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Narratives of Racism and Microaggressions

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NARRATIVES OF RACISM AND MICROAGGRESSION

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Psychology
in the College of Sciences
and in the Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term, 2022

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Abstract

As the nation becomes more multicultural, more research has inquired into the identity development of diverse individuals through their racial identity. The presence of racism and microaggressions presents an interesting obstacle in underrepresented groups' identity development. Microaggressions, which are ambiguous slights toward a member of a minority group, have become more prevalent in society and have caused a shift in how victims of these aggressions cope and integrate these experiences into their racial identity. Much research has focused on how these daily insults affect health in terms of lower life expectancy, however there is a lack of research regarding how individuals cope with these experiences and incorporate them into their racial identity. The purpose of this study is to determine how individuals cope and grow in their racial identity through the examination of racism narratives. Because narrative storytelling is a powerful factor in individuals' identity development, this study analyzed 46 African American and Hispanic American racism narratives on 4 narrative constructs: elaboration, coping, effects of racism, and growth. These narrative constructs were coded and correlated with the following questionnaires: Bicultural Integration Scale, the Cross Ethnic/Racial Identity scale, and the Identity Distress Scale. Results showed that individuals who showed more depth, growth, and positive coping in their narratives had more positive perceptions of their racial identity and more mature identity development. These findings indicate the importance of narrating traumatic racial experiences for African American and Hispanic American students as part of the coping process that allows growth from racist experiences.

Key Words: Narratives, Racism, Microaggressions, Coping strategies, Coping mechanisms

DEDICATION

To everyone who supported me on my academic journey
I dedicate this thesis to you.
Especially, my parents who taught me the value of hard work
and my friends who always showed me the brighter side of life.

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to Dr. Widaad Zaman,
my thesis chair, for her unwavering support and encouragement that
will influence me far after my undergraduate career.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Grace White,
whose expertise uplifted my research to new heights.

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The infamous doll test conducted by Clark and Clark (1947) aimed to identify racial

preferences or prejudice in children by presenting African American and White American

children with black or white dolls. African American children preferred white dolls over black

dolls, thus illuminating the disastrous effects of racism on African American children's self-

esteem This provided the necessary evidence to overturn the precedence of "separate but equal"

in the Brown vs. Board of education case (Bergner, 2009). Although the doll test is criticized for

its inaccurate methodology of evaluating self-esteem and identity today, it was an impetus for

further investigation into racial identity development. Since then, research on racial identity has

been devoted to understanding how racial identity develops (Marcia,1980), how it can be

beneficial and maladaptive in mitigating the effects of racism (Wong, 2003), and the differences

and similarities in racial identity development between different minority groups (Nadal et al.,

2014). Although there is extensive research into racial identity development, there is a dearth of

research regarding how minority individuals narrate their experiences and coping mechanisms in

the face of racial adversity. Narratives of meaningful personal experiences become integrated

into individuals' self-perceptions and, more broadly, into their identity development (McAdams,

2001). The purpose of this research was to examine coping mechanisms and elaboration in the

racism narratives of college students who identify as African or Hispanic American and to

determine how these narrative properties relate to racial identity development and psychological

well-being.

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Racism and Microaggressions

Jones (1972) defines racism as a system that knowingly or unknowingly enforces an ideology that a racial group is inferior through the institutions and individuals that follow it. Furthermore, research has distinguished between two types of racism: blatant and subtle racism. Blatant racism is characterized by overt behaviors and attitudes of racism toward a group perceived as inferior. Examples of blatant racism include racial slurs and hate crimes (Evelyn & Murphy, 2015). Subtle racism is defined as ambiguous acts of prejudice that are often perceived as racist or prejudiced by the receiver (Dovidio, 2001). Although overt expressions of racism are still prevalent in the United States today, legislation and new social contexts have caused a shift from blatant forms of racism to more subtle forms (Foster, 2005). Subtle forms of racism include those like symbolic racism, aversive racism, and modern racism (Sears & Henry, 2003). One specific type of subtle racism which has garnered much research in recent years, and is also emphasized in this research, is microaggressions.

Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271). Microaggressions are agglomerated into 3 categories: microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidation. Microassaults are blatant verbal or nonverbal slants that have the primary intention to hurt the receiver. They include name calling, and/or displaying symbols that are historically racist like swastikas or confederate flags. Microinsults are typically verbal in nature and often invalidate or belittle the receiver's heritage or identity. Finally, microinvalidations undermine the experiences, feelings, and thoughts of people of color (Sue et al., 2007). These 3

categories of microaggression are further broken down into nine categories of microaggressions that characterize specific experiences. The present study aims to examine how African and Hispanic American students narrate and cope with their experiences of racism and microaggressions, thus gaining firsthand accounts of how these acts are expressed in daily life.

Although microaggressions occur across groups, ethnic groups typically experience microaggressions differently. One study found that African Americans report more instances of being treated like a second-class citizen or criminal, while Latinos are typically treated as foreigners because of their cultural differences (Sue et al., 2008; Rivera et al., 2010). However, all ethnicities have reported being intellectually devalued. These constant slights made against one's race can have negative emotional, mental, and physical effects.

For example, racism has been positively correlated with poorer mental health, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD (Khaylis et al., 2007; Pieterse et al., 2012). Racism is also correlated with declining academic motivation and self confidence in school children through ethnic devaluation and stereotype threat (Wong et al., 2003). Stereotype threat refers to the phenomenon of decreased performance for fear of confirming a negative stereotype about one's group. For example, in a series of studies conducted by Steele and Aronson (1995), African Americans performed significantly worse on verbal tests in situations where stereotypes were made salient than those who were not made aware of these stereotypes. The decreased performance from fear of confirming a stereotype occurs in all aspects of life, including academic, work, and social settings (Spencer et al., 2016).

Unlike overt racism where the target of racism unequivocally knows the act was racist, microaggressions tend to leave the recipient of the aggression questioning whether the action

was intentionally racist or not (Sue, 2008). This questioning is often followed by paranoia of the event and the perception of a hostile environment. Therefore, microaggressions should not be overlooked regarding their effects on minority populations because they are subtle in nature. Research has found that the everyday accumulation of microaggressions are just as detrimental to minority populations as overt racism (Nadal et al, 2014). Across ethnic groups, microaggressions are associated with self-doubt, invisibility, and low self-esteem especially in academic and work settings (Nadal et al, 2014; Solorzano et al., 2000). Microaggressions have also been associated with MEES, or mundane, extreme, environmental stress in African American males that cause increased negative "psychological, physiological, and behavioral responses" (Smith et al., 2011). Considering the prevalence and wide-ranging effects that racism and microaggressions have on minority populations, one goal of this study is to determine which coping mechanisms are associated with better overall well-being and a more developed racial identity, a concept which has previously been found to ameliorate the negative effects of racism.

Racial Identity Development

Developing a centralized identity is an important steppingstone adolescents must conquer. Identity development begins in adolescence, as individuals are confronted with new beliefs, perspectives, and the possibility of multiple selves (Erikson 1950). Early research defined stages of identity development from in terms of commitment and exploration, as follows: moratorium (defines an identity made with little commitment but high exploration), identity diffusion (defines an identity made with neither commitments or explorations), foreclosure (defines an identity with high commitment without exploration), and identity achievement (defines an identity with high commitment and high exploration) (Marcia, 1980). The

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relationship between identity and psychological wellbeing is well documented. A study by Sharma and Chandiramani (2021) found that the process by which adolescents achieve their identity is associated with psychological wellbeing. Commitment to one's identity is related to positive mental health, and greater exploration is associated with greater self-definition. The process by which individuals achieve their overall identity is even more difficult for adolescents of color, as forming an identity is inseparable from their perceptions of their race and culture.

Neblett et al. (2012) defines racial and ethnic identity as "youths' attitudes and behaviors that define the significance and meaning of race and ethnicity in their lives" (p.295). Racial identity is important in buffering the effects of racial discrimination in people of color. The interconnection between racial identity and racial discrimination can be understood in terms of risk factors in resilience research. Risk factors are events or situations that lead to undesirable developmental outcomes such as poverty, negative attitudes, and low self-esteem. However, protective and promotive factors can decrease the probability of a risk factor causing undesirable outcomes in different ways (Keyes, 2004). Protective factors are buffers that mediate the relationship between risks and outcomes, while promotive factors protect vulnerable groups from environmental or constitutional risks by counteracting the effects of psychosocial threats (Jessor, 1995). Racial discrimination and perceiving acts as racist are considered risk factors because they are predictors of declining academic motivation, increase in problem behaviors and PTSD symptoms (Wong et al., 2003; Khaylis et al., 2007). A strong ethnic identity is an important protective and promotive factor against the negative effects of racism and microaggressions in minority populations. Specifically, research has found that having a connection to one's ethnic group promotes a sense of belonging which can buffer the isolating effects of perceived racism

that tarnish the self-esteem of minority groups (Wong et al., 2003). This study will expand upon previous research by examining ethnic identity as a protective and promotive factor against the negative effects of racism.

