the meaningfulness and utility of the 150 draft items, we conducted four member-checking groups (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) composed of an independent sample of parents ($N=33$) from the same communities as the original participants, and engaged three nationally recognized scholars on Black families in an item review process. The goals of this process were to review the 150 items for redundancies, identify and correct poor wording, and eliminate items that could potentially impinge on validity of the eventual measure. Parent participants reviewed and commented on three aspects of the survey items: a) content appropriateness, that is whether items were clear, taking into consideration sociodemographic characteristics of future respondents including literacy levels (e.g., Parents were asked: *Do you understand this item? Is it clear?* – “yes, no, somewhat”); b) content representativeness, that is whether the items captured the heart of the overarching dimension under which they are organized (e.g., Parents were asked: *Do you think this item is capturing something meaningful about this aspect of positive parenting?* – “yes, no, somewhat;” and c) variability, that is whether items would yield a wide range of responses (e.g., Parents were asked: *Do you think there will be some parents who will say “yes” and others who will say “no” to this item? Or, Will most parents tend to say “yes?” Will most parents tend to say “no?”*). For this parent review, individuals sorted the items into the appropriate envelopes according to three forced choices (as illustrated above).

Simultaneously, as part of the item review and reduction process, three nationally recognized scholars on Black families reviewed the 150 draft items and rated each item on a scale of 1 to 4, with “1” assigned to items they deemed not appropriate and “4” assigned to items that appeared appropriate. These experts performed their ratings across three aspects of the measure: 1) how representative the items were for capturing positive parenting of preschool children; 2) appropriateness of the items for parents who may have low literacy levels and/or come from a low-income background; and 3) the expected variability among survey items with this group. Items were eliminated if they were consistently rated low on representativeness, appropriateness, or variability by both parents and experts (i.e., obtained average scores below 2 on at least two of these domains). Items rated 2 or above on any of these three domains by parents but low (below 2) by experts (or vice versa) were modified according to suggestions provided. This process of parent and expert reviews yielded a final 72-item *Black Parenting Strengths in Context* (BPSC) scale. Member-checking group participants received a \$20 gift card; expert scholars received no compensation. See Figure 1 for a summary of procedures used in developing BPSC items.

In the second phase of the study– the measurement validation phase– 720 primary caregivers participated. Parents were recruited through the use of flyers posted at the centers and through presentations given by the research team at each site. Once participants provided consent they were asked to complete the BPSC, two additional parent self-report scales (for initial validation purposes), and a demographic questionnaire. Caregivers completed the measures individually or in groups at their centers. Research assistants were available to answer questions or clarify misunderstandings. For a small number of participants who evidenced problems with completing the questionnaire, research team members offered to

read the items and mark their responses. Occasionally, packets were sent home for a particular child. This approach was taken if the primary caregiver was not the person who dropped off or picked up the child at the center. Participation rates of eligible families varied between 60 to 90% ($M = 76.9\%$) at each site. Participants received a \$20 gift card for their participation in this phase of the study.

Initial Validation Measures

Consistent with an emic approach, our goal was to identify and assess dimensions of parenting that might be unique to this group. Importantly, given that the study was inductive, we had no a priori knowledge of what dimensions might emerge. In light of these realities, in this study we did not use established measures of parenting behavior typically employed in the literature to validate this new measure. Instead, the two constructs that we used for purposes of initial validation were selected because they represented broad socioemotional capacities and patterns of engagement that are critical to parenting as a social and cultural process generally and to parenting in Black communities, in particular. More specifically, a social support measure was selected based on existing literature that suggests, for Black families, parenting is not an isolated social enterprise, and that a critical part of the cultural phenomenon of parenting for Black parents is connectedness to the broader social milieu (e.g., kinship networks; Jackson, 1993). The second measure selected for the initial validation efforts was a social intelligence measure that assessed adults' capacities to identify, understand, and respond effectively to the needs and emotions of others (Crowne, 2013; Weis, & Süß, 2007). We contend that these socioemotional abilities are central to the conceptualization of sensitive and effective parenting. Indeed, recent empirical work has demonstrated a link between mothers' awareness of children's needs, their emotions, abilities, and interests, and social skills among youth living in poverty (Riley, Scaramella, & McGoron, 2014).

Family Social Support—The *Family Support Scale* (FSS; Dunst, Jenkins, & Trivette, 1984) is a widely-used 18-item measure created to assess the helpfulness of sources of social support accessible to families rearing young children, such as kinship support (e.g., parents, relatives), spousal/partner support, social organizations (e.g., parent groups, social clubs), informal support (e.g., friends, neighbors, other parents, church) and professional services. This measure is scored on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = “not at all helpful” to 5 = “extremely helpful”). Participants complete items based on the helpfulness of the identified sources of social support in the last three to six months. Higher scores denote greater availability of helpful support. The instrument demonstrates good internal consistency and test–retest reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.77$ split-half reliability = 0.75, and test–retest reliability = 0.41 to 0.75 across subscales) (Dunst et al., 1984). For this study, a raw sum total across all 18 items was used ($\alpha = 0.66$).

Social Styles—The 21-item *Tromso Social Intelligence Scale* (TSIS; Silvera, Martinussen & Dahl, 2001) is a self-report questionnaire designed to assess a person's social knowledge and skill (e.g., “I can predict other people's behavior”). The scale is composed of three subscales: social information processing (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$), social skills (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.79$), and social awareness (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.72$). While commonly rated on a seven-

point scale, for this study, participants were instructed to rate on a four-point scale how well they perform each skill (1= “extremely poorly” to 4 = “extremely well”). This approach was intended to decrease the tendency of respondents to gravitate toward a midpoint score. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for this sample were acceptable for the first two dimensions (Social Information Processing $\alpha = 0.81$; Social Skills $\alpha = 0.67$), but not for Social Awareness ($\alpha = 0.51$), so this dimension was excluded from further analyses.

Data Analysis

First, cases with missing item-level data were eliminated, and in the case that multiple caregivers completed the scale for the same child, one caregiver was randomly chosen. There were very few missing data cases ($n = 5$), but 50 of the children represented in the dataset had multiple caregivers who completed the scale. Thus, for the exploratory factor analyses of the BPSC scale (which assumes independence of error), 665 participants remained and provided a sufficient sample size (see Gorsuch, 1983). Prior to conducting the exploratory factor analyses, and in order to determine factorability of the 72-item measure, Bartlett’s test of sphericity, the Kaiser-Meyer criterion, the anti-image correlation matrix, and final communalities were assessed. In addition, item analyses were conducted focusing on item-total correlations, standardized alpha, frequency distributions and variability; problematic items were flagged. Once it was clear that more than one factor existed within the dataset and there were enough “healthy” items to continue, we explored both common factoring (principal axis factoring) and principal components analysis as offering possible solutions given our large number of items (as per Snook & Gorsuch, 1989).

Based on tests for the number of factors including minimum average partialling (MAP; O’Connor, 2000) and Cattell’s scree test (1966), one to eight factors were rotated using both orthogonal (varimax, equamax) and oblique (promax, where $k = 2$ to 5) rotational methods. Six additional criteria were applied to determine the most reliable and valid factor solution among the alternatives: (a) factors had to maintain simple structure (i.e., minimize cross-loading items as per Gorsuch, 1983); (b) factors had to have at least 3 items with salient loadings, where loadings > 0.35 were considered salient; (c) factors had to be reliable as per Cronbach’s alpha > 0.60 ; (d) inter-factor correlations had to be minimized as compared across possible solutions; and (e) factors had to be psychologically meaningful (as per Wood, Tataryn, & Gorsuch, 1996). Exploratory factor analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 20.

To further assess the best factor solution, according to these multiple criteria, the items retained during exploratory analyses were subjected to an oblique, multiple-group cluster analysis to assess the final structure’s validity against alternative solutions (Coolahan et al., 2002; Harman, 1976). In this procedure, hypothesized cluster membership was based on the exploratory factor analyses, and items were permitted to migrate iteratively to clusters that better explained item variance. (Confirmatory procedures, such as multi-group CFA, were deemed inappropriate at this initial stage of measure development). Finally, in an effort to recognize the ethnic heterogeneity within urban Black communities, we examined the factor congruence across parenting dimensions for parents born in the U.S. versus those born in another country (e.g., from the Caribbean nations), as well as for male versus female

primary caregivers. To this end, Wrigley-Newhaus coefficients were calculated (see Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1991). This additional exploratory procedure was employed in order to assess the degree of congruence between a given subsample's factor solution (e.g., males and females; African American and Caribbean) and the factor solution of the entire sample. Factor matches between hypothesized counterpart factors should be relatively higher across the independent samples, and coefficients between hypothesized non-counterpart factors relatively lower (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1991).