The formulation of a racial identity development scale began with Cross's (1971) Nigrescence model that described the 5 stages African Americans in America progress through to develop a healthy, functioning racial identity. The 5 stages Cross identified include pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, internalization, and internalization commitment. Over the years, the Nigrescence model has been further expanded to include 6 attitudes that further define the stages of the original model: assimilation, miseducation, self-hatred, anti-white, multiculturalist inclusive, and afrocentricity (Worrell et al., 2019). Although the NT-E model is intended to define the development of African American identity, research has found that many of the attitudes are not exclusive to African Americans, thus, the NT-E model was adapted into the Cross Ethnic/ Racial identity Scale – Adult (CERIS-A), which assesses racial identity development across multiple ethnic groups (Worrell et al., 2019). The CERIS-A assesses and defines racial identity development as follows: assimilation (identity is defined in nationalistic instead of ethnonationlistic terms), miseducation (the extent to which individuals endorse stereotypes of their ethnic group), self-hatred (the extent to which individuals dislike the ethnic-racial group they belong to), anti-dominant (the extent to which individuals dislike the socially dominant group), ethnocentricity (the extent to which individuals believe their ethnic/racial values should inform their lives), and ethnic-racial salience (the degree to which individuals consider race in their daily lives) (Worrell et al., 2019). This model offers more flexibility by allowing individuals to harbor multiple attitudes that define their racial identity.

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The present study will be the first to investigate how these attitudes relate to narratives of racism and microaggression, as well as the coping mechanisms used to deal with racism.

Coping in the Face of Racism

A positive ethnic identity serves as a protective factor against negative effects of racism such as depression and low self-esteem (Romero et al., 2014). Although this is an important way to stave off the negative effects of racism, there are other coping mechanisms individuals experiencing racism typically engage in. Firstly, it is important to distinguish between problem and emotion focused coping, and engagement and disengagement coping. Problem focused coping aims to address the stressor or problem directly, while emotion focused coping aims to regulate the emotions caused by the stressor/problem (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Emotion focused coping can further be distinguished between positive emotion coping such as seeking social support, cognitive restructuring, and humor, and negative emotion focused coping such as denial, rumination, and wishful thinking (Vaughn-Coaxum et al., 2018). However, engagement coping involves managing the stressor or the resulting emotions, while disengagement coping involves ignoring or distracting oneself from the stressor and resulting emotions. Therefore, engagement can include forms of problem focused coping and emotion focused coping, but disengagement coping is typically associated with emotion focused coping (Carver & Conner-Smith, 2010).

Coping strategies can either mediate or exacerbate the negative effects of racism. Research investigating the use of problem and emotion focused coping in relation to racism have found significant differences in their effectiveness. A study by Blume (2021) investigating the

relationship between microaggressions and mental health found that problem focused, and positive emotion focused coping predicted higher self-esteem and decreased depression, and drug/alcohol use in African American, Hispanic American, and Asian American college students. Subsequentially, disengagement/ negative emotion focused strategies can cause the racial event to be relived again through rumination because the individual has not come to terms with the situation, leading to greater psychological distress (Kaholokula et al., 2017). How individuals cope with their experiences influences their perception of themselves and the world, which becomes encoded in their identity through the narratives they use to explain their experiences. This study aims to determine if the way individuals express coping in their narratives is related to their racial identity and wellbeing outcomes.

Narratives in Identity Development

An important aspect of any form of identity development is the process by which that identity is constructed. Autobiographical accounts of significant past experiences have been argued to be both the process and product of identity construction (Fivush & Nelson, 2004). Mandler and Johnson (1977) found that from a young age, we learn to store our experiences in story format because it is efficient and aids in retrieval and recall. This story format becomes useful in the formation of an identity throughout a person's lifetime, especially during adolescence when individuals explore future options with the intention of cementing their beliefs and ideologies (Erikson, 1963). Adolescents begin formulating these memories into life stories, or biographical accounts of their past, present, and future that are constructed in a way to derive meaning and eventually develop an identity (McAdams, 2001). Therefore, when these life stories are narrated, they are more than just an autobiographical account; narratives contain

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emotional and affective states, cognitive processes, ways of coping with experiences, and eventually, become incorporated into a person's identity (Syed, 2015; Syed & Azmitia, 2008). Through narratives, people can articulate the significance of the event, and researchers are able to analyze and understand their developmental processes (Thorne, 2000).

Researchers interested in the relations between autobiographical narratives and identity development look for a myriad of elements such as meaning making and elaboration that signal processing of the experience. Meaning making refers to the deeper meaning that was derived from the experience and can be broken into two types: lesson learned (learning a lesson from the experience) and gaining insight (gaining understanding or insight that can be applied beyond the specific experience and incorporated into an individual's life) (McLean & Thorne, 2001). Although meaning making can occur in positive narratives, meaning making is more associated with negative or conflicting experiences because it requires individuals to pause and reflect on the meaning in relation to self (McLean & Thorne, 2003). For example, in a study conducted by Mclean and Pratt (2006), narratives containing mortality and redemptive elements scored higher in meaning making and were highly correlated with a more mature identity status. Additionally, individuals tend to connect the meaning taken from the event to one's self, called a self- event connection (Pasupathi et al, 2007). Thus, individuals use storytelling to cope with negative events and meaning making is one way that individuals integrate their experiences into their personal values and beliefs to form an identity. For this study, the meaning making coding scheme was adapted into the growth coding scheme to include more specific indicators for the racism narratives. However, the structure of the scheme is very similar.

Elaboration, referring to the level of detail individuals provide in their narrative accounts, has also been related to identity development. High elaboration defines a narrative that is rich in detail, while low elaboration defines a narrative that lacks specific details. Previous research on elaboration centers heavily on how autobiographical memory develops in children through elaborative maternal reminiscing style, which has predictive value in children's later memory abilities and self-concept (Fivush et al., 2006). However, studies have found that adolescents who report negative experiences are more elaborative than those who report positive experiences, suggesting the importance of elaboration in interpreting and coping with negative experiences (McCabe & Peterson, 2011). For example, one study examining interpretive elaboration (elaboration including thoughts, feelings, and goals) in trauma narratives, found that higher elaboration promoted active coping strategies in individuals which predicted a decrease in the onset of mental health disorders like depression or posttraumatic stress disorder (Booker et al., 2020). Together, these studies suggest that constructing a narrative is essential to recovery after trauma, but specifically, being able to develop a coherent narrative that processes the experience using emotional constructs and meaning are critical to the development of identity. Given these findings, we examined the racism narratives of emerging adults in relation to their identity development.

The Current Study

Racism narratives present an intriguing intersection between trauma and identity memories. Experiences of racism are both traumatic, and highly influential in the process of racial identity development (Snyder, 2016). Although previous studies have examined the

interplay between racial identity stages and coping mechanisms in relation to mental health, there

is a lack of research on how individuals in different racial identity stages narrate their

experiences and derive meaning from them. The purpose of this study is to examine the

relationship between narrative constructs, such as elaboration and growth (adapted from the

meaning-making coding scheme), and racial identity development and psychological well-being

in African and Hispanic American emerging adults. We hypothesize that individuals with greater

narrative elaboration and greater meaning making will show more developed racial identity,

more developed bi-cultural identity, and less identity distress. In addition, we will examine the

role of coping strategies when dealing with discrimination in the relationship between narrative

elements and identity development. We do not make any specific predictions here given the

exploratory nature of this question.

Methods

Procedure

This study's targeted demographic was African American and Hispanic American students attending a major public university in the southeast. Data was collected on Qualtrics and made available to students through the Sona Research Participation system of the Psychology Department, which allows undergraduate students to participate in research for course credit. This study was approved by the IRB of the target institution.

Participants

A total of 103 students took part in the study, however 57 were excluded because they failed to fill out more than the demographic questions. The resulting sample consisted of 46 participants, of which 67% were female, 32% were Black, 28% Hispanic, 24% were Mixed, and 13% were White. Of those who identified as Black, 52% identified as African American, 43% identified as Afro-Caribbean, and 4% identified as immigrants from Africa. Of those who identified as Hispanic, 53% identified as Caribbean, 23% identified with Central American, and 23% identified as South American.