In addition, to further assess the newly developed measure's construct validity, we examined the associations with other parenting constructs hypothesized to be related to the new measure's parenting dimensions and also explored the relations with demographic characteristics of primary caregivers. Thus, bivariate correlation analyses were conducted between the BPSC dimensions and the two other parent self-report measures. For categorical demographic variables, analysis of variance (ANOVA) with Tukey's HSD post hoc analyses were conducted.

Results

Bartlett's test of sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2(2,556) = 18,800.747, p < .0001$), indicating there was at least one factor present. The Kaiser-Meyer value was .94 and the diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all $> .05$, ranging from .59–.97, with most values over .85. This supports the inclusion of each item in the initial exploratory factor analysis. There were no items that correlated so highly with other items that they would suggest redundancy (range = .03–.60). Lastly, the communalities were investigated to determine if each item shared some common variance with other items. Eight of the 72 items were flagged for later consideration because they had communalities $< .30$, suggesting that they did not share sufficient variance with other items.

For the entire BPSC scale, the overall reliability was high (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). Sixty-eight of the 72 items (94%) fell within a healthy range with respect to item-total correlations (i.e., .20–.80), with the majority being in the optimal range of .30–.60. There were no negative item-total correlations. However, four items had low correlations with the other items, ranging from .02–.18. Twenty-one of our items had a high kurtosis (indicating relative invariance), with seven items being above an absolute value of 5, and one item above 10. The 33 problematic items that were flagged at this initial item analysis stage created persistent problems during EFA (e.g., these items consistently hyperplaned, or did not load significantly on any factors regardless of the solution applied), and, thus, were eventually deleted from further analyses.

Results revealed that the common factor analysis (principal axis factoring) extraction method yielded the strongest factor solution, meeting the multiple criteria for determining the most parsimonious representation of the data described above. After removing the problematic items as described above, the best factor solution (i.e., the solution that most optimally met all stated criteria) was the model retaining five orthogonal components (via varimax rotation) across the 39 items included. A description of each of the five factors follows.

Fostering a Connected and Competent Self ($\alpha = .91$) consisted of 25 items that reflected caregivers' efforts to teach, care for, guide, and foster a safe nurturing environment for their children. Sample items included "I tell my child how proud I am of him/her" and "I encourage my child not to be afraid to talk about things with me." *Black Cultural Pride* ($\alpha = .81$) was comprised of five items reflecting caregivers' efforts to teach their children about Black pride and cultural heritage. Sample items included "I make sure my child sees images of Black pride (such as Black art)" and "I talk with my child about being proud to be Black." The *Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values* ($\alpha = .78$) factor was a four-item subscale that reflected caregivers' efforts to instill religious and spiritual practices and values in their child(ren). Sample items included "I take my child to religious services" and "I talk with my child about the importance of giving thanks for what we have." The *Involvement at School* ($\alpha = .61$) subscale was comprised of three items reflecting family representation at school events, meetings and activities. Sample items included "I volunteer at my child's school" and "If I can't go to an event at school for my child, I make sure someone else does." *Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness* ($\alpha = .62$) was a three-item subscale describing caregivers' efforts to prevent or respond to misbehavior. Sample items included, "I prepare my child ahead of time to help him/her behave" and "I take away something that my child likes when he/she misbehaves." Table 3 provides factor loadings for each item by factor. Table 4 provides the inter-factor correlations and variability statistics for the five factors of the BPSC scale. Finally, Table 5 provides the variance components of each factor.

Further support for the final factor solution was obtained through factor-matching analyses, using Wrigley-Neuhaus coefficients of congruence, the most accurate of factor pattern matching indices according to a Monte Carlo study (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1991). These analyses indicated a high degree of statistical congruence between the factor solutions for males and females, as well as for solutions derived for African American and Caribbean (the two largest ethnic) subgroups. This method yielded acceptable to high coefficients for all like factors (.81 to .99 across ethnic subgroups and .77 to .99 across gender subgroups) and relatively low coefficients in comparison for all unlike factors (.30 to .54 across ethnic subgroups and .33 to .53 across gender subgroups), providing preliminary evidence that the five-factor solution is replicable across gender and major ethnic subgroups (see Table 6). Finally, the composition of the five-factor solution was confirmed by subjecting the 39 items retained during exploratory analyses to oblique, multiple-group confirmatory cluster analysis, where hypothesized cluster membership was determined by the factor solution obtained in exploratory analyses. When permitted to migrate iteratively to clusters that best explained item variance, no items migrated from their hypothesized cluster. Table 3 lists cluster loadings and item variance predicted by items in their own cluster and the next best alternative cluster.

In additional analyses, we explored the relations of the five BPSC factors with two other self-report parent measures and demographic characteristics of the respondent caregivers. Though we had no specific hypotheses about these relations given the inductive nature of our measure development process, we did expect small to moderate associations with the parent self-report measures as evidence of convergent or divergent validity, and some meaningful variation with respect to demographics. Indeed, several associations emerged (see Tables 7 & 8). With respect to the parent self-report measures of social style and family

support, several small and positive associations were found, ranging from $r = .10-.27$. Of the demographic characteristics examined, ethnic group (i.e., African American or Caribbean), immigrant versus US-born, education, and relationship to the child emerged as the most significant variables. US-born, African American caregivers reported significantly higher levels of *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self*, *Black Cultural Pride*, and *Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness* compared with Caribbean and immigrant caregivers. Likewise, caregivers who identified as mothers and “other” relation reported higher levels of *Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness*, as well as *Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values* compared with fathers. With respect to the latter dimension, caregivers who were Caribbean, immigrant, and part of a two-parent constellation also reported higher levels than their counterparts. Finally, education seemed to matter for *Involvement at School* and *Black Cultural Pride*, where caregivers with higher levels of education reported higher levels of these parenting practices. Taken together, these results provide additional evidence for the construct validity of the BPSC measure and show important within-group variability.

Discussion

No parent-derived, culturally-grounded empirical measure exists that assesses the construct of positive parenting broadly for normative samples of low-income, Black parents. This mixed-methods within-group study, in an attempt to begin to redress this gap, identified conceptualizations of positive parenting with a sample of low-income, urban-residing Black parents and translated those conceptualizations into a culturally- and contextually-rooted paper-and-pencil measure. A within-group approach allowed us to honor the reality that parents are social actors who are experts in their own experience and, as such, their voices and experiences must be given a preeminent place in social scientific investigations about their lives (Hitchcock, Nastasi et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2003; Leong, Leung, & Cheung, 2010; Pillai, 2012). We used an iterative multistage process that included interviews, focus groups, and multiple validity checks in the development of the items of this measure. In doing so we privileged low-income, urban-residing Black parents’ beliefs, values and behaviors, and the particular cultural, psychosocial and contextual realities of which they are reflective. In the second phase of the study we: (a) sought to determine what specific dimensions of positive parenting could be identified from this ground-up approach, and (b) sought to identify preliminary empirical evidence for the reliability and validity of these dimensions of positive parenting. This study yielded an initial measure comprised of five dimensions of positive parenting for use with low-income, Black families.

The largest dimension of the BPSC scale, *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self*, reflected several parenting behaviors that appear to cohere around social, moral and emotional nurturance within the family. This is consistent with sociological work on African American/Black families that documents the complexity of the social-emotional domain of Black parent-child relationships (Barnes, 2001). This dimension includes parents’ focus on: cultivating their children’s trust; helping children to develop a sense of empathy; emphasizing kindness and altruism; encouraging zest (i.e., children’s excitement and interest); supporting children’s capacity for self-regulation; and encouraging positive learning behaviors at home. This dimension also included items focused on parents’ expressions of warmth. In sum, the *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self* factor

focused on the parent-child relational bond, including laying the foundations for key competencies, values and character strengths in children. This outcome may suggest the matrix of behavioral competencies, character strengths and relational skills that Black parents in low-income urban contexts view as interconnected and crucial for the development of young children (Dodge et al., 2005; Peters, 2007).

The content of this first factor is an exciting finding. While warmth, in particular, is prioritized in the existing literature and in existing measures as central to positive parenting, what the content of this subscale appears to highlight is that low-income Black parents' view of positive parenting places a premium on building relationships and social capital, cultivating children's sense of self, their competencies and their ability to see themselves as connected to and responsible to proximal and distal others. This is not to say that Black parents eschew warmth (indeed, this factor includes practices such as showing affection to children). Rather, it is to say that the focus on fostering a particular set of qualities (i.e., a social connectedness, engagement, and competence) in their young children may be pre-eminent; parents may see this as an objective that can be achieved through multiple and complex means (expressing affection, making sure that children are connected to a network of loved ones, making sure that children are caring people, and ensuring that they build important early academic skills and thus connections with teachers). This is certainly an inference that could be tested in future research.

Four of the factors of the BPSC scale reflected parenting dimensions echoed in the broader literature on African-American families: racial socialization, spirituality, school involvement, and discipline (see McLoyd, Hill, & Dodge, 2005). Although measures of each dimension may exist within the literature, it was not clear from the outset of this study that these constructs would be relevant to low-income parents' own subjective conceptualizations of "positive parenting." This study affirms this to be the case and brings all of these constructs together into a single measure for use with low-income, Black families of preschool children.

Research has established that racial socialization (i.e., the effort to help Black children to learn about their heritage, to understand how to negotiate relationships with in-group as well as out-group members, and to cope with and transcend the challenges of discrimination) is a core developmental task for Black and other ethnic minority youth and families (Hughes, 2003; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Lesane-Brown, Brown, Tanner-Smith, & Bruce, 2010). Importantly, the present study supports emerging findings from literature that demonstrate that racial socialization (particularly pride and heritage messaging) is a dimension of parenting that is salient for parents of children who are 4 years old and younger (see Anderson et al., 2015). Using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–1999, Lesane-Brown et al. (2010) found that approximately 26% of African American parents reported talking with their kindergartners about race/ethnicity several times a year; 28% reported talking with their young children about these topics several times a month; and 17% reported talking with their young children about race/ethnicity several times a week or more. With such young children, Lesane-Brown et al. (2010) found that racial socialization messages were generally "limited to ethnic/racial pride and history/ heritage" (p. 458). Notably, items that loaded on the *Black Cultural Pride* factor

of the BPSC are consistent with this research, suggesting that parents of young children tend to focus on building a sense of ethnic identity and pride (e.g., by exposing children to positive images of Black people) rather than on explicit preparation for bias and discrimination that they will encounter or mistrust of out-group others (see Hughes et al., 2006). The latter racial socialization strategies tend to become more of a focus of parenting in middle childhood and adolescence (Caughy et al., 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1997).

The emergence of the *Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values* factor is consistent with research that shows religion and spirituality are central in the lives of many Black families (Mattis, 2005; Taylor, Chatters, & Levin, 2004). To date, however, little attention has been paid to the religious socialization of very young children (Mattis & Mattis, 2011). The items that comprise this factor highlight the multiple ways through which Black families may cultivate religious and spiritual sensibilities in young children. These include engagement in formal institutional religious life, and the development of a personal connection with the divine through prayer, as well as through the experience and expression of gratitude. The inclusion of gratitude is important here, in that emerging research demonstrates that this virtue is associated with greater psychological and psychosocial well-being among adults (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The extent to which these early efforts at religious and spiritual socialization manifest in positive outcomes for preschool children deserves empirical attention.

Parental involvement at school also emerged as a dimension of positive parenting. In the broadest sense, academic socialization of children in Black families has long been viewed as a means of overcoming social inequities and economic disadvantage (Barbarin, McCandies, Coleman, & Hill, 2005). Indeed, research has shown repeatedly that this parenting practice can ameliorate the effects of poverty on achievement for Black children (Luster & McAdoo, 1996). Interestingly, for our sample, the three parenting behaviors comprising the school involvement factor were about being present at the school. Perhaps this reflects parents' understandings of how teachers view family involvement (especially in Head Start, which actively promotes family engagement in school-based activities), or perhaps it reflects parents' recognition of the need to intervene proactively on behalf of their children who might be victims of biased treatment in schools (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). These questions could be further examined in future research.

However, research has shown that there are significant barriers to school involvement for Black families, such as parents' experience that their children's school is less welcoming to them (Hurley, 1996), cultural discontinuities between home and school settings (Slaughter-Defoe, 1995), parents' own negative school experiences (Lareau, 2011), and economic and time constraints (Finders & Lewis, 1994). The items that comprise this BPSC dimension likely reflect parents' acknowledgement that being present at their children's school is a significant parenting responsibility and may also be influenced by the specific context and policies of Head Start. Yet, the items reflect an important cultural and perhaps class-based practice wherein when parents can not be at the school themselves, they view it important to send another representative of the family on behalf of the child. This parent involvement behavior is under-described in the literature. The tendency of parents to ask other adults to represent them at their children's school, if and when they are unable to be there themselves,

highlights the need to include indirect or surrogate parental supports in culturally- and class-grounded assessments of African American/Black parental school involvement. Studies that assess involvement only in terms of direct parent involvement may substantially underestimate the level of involvement of parents who rely on trusted surrogates in their social networks to represent them. Further, institutions that permit only the involvement of “parents” and primary caregivers may unwittingly limit families’ efforts at engagement and, thus, benefits for the child.

Of note, items pertaining to *home* support for academic achievement (more commonly reflected in the construct of academic socialization) fell under the *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self* factor of the BPSC. This is interesting and important in light of findings suggesting that what Black parents do at home might matter more than the amount of time they spend at school in relation to children’s early achievement (e.g., Fantuzzo et al., 2004; Luster & McAdoo, 1996). Future research should explore the meaning of the separateness of these two facets of educational involvement by examining how low-income Black parents perceive their home- and school-based involvement efforts as benefitting their children (Hill, 2010).

Finally, we turn to the *Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness* factor. There has been much written about the use of physical punishment among Black families (Dodge et al., 2005). However, comparatively little research exists that acknowledges the many other forms of disciplinary guidance employed by these families. The item content of this dimension supports previous findings that low-income Black parents value and employ a range of strategies, including withdrawal of privileges, dialogic strategies, “the look,” and immediate responses to negative behavior (Coolahan et al., 2002). As with several of the other dimensions of parenting represented in this scale, scholarly discourse about and empirical measurement of Black families’ use of discipline is less nuanced than the lived experience (Dodge et al., 2005).

Research Contributions and Implications

This study makes three key contributions. First, the dimensions of positive parenting identified from focus groups, individual interviews and factor analysis provide us with both a definition and a more comprehensive operationalization of the construct of positive parenting (than currently exists in any single scale for use with this group) from the perspectives of parents whose voices have traditionally been left out of the discourse about effective parenting (Jarrett, Jefferson, & Kelly, 2010). Thus, BPSC dimensions hold promise for better honoring the culture- and context-specific parenting goals and practices that low-income, Black parents subjectively view as important for producing healthy developmental outcomes for their children. Our findings suggest that for this group *positive parenting* refers to the use of a variety of behavioral strategies to ensure the development of children who are responsive, obedient, confident, competent, have a sense of enthusiasm and curiosity about the world, who are caring and appreciative of their connection and responsibility to others, and who have a sense of racial and cultural pride as well as an understanding of themselves as spiritual beings. The dimensions of parenting subjectively identified by parents as reflective of positive parenting suggest that warmth and behavior control (which are focal in

the more traditional conceptualization of authoritative parenting) are only a part of a larger and more complex set of considerations for low-income, Black families. Better understanding of the myriad positive parenting practices espoused by low-income, Black families could inform practice (e.g., parenting interventions) and policies in programs like Head Start, by relying less on traditional conceptualizations of how positive parenting looks that might not be the best “fit” with parenting scripts in diverse communities. Programs of intervention must demonstrate that they are rooted in parents’ own culturally rooted, multi-dimensional understandings of successful parenting, and seek to assess the areas of parenting where parents already demonstrate considerable strength while providing supports in those domains where parents are struggling.

Second, while prevailing models locate the parenting experience largely within the parent-child dyadic relationship, the dimensions of the BPSC locate positive parenting within a broader ecology. More specifically, the dimensions of the BPSC reflect parents’ appreciation that their children are relational, spiritual, intellectual and ethnocultural beings who are engaged in dynamic multi-directional relationships with people, institutions and representations in the world around them (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Lerner, 2006). Such a conceptualization is consistent with the oft-quoted notion that “it takes a village to raise a child” and could be employed to develop more culturally sensitive as well as far-reaching community-level interventions that take into account the lived experiences of many young, Black children growing up in poverty.

Finally, while studies have demonstrated the relevance of dimensions such as racial pride, school engagement, and spirituality for parenting older Black youth, the present study adds to a small but growing body of work that is demonstrating these dimensions are also salient for parents who are caring for children at much earlier stages of development (i.e., preschoolers; see Caughy et al., 2011; Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006; Lesane-Brown et al., 2010; Mattis & Mattis, 2011). This, again, speaks to the need for having more culturally-informed definitions of positive parenting to guide intervention programming in two-generational programs, like Head Start, which serve preschool children.