The sample overwhelmingly consisted of participants within the 18-23 age range (85%) in their last 2 years of college (76%). Participants mostly spoke English as their first language (78%) and worked part time (64%).

Measures

Participants were asked to fill out a narrative questionnaire, the Bicultural Integration Scale (Huynh & Benet-Martinez, 2010), the Identity Distress survey (Berman et al., 2004), and the Cross Ethnic-Racial Identity Scale -Adult, (Worrell et al., 2019), all of which measure

aspects of identity. Participants also filled out the Coping with Discrimination Scale (Wei, Alvarez, Ku, Russell, and Bonett, 2010), the RYFF Psychological well-being scales (Ryff & Keyes, 1994), and the perceived Stress Scale, all of which measure aspects of well-being.

Narratives of Racism Prompt Questionnaire. The narrative questionnaire, which was developed by the authors specifically for this study, probes participants for any experiences of racism and microaggression and the coping mechanisms utilized, using prompts such as: *"Describe in detail an experience of racism or microaggression that marked a turning point in your racial identity development."* See Appendix 2 for Narrative Prompt Questionnaire.

The Bicultural Identity Integration scale. This scale (Huynh & Benet-Martinez, 2010) measures cultural identity development in individuals with dual cultures, such as Hispanic American, or African American. It consists of two subscales: harmony vs. conflict and blendedness vs. compartmentalization. The harmony vs. conflict subscale measures the extent to which individuals feel that the values and beliefs of their minority and the majority culture are easy to combine. All items are measured on a 5-point likert-type scale from 1- strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree. An example of an item on this scale is: *"I rarely feel conflicted about being bicultural."* The harmony subscale is measured on a scale of 1-11, with a score of 1 representing conflict between the minority and majority culture, and a score of 11 representing a high harmonization of cultures. The blendedness vs. compartmentalization subscale measures the extent to which individuals either combine or separate their minority and the majority culture. An example of an item on this subscale is: *"I feel part of a combined culture that is a mixture of my minority culture (Black; Hispanic) and mainstream American culture."* The blendedness subscale is measured on a scale of 1 to 9, with a score of 1 representing compartmentalization

between the minority and majority culture, and a score of 9 representing blendedness between the cultures.

      The Identity Distress Survey. This scale (Berman et al., 2004) measures the degree to which individuals feel upset or worried about their identity and how long these feelings have remained. The survey asks about distress over long term goals, religion, values, etc. Each item is measured on a 6-point likert - type scale measuring distress (1 – none at all; 2- mildly distressed; 3- moderately distressed; 4 – severely distressed; 5- very severely distressed). Identity distress is scored on a scale of 9 to 45, with 9 being not distressed at all, and 45 being severely distressed. The final item asks, "*How long have you felt upset, distressed, or worried over these issues as a whole?"* and is scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being distressed never or for less than a month, and 5 being distressed for more than 12 months.

      The Cross Ethnic Racial Identity Scale-Adult. This scale (Worrell et al., 2019) measures the cultural attitudes of minorities of all ethnic backgrounds. It includes 7 subscales; the subscales and an example item of that subscale are as follows: assimilation (*"I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of an ethnic or racial group."*), miseducation (*"I think many of the stereotypes about my ethnic/racial group are true."*), self-hatred *("I go through periods when I am down on myself because of my ethnic group membership."*), anti- dominant group ("*I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for the majority culture*."), ethnocentricity *("I believe that only people who accept a perspective from their ethnic/racial group can truly solve the race problem in America."*), multiculturalist inclusive *("We cannot truly be free as a people until our daily lives are guided by values and principles grounded in our ethnic/racial heritage."*), and ethnic- racial salience ("*When I read

the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues."). This survey uses a 7-point likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree, and 7 being strongly agree. Each of the attitudes is scored on a scale of 1 to 7, with one being the least extreme, and 7 being the most extreme.