Though more work is needed to illuminate the family processes involved for this ethnically diverse group, findings from this study represent a significant move in the direction of providing a more culturally relevant measure of a critically important independent variable known to influence children’s development. A particular point of departure for this study was the intentional focus on *positive* parenting among a *non-clinical* sample of low-income, Black families. In this, we, like others in the practice segments of our field, maintain that strengths are an important point for intervention efforts (Hurd et al., 1995). Understanding and accurately assessing the goals, values, and practices that Black low-income urban-residing parents see as critical to their parenting success is, we believe, a crucial next step towards crafting a body of knowledge that seeks to discern which strengths or combination of strengths this group of parents leverage in their efforts to ensure success among their children.

The culturally-grounded definition of positive parenting advanced through the BPSC certainly holds promise for the development of models of parenting support that may be

better able to meet the needs of the diverse families served by Head Start by honoring the cultural and context-specific parenting goals and practices that are important for low-income, urban-residing Black families. For example, given the size and nuanced nature of the *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self* dimension of the BPSC, intervention efforts might focus on increasing the relational connectedness between parents and their children, rather than trying to eliminate isolated discipline strategies (e.g., spanking) that may be supported within particular communities and cultural contexts, or promoting styles (e.g., authoritative parenting) that may have more nuanced within-group meanings and manifestations than researchers currently understand (McLoyd et al., 2005). Moreover, as stated earlier, interventions that seek to identify the multiple goals parents hope to achieve (e.g., character development, racial socialization) and the range of strategies parents use to achieve them would likely have an optimal chance of improving outcomes for any parent-child dyad.

Qualifications and Directions for Future Research

Qualifications of the present findings are warranted. First, this study was conducted with a largely (though not exclusively) female, Head Start sample in one large city in the northeastern region of the U.S. The extent to which these findings and the BPSC scale may apply to Black parents generally is a topic for further inquiry. For example, low-income, Black families whose children are served in other early care and education programs in which school readiness and family engagement are not major components of the core program mission may not emphasize school involvement in a similar way as with the present sample of Head Start families. Likewise, parents who send their children to programs located in religious institutions might place more emphasis on spirituality and religiosity. Future research with the BPSC should also explore these dimensions of positive parenting within other ecological niches that Black families occupy (e.g., upwardly mobile or middle-to high-income families). Finally, the focus of the study is on parents of young children, and thus the findings are limited to parenting as it may unfold in these early years. The exploratory sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Fetters et al., 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) used in this study represents “best practice” for the development of measures that reflect the lived experience of the particular group being studied. Researchers and practitioners will need to guard against potential misuse of the BPSC scale with other groups, without first conducting the requisite validity work (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999).

While this study provides evidence for the promise of within-group approaches leading to more culturally nuanced measurement of parenting behaviors in diverse groups of families (see also McWayne et al., 2013), we note the uneven nature of the factor structure that emerged. In focus groups and individual interviews parents in this study named and identified a wide range of practices. In particular, the much larger composition of the *Fostering a Connected and Competent Self* factor suggests that parents seem to have a wide range of practices that they employ in their efforts to foster social, moral, emotional, and academic competence in their young children, as well as a strong parent-child bond. Conversely, it may be the case that areas of development such as racial pride, religiosity and spirituality may have fewer items because they require more straightforward acts of

engagement with children who are very young. These practices may become more complex as children age, as their thinking and experiences become more complex, and as the demands and challenges of their contexts change. Relatedly, for two factors— *Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness* and *Involvement at School*— the alpha reliabilities were low. This is likely due to the low number of items comprising the scales. Future research should seek to incorporate additional items to build these factors on the BPSC, to show stronger internal psychometric properties and as the basis for further development with a more representative population of Black, low-income parents.

Researchers should seek to understand the benefits of simultaneously attempting to investigate a cultural group using both emic and traditional approaches (Leong et al., 2010). The innovative method of linking and equating items that might differentially represent constructs across various subgroups (e.g., based on ethnicity, gender, etc.) may be a useful way to incorporate items relevant for certain subgroups but not for others all within the same measure (see Bandalos & Raczynski, 2015). Relatedly, future research with the BPSC measure will need to intentionally sample for greater diversity among urban-residing, low-income Black families with larger and more stratified samples in order to continue to explore the differences across subgroups that emerged in this study. For example, the African immigrant subsample was too small to include in subgroup analyses. Yet, the findings suggested that there are mean ethnic differences on most of the parenting dimensions that would be potentially important to explore in future research. Indeed, a developing body of research suggests that there are distinct ethnic similarities and differences in Caribbean and African American family functioning and disciplinary practices (see Roopnarine & Hossain, 2013). There is also a growing body of literature that focuses on fathering, but little empirical research is available that speaks to the shared contribution of mothers' and fathers' caregiving in relation to young children (see Downer et al., 2010). A measure such as the BPSC, which was inclusive of fathers from the point of development, might provide a means to further explore both similarities and differences between mothering and fathering of young, low-income children. For example, the present findings are suggestive of differences between low-income Black mothers and fathers in the frequency with which they discipline children and encourage spiritual or religious values and practices, but future research is needed to understand the reasons for these differences. Likewise, with respect to the racial socialization factor, Caughy, Nettles, and Lima (2011) found that whether or not Black parents talk about race with their young children depends on the gender of the child and on the characteristics of the neighborhood in which the family lives. The BPSC is a scale that could be employed to investigate these subgroup differences across several dimensions of parenting.

Future research should also seek to further validate the BPSC by examining relations between these positive parenting dimensions and academic and social outcomes for Black preschool children. The BPSC could be compared with traditional parenting measures to test if these instruments differentially predict child outcomes and/or whether the predictive advantage (if any) of the BPSC is a function of other characteristics such as family demographics, neighborhood ethnic composition, or in-group identity (Seginer, 2006).

References

- Abell E, Clawson M, Washington WN, Bost KK, Vaughn BE. Parenting values, attitudes, behaviors, and goals of African American mothers from a low-income population in relation to social and societal contexts. *Journal of Family Issues*. 1996; 17(5):593–613.
- American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association & National Council on Measurement in Education. *Standards for Educational & Psychological Testing*. Washington, DC: Authors; 1999.
- Anderson AT, Jackson A, Jones L, Kennedy DP, Wells K, Chung PJ. Minority parents' perspectives on racial socialization and school readiness in the early childhood period. *Academic Pediatrics*. 2015; 15:405–411. [PubMed: 25534762]
- Anderson RE, Hussain SB, Wilson MN, Shaw DS, Dishion TJ, Williams JL. Pathways to pain: Racial discrimination and relations between parental functioning and child psychosocial well-being. *Journal of Black Psychology*. 2015; 41:491–512. [PubMed: 26594069]
- Audebert C. Residential patterns and political empowerment among Jamaicans and Haitians in the U.S. metropolis: The role of ethnicity in New York and South Florida. *Human Architecture: Journal of The Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, VII. 2009; 4:53–68.
- Bandalos, DL., Raczynski, KA. Capturing family-school partnership constructs over time: Creating developmental measurement models. In: Sheridan, SM., Kim, EM., editors. *Research on family-school partnerships: An interdisciplinary examination of state of the science and critical needs*, Vol. 1: Foundational Aspects of Family-School Partnerships. New York: Springer; 2015. p. 77-103.
- Barbarin OA, McCandies T, Coleman C, Hill NE. Family practices and school performance of African American children. *African American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity*. 2005; 3:227–244.
- Barnes SL. Stressors and strengths: A theoretical and practical examination of nuclear, single-parent, and augmented African American families. *Families in Society*. 2001; 82:449–460.
- Baumrind D. Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs*. 1967; 75:43–88. [PubMed: 6032134]
- Baumrind D. Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology*. 1971; 4:1–103.
- Berry JW. Emics and etics: A symbiotic conception. *Culture & Psychology*. 1999; 5:165–171. DOI: 10.1177/1354067X9952004
- Berry M, Cash S, Mathiesen S. Validation of the strengths and stressors tracking device with a child welfare population. *Child Welfare*. 2003; 82(3):293–318. [PubMed: 12769393]
- Billingsley A. Family functioning in the low-income Black community. *Social Casework*. 1969; 50:563–572.
- Brody GH, Flor DL. Maternal resources, parenting practices, and child competence in rural, single-parent African American families. *Child Development*. 1998; 69:803–816. [PubMed: 9680686]
- Butterfield SP. Challenging American conceptions of race and ethnicity: Second generation West Indian immigrants. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. 2004; 24(7/8):75–102.
- Canning SS, Fantuzzo JW. Competent families, collaborative professionals: Empowered parent education for low income, African American families. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community* 20.1–2. 2000:179–196.
- Carpenter JL, Mendez J. Adaptive and challenged parenting among African American mothers: Parenting profiles relate to Head Start children's aggression and hyperactivity. *Early Education and Development*. 2013; 24:233–252.
- Cattell RB. The scree test for the number of factors. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*. 1966; 1:245–276. [PubMed: 26828106]
- Caughy M, Nettles SM, Lima J. Profiles of racial socialization among African American parents: Correlates, context, and outcome. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. 2011; 20:491–502.
- Caughy M, O'Campo P, Randolph S, Nickerson K. The influence of racial socialization practices on the cognitive and behavioral competence of African American preschoolers. *Child Development*. 2002; 73(5):1611–1625. [PubMed: 12361322]

- Ceballo R, Chao R, Hill NE, Le H, Murry V, Pinderhughes EE. Excavating Culture: Summary of Results. *Applied Developmental Science*. 2008; 12:220–226. [PubMed: 24163576]
- Ceballo R, Hurd N. Neighborhood context, SES, and parenting: Including a focus on acculturation among Latina mothers. *Applied Developmental Science*. 2008; 12(4):176–180.
- Chao R. Beyond parental control and authoritarian parenting style: Understanding Chinese parenting through the cultural notion of training. *Child Development*. 1994; 65:1111–1119. [PubMed: 7956468]
- Coard SI, Foy-Watson S, Zimmer C, Wallace A. Considering culturally relevant parenting practices in intervention development and adaptation. A randomized controlled trial of the Black Parenting Strengths and Strategies (BPSS) program. *The Counseling Psychologist*. 2007; 35:797–820.
- Comfort M, Gordon PR, Naples D. KIPS: An evidence-based tool for assessing parenting strengths and needs in diverse families. *Infants & Young Children*. 2011; 24(1):56–74.
- Coolahan K, McWayne C, Fantuzzo J, Grim S. Validation of a multidimensional assessment of parenting styles for low-income African-American families with preschool children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 2002; 17:356–373.
- Creswell, JW., Plano Clark, VL. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Second. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2011.
- Crowne KA. An empirical analysis of three intelligences. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*. 2013; 45(2):105–114.
- Cuellar J, Jones DJ, Sterrett E. Examining parenting in the neighborhood context: A review. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. 2015; 24(1):195–219. [PubMed: 26392738]
- Dearing E, Kreider H, Simpkins S, Weiss HB. Family involvement in school and low-income children's literacy: Longitudinal associations between and within families. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 2006; 98(4):653–664. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.98.4.653>.
- Dexter CA, Wong K, Stacks AM, Beeghly M, Barnett D. Parenting and attachment among low-income African American and Caucasian preschoolers. *Journal of Family Psychology*. 2013; 27(4):629–638. [PubMed: 23795606]
- Dodge, KA., McLoyd, VC., Lansford, JE. The cultural context of physically disciplining children. In: McLoyd, VC., Hill, N., Dodge, KA., editors. *African American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity*. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press; 2005. p. 245-263. *Duke Series in Child Development and Public Policy*
- Downer, J., Campos, R., McWayne, C., Gartner, T. Father involvement and children's early learning: A critical review of published empirical work from the past 15 years. In: Jeynes, W., editor. *Family factors and the educational success of children*. New York: Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group; 2010. p. 64-105.
- Dunst CJ, Jenkins V, Trivette CM. Family support scale: Reliability and validity. *Journal of Individual, Family, and Community Wellness*. 1984:45–52.
- Elliott S, Powell R, Brenton J. Being a good mom: Low-income, Black single mothers negotiate intensive mothering. *Journal of Family Issues*. 2015; 36:351–370.
- Emmons RA, McCullough ME. Counting blessings versus burdens: Experimental studies of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 2003; 84:377–389. [PubMed: 12585811]
- Fantuzzo J, McWayne C, Perry MA, Childs S. Multiple dimensions of family involvement and their relations to behavioral and learning competencies for urban, low-income children. *School Psychology Review*. 2004; 33(4):467–480.
- Fetters MD, Curry LA, Creswell JW. Achieving Integration in Mixed Methods Designs—Principles and Practices. *Health Services Research*. 2013; 48(6 Pt 2):2134–2156. [PubMed: 24279835]
- Finders M, Lewis C. Why some parents don't come to school. *Educational Leadership*. 1994; 51:50–50.
- Foner, N. West Indian migration to New York: An overview. In: Foner, N., editor. *Islands in the City: West Indian Migration to New York*. Berkeley: University of California Press; 2001.
- Garcia Coll C, Lamberty G, Jenkins R, McAdoo HP, Crnic K, Wasik BH, Garcia HV. An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. *Child Development*. 1996; 67:1891–1914. [PubMed: 9022222]

- Garner PW. Prediction of prosocial and emotional competence from maternal behavior in African American preschoolers. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. 2006; 12(2):179–198. [PubMed: 16719571]
- Geertz, C. *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books; 1973.
- Gorsuch, RL. *Factor analysis*. 2. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum; 1983.
- Guadagnoli E, Velicer WF. A comparison of pattern matching indices. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*. 1991; 26(2):323–343. [PubMed: 26828257]
- Gulliford H, Deans J, Frydenberg E, Liang R. Teaching coping skills in the context of positive parenting within a preschool setting. *Australian Psychologist*. 2015; 50:219–231.
- Hale-Benson, J. Cultural context for child care in the black community. In: Lande, J.Scarr, SW., Gunzenhauser, N., editors. *Caring for children: Challenge to America*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.; 1989. p. 217-231.
- Harman, HH. *Modern factor analysis*. 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1976.
- Harrison AO, Wilson MN, Pine CJ, Chan SQ, Buriel R. Family ecologies of ethnic minority children. *Child Development*. 1990; 61:347–362. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1131097>.
- Harwood R, Leyendecker B, Carlson V, Asencio M, Miller A. Parenting among Latino families in the US. *Handbook of parenting*. 2002; 4:21–46.
- Hill NE, Tyson DF. Excavating culture: Ethnicity and context as predictors of parenting behavior. *Applied Developmental Science*. 2008; 12:188–197.
- Hill RB. Understanding Black family functioning: A holistic perspective. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*. 1998; 29:15–25.
- Hitchcock JH, Nastasi BK, Dai DY, Newman J, Jayasena A, Bernstein-Moore R, Srakar S, Varjas K. Illustrating a mixed-method approach for validating culturally specific constructs. *Journal of School Psychology*. 2005; 43:259–278.
- Hughes D. Correlates of African American and Latino parents' messages to children about ethnicity and race: A comparative study of racial socialization. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 2003; 31:15–33. [PubMed: 12741687]
- Hughes D, Chen L. When and what parents tell children about race: An examination of race-related socialization among African American families. *Applied Developmental Science*. 1997; 1.4:200–214.
- Hughes D, Smith EP, Stevenson HC, Rodriguez J, Johnson D, Spicer P. Parents' ethnic-racial socialization practices: A review of research and directions for future study. *Developmental Psychology*. 2006; 42:747–770. [PubMed: 16953684]
- Hurd E, Moore C, Rogers R. Quiet success: Parenting strengths among African Americans. *Families in Society*. 1995; 76(7):434–443.
- Ispa JM, Halgunseth LC. Talking about corporal punishment: nine low-income African American mothers' perspectives. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 2004; 19:463–484.
- Jackson AP. Black, single, working mothers in poverty: Preferences for employment, well-being, and perceptions of preschool-age children. *Social Work*. 1993; 38.1:26–34.
- Jacobson AL. Contemporary models for positive parenting. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*. 2004; 96(4):4–9.
- Jarrett RL, Jefferson SR, Kelly JN. Finding community in family: Neighborhood effects and African American kin networks. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*. 2010; 41:299–328.
- Johnson DJ, Jaeger E, Randolph SM, Cauce AM, Ward J. Studying the effects of early child care experiences on the development of children of color in the United States: Toward a more inclusive research agenda. *Child Development*. 2003; 74:1227–1244. [PubMed: 14552395]
- Keels M. Ethnic group differences in early head start parents' parenting beliefs and practices and links to children's early cognitive development. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 2009; 24:381–397.
- Kelch-Oliver K, Smith CO. Using an evidence-based parenting intervention with African American parents. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*. 2015; 23(1):26–32. DOI: 10.1177/1066480714555697
- Lareau, A. *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. University of California Press; 2011.