      The Coping with Discrimination Scale. This scale (Wei et al., 2010) measures the coping strategies that people use when faced with discrimination. The scale consists of 5 subscales: Education/Advocacy, Internalization, Drug and Alcohol Use, Resistance, and Detachment. Education/Advocacy is defined as the tendency to educate or advocate against discrimination in order to cope. An example of an item on the education/advocacy subscale is, *"I try to educate people so that they are aware of discrimination."* Internalization is the tendency to believe the cause of an incident is attributed to oneself. An example of an item on the internalization subscale is, *"I wonder if I did something to provoke this incident."* Drug and alcohol use is the tendency to use drugs or alcohol to cope with discriminatory events. An example of an item on the drug and alcohol use subscale is, "*I try to stop thinking about it by taking alcohol or drugs.*" Resistance is the tendency to challenge or confront discriminatory behavior. An example of an item on the resistance subscale is, "*I respond by attacking others' ignorant beliefs."* Detachment is the tendency to be unsure of how to cope or distancing oneself from social support after a discriminatory event. An example of an item on the detachment subscale is, *"I do not talk with others about my feelings."* This survey uses a 6-point likert-type scale, with 1 being "never like me" and 6 being "always like me." Each of the subscales are scored on a scale of 5 to 30, with 5 being the least likely to use the coping mechanism to cope, and 30 being the most likely to use the coping mechanism to cope.

RYFF Well-being Scale. This scale (Ryff & Keyes,1994) measures the psychological well-being of individuals based on six dimensions: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose in Life, and Self- Acceptance. Autonomy is defined as a sense of independence, and ability to resist social pressures. An example of an item on the Autonomy subscale is, *"I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important."* Environmental mastery is the ability to manage everyday situations and believe that one has control over their surroundings. An example of an item on this subscale is *"I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking."* Personal growth is defined as seeking growth and development. An example of an item on this subscale is *"For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth."* Positive relations is defined has having quality relations with others. An example of an item on this subscale is *"I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me."* Purpose in life is the belief that one has a purpose, or a belief that their life has meaning. An example of an item on this subscale is *"Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them."* Self- acceptance is having a positive perception ones current and past situation. An example of an item on this subscale is *"When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am."* This survey uses a 6-point likert-type scale, with 1 being strongly disagree and 6 being strongly agree. Each subscale is scored on a scale of 7 to 42, with 7 representing the low side of each dimension, and 42 representing the high side of each dimension

Perceived Stress Scale. This scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1994) measures the degree to which individuals perceive their life experiences as stressful within a period of 4 weeks. Each item is measured on a 5-point likert-type scale, with 0 being never, and 4 being very

often. For this questionnaire, scores range from 0, being no perceived stress, to 40, being high perceived stress. An example of an item on this scale is *"In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?"*

Narrative Coding

Narrative responses were coded for Elaboration, Coping, Effects of Racism on Identity, and Growth.

Elaboration was coded on a 5-point scale, ranging from least elaborative (0) to most elaborative (5), as seen in Table 1. The elaboration coding scheme was developed from Zaman and Fivush (2013) to capture level of detail in the narratives. Coding development was done on 10% of the narratives, and another 10% was used for reliability. Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Table I

Elaboration Coding Scheme

Score 0	There is no story or elaboration; the participants answer the question with no further details. *E.g., "Bullying"*
Score 1	The narrative is superficial and flat in detail. Narratives of this score may also list a laundry list of items without further detail. *E.g., "Felt belittled, unworthy & undeserving of success."*

Score 2	The narrative has moments where there are details mentioned, however details are general, vague, or repetitive. E.g., *"I was called a vulgar name by a classmate in middle school, on social media. It had to do with my features."*
Score 3	The narrative has more of a story format that revolves around a central theme and includes details that are vivid. The narrative might mention other characters or internal states within their details. However additional details might be repetitive, making the same point. E.g., *"I code switch depending on who I'm around. I'll enunciate my words more if I'm talking to an older group of people, especially if they're white. I feel more comfortable around my friends so I'll talk differently to them. I try to read the room first before I talk just so I'm not out of place."*
Score 4	The narrative has a story format that contains relevant, vivid details of the characters and events of the story. There are layers to the plot and the narrative includes thoughts, feelings, and solutions. E.g., *"Expectations to be Exceedingly hardworking, as if we have to prove ourselves to others. The feeling is as though that only when we are at near perfection, academically or professionally, that is when we*

	are worthy of the same opportunities accessible to the privileged.
	Emotionally and physically it is draining, we run laps to receive things
	that others merely had to walk to and when we think we have made it,
	we are exhausted and far enough along to then realize we have missed
	the luxury of living."