- Lareau A, Horvat EM. Moments of social inclusion and exclusion race, class, and cultural capital in family-school relationships. *Sociology of education*. 1999;37–53.
- Lee Y. Adolescent motherhood and capital: Interaction effects of race/ethnicity on harsh parenting. *Journal of Community Psychology*. 2013; 41(1):102–116.
- Leidy MS, Guerra NG, Toro RI. A review of family-based programs to prevent youth violence among Latinos. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. 2010; 32:5–36. DOI: 10.1177/0739986309353317
- Leong FTL, Leung K, Cheung FM. Integrating cross-cultural psychology research methods into ethnic minority psychology. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. 2010; 16:590–597. [PubMed: 21058825]
- Lerner, RM. Developmental science, developmental systems, and contemporary theories of human development. In: Damon, W., Lerner, RM., editors. *Handbook of child psychology*. New York: Wiley; 2006. p. 1-17.
- Lerner, RM, Taylor, CS., von Eye, A., editors. *Pathways to positive development among diverse youth. New directions for youth development: Theory, practice, and research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2002.
- Lesane-Brown CL. A review of race socialization within Black families. *Developmental Review*. 2006; 26:400–426.
- Lesane-Brown CL, Brown TN, Tanner-Smith EE, Bruce MA. Negotiating boundaries and bonds: Frequency of young children's socialization to their ethnic/racial heritage. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. 2010; 41:457–464.
- Logan, JR., Deane, G. *Black diversity in metropolitan America*. Albany: University at Albany Press & Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research; 2003. <http://mumford.albany.edu/census/report.html>
- Luster T, McAdoo H. Family and child influences on educational attainment: A secondary analysis of the high/scope Perry Preschool data. *Developmental Psychology*. 1996; 32(1):26.
- Maccoby, EE., Martin, JA. Socialization in the context of the family: Parent-child interaction. In: Mussen, PH., editor. *Handbook of child psychology*. 4. Vol. IV. New York: John Wiley and Sons; 1983. p. 1-101.
- Mandara J, Murray CB. Development of an empirical typology of African American family functioning. *Journal of Family Psychology*. 16:318–337.
- Mattis, JS. Religion in African American life. In: McLoyd, VC, Hill, N., Dodge, KA., editors. *African-American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity*. New York: Guilford Press; 2005. p. 189-210.
- Mattis, JS., Mattis, JH. Religion and spirituality in the lives of African American children. In: Hill, N, Mann, T., Fitzgerald, H., editors. *African American Children and Mental Health*. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO; 2011. p. 125-150.
- McCreary LL, Dancy BL. Dimensions of family functioning: Perspectives of low-income African American single-parent families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2004; 66:690–701.
- McKee L, Roland E, Coffelt N, Olson AL, Forehand R, Massari C, Jones D, Gaffney CA, Zens MS. Harsh discipline and child problem behaviors: The roles of positive parenting and gender. *Journal of Family Violence*. 2007; 22(4):187–196.
- McLoyd, VC, Hill, NE., Dodge, KA., editors. *African American family life: Ecological and cultural diversity*. Guilford Press; 2005.
- McWayne CM, Melzi G, Schick AR, Kennedy JL, Mundt K. Defining family engagement among Latino Head Start parents: A mixed-methods measurement development study. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 2013; 28(3):593–607. doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.tufts.edu/10.1016/j.ecresq.2013.03.008>.
- McWayne CM, Owsianik M, Green LE, Fantuzzo JW. Parenting behaviors and preschool children's social and emotional skills: A question of the consequential validity of traditional parenting constructs for low-income African Americans. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 2008; 23(2): 173–192.
- Miles, M., Huberman, A. *Qualitative data analysis. A sourcebook*. 2. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 1994.

- Murry V, Bynum MS, Brody GH, Willert A, Stephens D. African American single mothers and children in context: A review of studies on risk and resilience. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*. 2001; 4:133–155. [PubMed: 11771793]
- O'Connor BP. SPSS and SAS programs for determining the number of components using parallel analysis and velicer's MAP test. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments & Computers*. 2000; 32(3):396–402. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3758/BF03200807>.
- Onwuegbuzie AJ, Bustamante RM, Nelson JA. Mixed research as a tool for developing quantitative instruments. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 2010; 4(1):56–78. DOI: 10.1177/1558689809355805
- Oyserman D, Bybee D, Mowbray CT, MacFarlane P. Positive parenting among African American mothers with a serious mental illness. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2002; 64:65–77.
- Peters, MF. Parenting of young children in Black families. In: McAdoo, HP., editor. *Black Families*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; 2007. p. 203-218.
- Pettit G, Bates J, Dodge K. Supportive parenting, ecological context, and children's adjustment: A seven-year longitudinal study. *Child Development*. 1997; 68:908–923. [PubMed: 29106716]
- Pillai P. Cultural directions and origins of everyday decisions. *Integr Psych Behavior*. 2012; 46:235–242. DOI: 10.1007/s12124-012-9196-9
- Pinderhughes EE, Dodge KE, Bates JE, Pettit GS, Zelli A. Discipline responses influences of parents' socioeconomic status, ethnicity, beliefs about parenting, stress, and cognitive-emotional processes. *Journal of Family Psychology*. 2000; 14:380–400. [PubMed: 11025931]
- Pinderhughes EE, Nix R, Foster EM, Jones D. Parenting in context: Impact of neighborhood poverty, residential stability, public services, social networks, and danger on parental behaviors. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2001; 63(4):941–953.
- Raikes HH, Vogel C, Love JM. Family subgroups and impacts at ages 2, 3, and 5: variability by race/ethnicity and demographic risk. Monograph IV. *Monographs of the Society for Research on Child Development*. 2013
- Riley MR, Scaramella LV, Mc Goron L. Disentangling the associations between contextual stress, sensitive parenting, and children's social development. *Family Relations*. 2014; 63:287–299.
- Roopnarine, JL., Hossain, Z. African American and African Caribbean fathers. In: Cabrera, Natasha J., Tamis-LeMonda, C., editors. *Handbook of father involvement: Multidisciplinary perspectives*. 2. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group; 2013. p. 223-243.
- Seay A, Freysteinson WM, McFarlane J. Positive parenting. *Nursing Forum*. 2014; 49(3):200–208. [PubMed: 24898152]
- Seginer R. Parents' educational involvement: A developmental ecology perspective. *Parenting: Science and Practice*. 2006; 6(1):1–48. DOI: 10.1207/s15327922par0601_1
- Silvera DH, Martinussen M, Dahl TI. The tromsø social intelligence scale. A self-report measure of social intelligence. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*. 2001; 42:313–319. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9450.00242 [PubMed: 11547906]
- Simons LG, Conger RD. Linking mother-father differences in parenting to a typology of family parenting styles and adolescent outcomes. *Journal of Family Issues*. 2007; 28:212–241.
- Simons LG, Simons RL, Su X. Consequences of corporal punishment among African Americans: The importance of context and outcome. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 2013; 42:1273–1285. [PubMed: 23192450]
- Slaughter-Defoe DT. Revisiting the concept of socialization: Caregiving and teaching in the 90s: A personal perspective. *American Psychologist*. 1995; 50(4):276.
- Snook SC, Gorsuch RL. Component analysis versus common factor analysis: A Monte Carlo study. *Psychological Bulletin*. 1989; 106:148–154.
- Spencer, MB., Dornbusch, SM. Challenges in studying minority youth. In: Feldman, S., Elliott, G., editors. *At the threshold: The developing adolescent*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 1990. p. 123-146.
- Spencer MB, Markstrom-Adams C. Identity processes among racial and ethnic minority children in America. *Child Development*. 1990; 61(2):290–310.
- Strauss, A., Corbin, J. *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage; 1998.

- Sue S. Science, ethnicity, and bias. *American Psychologist*. 1999; 54:1070–1077. [PubMed: 15332528]
- Suizzo MA, Robinson C, Pahlke E. African American mothers' socialization beliefs and goals with young children. *Journal of Family Issues*. 2008; 29:287–316. DOI: 10.1177/0192513X07308368
- Taylor, R.J., Chatters, L.M., Levin, J.S. Religion in the lives of African Americans: Social, psychological, and health perspectives. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications; 2004.
- Teddlie, C., Tashakkori, A. Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2009.
- Turner KM, Sanders MR, Hodge L. Issues in professional training to implement evidence-based parenting programs: The preferences of indigenous practitioners. *Australian Psychologist*. 2014; 49:384–394.
- Warner R. The emics and etics of quality of life assessment. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. 1999; 34(3):117–121. [PubMed: 10327835]
- Weis S, Süß HM. Reviving the search for social intelligence—A multitrait-multimethod study of its structure and construct validity. *Personality and Individual Differences*. 2007; 42(1):3–14.
- Weisner, T.S. Discovering successful pathways in children's development: Mixed methods in the study of childhood and family life. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2005.
- Wood JM, Tataryn DJ, Gorsuch RL. Effects of under- and overextraction on principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation. *Psychological Methods*. 1996; 1(4):354–365.
- Young VH. A Black American socialization pattern. *American Ethnologist*. 1974; 1:415–431.

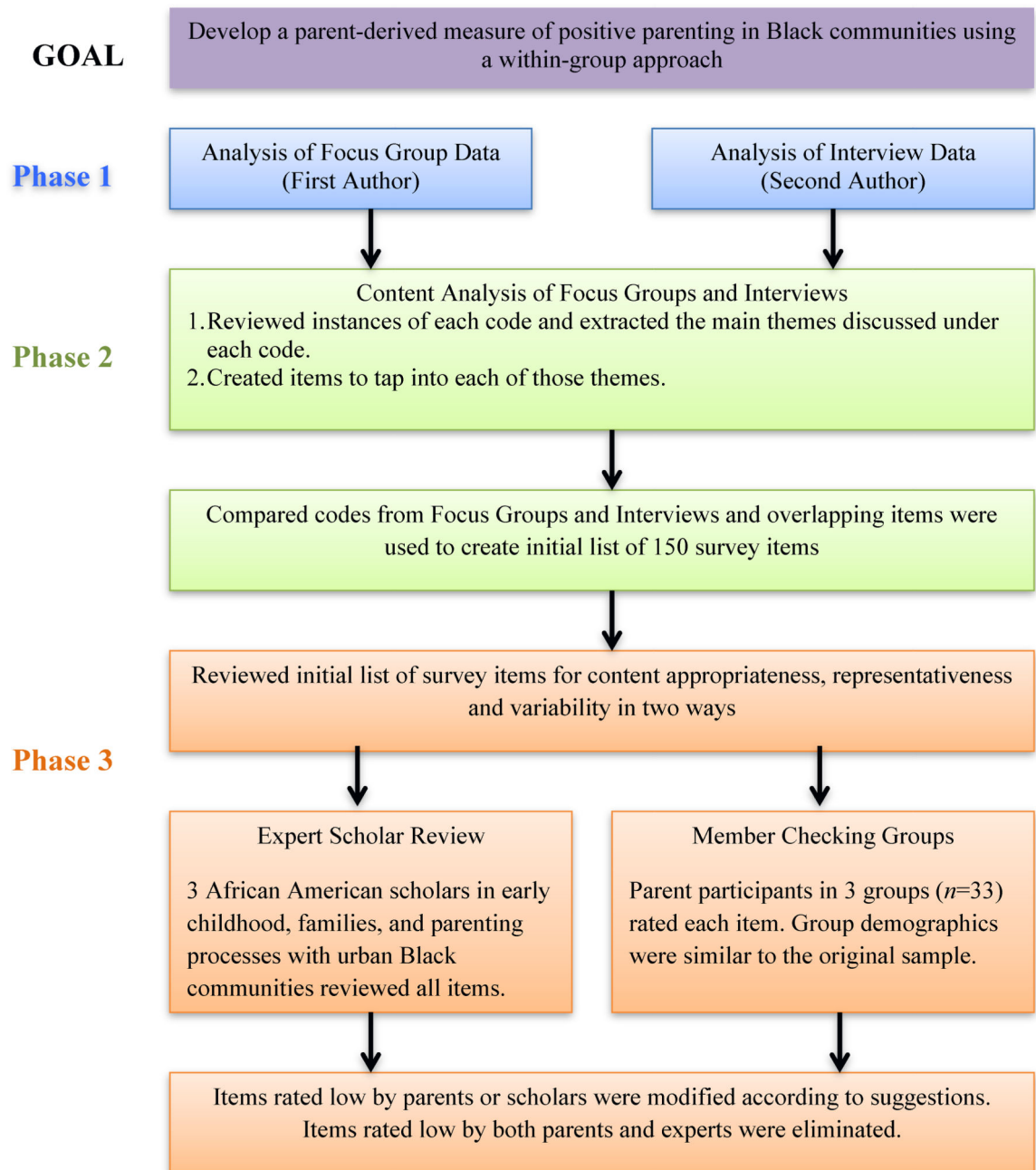


Figure 1.
Process of Measurement Development

Table 1

Demographic Data for Study 1 and Study 2 Participants

Demographic Variable	Study 1 (N=119) Total % of Sample	Study 2 (N=665) Total % of Sample
Gender		
Female	66%	78%
Male	34%	22%
Caregiver type		
Parent	96%	86%
Grandparents or aunts/uncles	3%	9%
Foster parents, godparents or "other"	1%	5%
Employment Status		
Fulltime	43%	41%
Parttime	16%	17%
Not employed outside home	41%	42%
Marital Status		
Single, no committed relationship	15%	34%
Single, committed relationship	8%	12%
Married/Co-habiting	77%	54%
Education		
<High school	14%	19%
High school/GED	28%	26%
Some college/vocational training	42%	39%
Bachelor's degree	9%	10%
Post college/graduate degree	7%	6%
Country of Birth		
United States	57%	58%
Other Countries	43%	42%
Ethnicity		
African American	53%	56%
Caribbean	39%	25%
Continental African	2%	4%
Other	6%	15%
Race		
Black, Non-Hispanic	83%	75%
Black, Hispanic	7%	13%
Multiracial/Other	10%	12%
Mean # of Years in the United States (<i>SD</i>) ^a	20.0 (13.6)	16.1 (9.4)
Mean Age (<i>SD</i>)	35.2 (9.2)	34.9 (10.4)

^aMean number of years in the U.S. refers only to those participants who were born outside of the U.S.

Table 2

Examples of Selected Themes, Related Factors and Items

Study 1		Study 2	
Indicator	Theme	Item	BPSC Factor
<p>“I keep a lot of communications open, let them know don’t be afraid to come and tell me anything, whether bad or good. ... I stress that it’s better to do that instead of me finding out in the long run.”</p> <p>“You know, children will be inquisitive, and when your child asks you ‘why’ about something, she could be watching TV, you know, you can tell her...”</p>	Communication	I encourage my child not to be afraid to talk about things with me.	<i>Fostering a Connected and Competent Self</i>
<p>“And as you can see, when she got it right, you know, it’s a whole different reaction. You know, and let her think that, you know, ‘You did this. You the one that did this! Not daddy, I ain’t have nothing to do with it.’”</p>	Supporting Autonomy	I encourage my child to ask questions when he/she doesn’t understand something.	
<p>“They all need individual love and attention... your one-on-one time with your child.”</p>	Time and Attention	I encourage my child to do things for him/herself (eating, dressing.	
<p>“I think everybody should spend time with their kids, that’s very important. I think that’s one of the reasons why some kids are well-rounded, because of spending time.”</p>		I spend one-on-one time with my child.	
<p>“... you could give your kids all the financial things they want, but the only thing they really want is just love and attention from you.”</p>		Emotional Support	
<p>“So, I don’t want her to ever give up, that’s one thing that I really press into her.”</p> <p>“You know, they might get frustrated, but that’s okay, you just have to get back to it.”</p> <p>“Always be determined. If there’s an obstacle in your way, don’t let that obstacle deter them.”</p>			
<p>“If you teach your children, as you say, your culture, they will have something in them, but if you just don’t teach them anything, then they won’t have anything.”</p>	Racial and Cultural Socialization	I teach my child about his/her culture.	
<p>“On Sundays, I take them to church, because I believe that the foundation is more in the church. Not everybody, you know, go to church, but for me you know, the foundation, your kids get a lot of love in church, so I take them to church.”</p>	Religion	I take my child to religious services.	<i>Religious/ Spiritual Practices and Values</i>
<p>“[W]ell I think with Caribbean and, well, let’s say Black people, it’s respect. Respect, like we will not have our child act up in public... ‘You’re not gonna talk to me like that, you know? You can express, but when I say ...’ You know, it’s the look. How many people have the look that they give their child?”</p>	Life Lessons and Values/Discipline	The minute my child begins to act up, I put a stop to it.	<i>Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness</i>

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

Table 3
Exploratory and Confirmatory Structures for the Parenting Dimensions of the BPSC (N =665)

Item	Varimax Factor Loading	Item-total r^2	Confirmatory Analysis ^b R ² with own/next cluster	Loading	
<i>Fostering a Connected and Competent Self</i>					
I show my child my excitement when he/she learns something new.	.67	.56	.44	.07	.67
I let my child know when he/she is doing something right or wrong.	.62	.51	.38	.09	.62
I encourage my child to keep trying when something is difficult.	.62	.58	.45	.14	.67
I tell my child that I love him/her.	.60	.50	.36	.06	.60
I show affection to my child.	.58	.49	.35	.06	.59
I help my child do things he/she is interested in.	.58	.56	.39	.09	.63
I tell my child how proud I am of him/her.	.56	.50	.35	.05	.59
I encourage my child to try new things.	.56	.58	.41	.12	.64
I encourage my child to do things for him/herself (eating, dressing).	.55	.53	.37	.08	.61
I explain the reasons for rules.	.55	.59	.42	.14	.65
I encourage my child not to be afraid to talk about things with me.	.55	.59	.42	.15	.65
I teach my child about the importance of helping others.	.54	.58	.39	.10	.62
I play with my child.	.54	.52	.37	.08	.61
I help my child to calm down when he/she is upset.	.54	.55	.38	.14	.61
I work with my child on numbers and letters.	.53	.54	.38	.09	.61
I know where my child is at all times.	.52	.48	.29	.05	.54
I ask my child about his/her day.	.51	.52	.33	.07	.57
I teach my child to take care of his/her things.	.49	.50	.32	.07	.56
I stop my child from saying hurtful words, like “stupid” or “ugly.”	.48	.45	.28	.07	.53
I make sure that my child has a quiet place for learning.	.47	.54	.35	.11	.59
I spend one-on-one time with my child.	.46	.52	.33	.10	.57
I am choosy about who watches my child.	.44	.42	.23	.07	.48
I watch educational tv shows and/or play educational games with child.	.40	.47	.27	.08	.52
I set clear limits for my child.	.40	.46	.26	.11	.50
I help my child with work he/she brings home from school.	.37	.15	.25	.12	.50
<i>Black Cultural Pride</i>					

Item	Varimax Factor Loading	Item-total r^2	Confirmatory Analysis R^2 with own/ next cluster	Loading	
I talk with my child about being proud to be Black.	.71	.40	.63	.10	.80
I expose my child to positive images of Black people.	.69	.47	.65	.14	.81
I talk with my child about famous Black leaders.	.65	.43	.60	.10	.78
I teach my child about his/her culture.	.56	.52	.53	.17	.73
I make sure my child sees images of Black pride (such as Black art).	.54	.35	.45	.07	.67
Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness					
I take away something that my child likes when he/she misbehaves.	.55	.39	.63	.11	.79
The minute my child begins to act up, I put a stop to it.	.52	.41	.51	.14	.71
I prepare my child ahead of time to help him/her behave.	.48	.44	.56	.17	.75
Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values					
I take my child to religious services.	.72	.21	.59	.03	.77
I talk with my child about God/Allah.	.70	.28	.63	.09	.79
I pray with my child.	.70	.39	.70	.13	.84
I talk with my child about the importance of giving thanks for what we have.	.49	.47	.47	.16	.69
Involvement at School					
I volunteer at my child's school.	.66	.24	.63	.05	.80
I attend meetings, events, or workshops at my child's school.	.63	.34	.68	.08	.83
If I can't go to an event at school for my child, I make sure someone else does.	.35	.36	.39	.11	.63

Note. Item wording has been abbreviated for ease of presentation. Thirty-nine of the original 72 items (54%) loaded appreciably on only one dimension.

^aPearson product-moment correlation between the respective item and the scale without it.

^bEntries are based on oblique, principal components cluster analysis (Harman, 1976). R^2 for an item's own cluster indicates the proportion of item variance predicted by other items in the hypothesized correct cluster, whereas R^2 for an item's next cluster indicates variance predicted by items in the empirically best alternative cluster.

Table 4
 Variability, Interfactor Correlations and Alpha Reliability of BPSC Dimensions (N = 665)

Factor	M (SD)	Range	FCCS	BCP	BGR	SPV	IS
Fostering a Connected and Competent Self	90.6 (8.4)	50–100	.91				
Black Cultural Pride	15.0 (3.7)	5–20	.44	.81			
Behavioral Guidance	9.8 (1.9)	4–12	.52	.29	.62		
Religious/Spiritual	12.2 (2.9)	4–16	.29	.38	.23	.78	
Involvement at School	8.3 (2.2)	3–12	.35	.34	.25	.14	.61

Note. Means are raw sum scores for a given factor. Anchors for the items were in accord with a four-point Likert-type scale: 1 = “Never,” 2 = “Sometimes,” 3 = “Often,” 4 = “Almost Always.” FCCS = Fostering a Connected and Competent Self. BCP = Black Cultural Pride. BGR = Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness. SPV = Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values. IS = Involvement at School. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients are reported in the diagonal and shaded for ease of presentation.

Table 5

Variance Components of BPSC Dimensions (N =665)

Factor	Communality	Specificity	Error
Fostering a Connected and Competent Self	.51	.40	.09
Black Cultural Pride	.40	.41	.19
Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness	.36	.26	.38
Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values	.23	.55	.22
Involvement at School	.22	.40	.39

Note. Communality reflects the total proportion of common variance conveyed by a dimension. Specificity indicates the proportion of variance that is both reliable and unique to a particular dimension. Specificity is calculated by subtracting communality for a dimension from its alpha coefficient. Specificity values that exceed error variance (where error variance = 1 – alpha) are considered significant and are in boldface type.

Table 6

Coefficients of Congruence for BPSC Dimensions Across Subsamples

Dimension	Invariance ^a			
	Males	Females	African-American	Caribbean
Fostering a Connected and Competent Self	.95 (.46)	.99 (.50)	.99 (.52)	.87 (.53)
Black Cultural Pride	.78 (.52)	.99 (.53)	.98 (.54)	.91 (.52)
Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness	.94 (.41)	.99 (.46)	.99 (.47)	.94 (.44)
Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values	.85 (.35)	.99 (.33)	.99 (.36)	.95 (.30)
Involvement at School	.89 (.45)	.99 (.43)	.94 (.44)	.81 (.47)

Note. Entries are Wrigley-Newhaus coefficients (Harman, 1976). Non-parenthetical values indicate similarity of the respective dimension to the counterpart dimension. Parenthetical values indicate average similarity of the specified dimension to all other noncounterpart dimensions (McDermott, 1993).

^aCoefficients are based on a comparison of the factor structure derived for a specific subsample (e.g., males, females) to that for the whole sample.

Table 7

Associations between BPSC Factors and Primary Caregiver Demographics

BPSC Factor Demographic Variable	Fostering a Connected and Competent Self	Black Cultural Pride	Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness	Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values	Involvement at School
Relationship to child ¹					
Mother	49.25	48.93	49.22_a	49.14_a	48.72
Father	47.10	47.43	46.64_b	46.78_b	48.80
Other	49.21	50.32	49.55_a	49.99_a	50.16
Ethnicity ^{2,3}					
African American	49.81_a	49.89_a	50.19_a	48.21_b	48.74
Caribbean	47.57_b	47.82_b	47.54_b	50.38_a	49.82
Nativity ^{4,5}					
U.S.-born	50.06_a	49.85_a	50.13_a	47.30_b	49.03
Immigrant	47.30_b	47.77_b	47.52_b	50.77_a	48.94
Education ⁶					
< high school	47.64	47.54_a	48.89	49.05	47.81_a
High school or GED	48.06	48.10_{a,b}	49.57	48.63	47.49_a
> high school	49.71	49.82_b	48.83	48.75	50.12_b
Family Structure ⁷					
Single	48.95	48.50	49.59	47.98_a	48.41
Two-parent	48.87	49.42	48.66	49.52_b	49.56

Note. Means are *t*-scores on the respective factor ($M=50, SD=10$). Those with different subscripts are statistically significantly different from each other according to ANOVA with Tukey's HSD, where appropriate and are presented in boldface-type.

¹ $F(2, 693) = 3.71, p = .025; F(2, 693) = 3.83, p = .022$, respectively.

² Due to insufficient sample size, other ethnic groups were not included in this analysis.

³ $F(1, 531) = 5.38, p = .021; F(1, 531) = 4.86, p = .028; F(1, 531) = 8.08, p = .005; F(1, 531) = 5.63, p = .018$, respectively.

⁴ Nativity was highly correlated with ethnicity ($r = .72, p < .0001$).

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

Author Manuscript

⁵ $F(1, 642) = 11.21, p = .001; F(1, 642) = 7.12, p = .008; F(1, 642) = 10.98, p = .001; F(1, 642) = 19.76, p < .0001, respectively.$

⁶ $F(2, 642) = 3.28, p = .038; F(2, 642) = 5.32, p = .005, respectively.$

⁷ $F(1, 642) = 3.89, p = .049.$

Table 8

Convergent Validity between BPSC Dimensions and Other Parent Measures

Parent Variable BPSC Dimension	Family Social Support	Social Information Processing	Social Skills
Fostering a Connected and Competent Self	.13 **	.18 **	.18 **
Black Cultural Pride	.27 **	.16 **	.15 **
Behavioral Guidance and Responsiveness	.04	.17 **	.07
Religious/Spiritual Practices and Values	.20 **	.06	.13 **
Involvement at School	.25 **	.16 **	.10 *

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).