The Coping coding scheme is coded on a 4-point scale, ranging from least effective coping (0) to most effective coping (4) as seen in Table 2. This coding scheme captured how positively or negatively individuals dealt with their experiences of racism. Coding development was done on 10% of the narratives, and another 10% was used for reliability. Cronbach's alpha was .98.

Table II

Coping Coding Scheme

Score 0	The participant does not answer the question. A narrative can also receive a 0 if the participant was unaware the event was racially motivated or if the participant did not know how to deal with the experience of racism.
	E.g., "I was in 2nd-5th grade so I couldn't do much about it and didn't realize this was "racism" until I was told.

Score 1	The coping strategy is negative in nature and includes dismissing one's minority identity to fit in to avoid racism and desiring to be a part of the majority culture. *E.g., "I used to wish that I was the color of my palms for people to notice me."*
Score 2	The coping strategy is avoidance, not dealing with racism by brushing or laughing it off E.g., "*I just brushed it off as someone being super ignorant and didn't let it phase me."*
Score 3	The coping strategy is vague, and the participant offers limited details on how coping was accomplished. This includes "making peace" with the racist act or crying. *E.g., "I had to make peace with the fact that people will judge me and my character before even knowing who I am.*
Score 4	The coping strategy is positive; the participant demonstrates a coping strategy that has led to acceptance and a positive perception of one's minority identity.

	E.g., *"I'm still dealing with it today, I just have to give myself space to breathe and realize just because I'm not good at something doesn't mean it's a reflection on my character.*

The Effects of Racism coding scheme is coded on a 3-point scale, ranging from negative effects of racism (1), to positive effects of racism (3), as seen in Table 3. This coding scheme captured how participants described the effects of the racist experience on them. Coding was done on 10% of the narratives, and another 10% was used for reliability. Cronbach's alpha was .88.

Table III

Effects of Racism Coding Scheme

Score 1	This narrative explains a negative effect racism had on their identity *E.g.,'' Depends on my mood, if I'm feeling up to it I'll call people out on their microaggressions but more often then not I try not to make a scene because I don't want to be stereotyped as the loud angry black woman."*
Score 2	This narrative explains that racism has not had an effect on their racial identity.

	E.g., "I don't think they've affected my racial identity at all. I know what I am, nothing can change it. The only thing that should be changed is the perception other people have of me and those that don't look like these people."
Score 3	This narrative explains a positive effect racism had on their identity *E.g., "They have made me much more proud to be who I am. In my eyes these people hate for a reason, must be jealousy."*

The Growth coding scheme was adapted from the meaning-making coding scheme (McLean & Thorne, 2001) to capture how the experiences of racism and microaggression allowed participants to grow positively in their mindset about race. This coding scheme uses a 3-point scale, ranging from negative growth (1) to positive growth (3), as seen in Table 4. = Coding was done on 10% of the narratives, and another 10% was used for reliability. Cronbach's alpha was .88

Table IV

The Growth coding scheme

Score 1	The narrative displays negative growth, such as dismissing your minority culture or hating the majority culture.

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	E.g.,"… I felt shattered inside because now I am aware that I am not allowed to be ignorant. I am not allowed to make the same mistakes or decisions as everyone else. I am not allowed to run down the street without telling my aunt. I am not allowed to befriend people in this neighborhood because they will smile in your face and salivate at the idea of taking your life because of the color of your skin. Now I am reserved and have no real trust for white people…"
Score 2	Thinking about race broadly as a result of experiencing racism or a microaggression. This narrative does not mention any specific self-reflection or how the event affected their racial development. *E.g.," I was at my friend's house. We were sitting in the driveway minding our business and a cop passed by while we were rolling up. He circled around and started to harass us. I was lucky to get out of the situation but it put many things into perspective about how I as black man am treated in America."*
Score 3	This narrative displays aspects of positive growth – learning something positive about the self or the group A viable conclusion about their personal or group racial identity.

	E.g., "...shows me how strong and special Black people are. Because we are hated so much and yet we still succeed and are trendsetters for the people that hate us."

Results

The results are divided into two primary sections, looking firstly at correlations between narrative variables and questionnaires, and secondly at group differences between coping strategies and outcome variables.

Correlational Analyses

Our hypotheses for individual differences center around the narrative variables being correlated with the questionnaire variables. To examine these hypotheses, Pearson's bivariate correlations were conducted looking at the relationships between the narrative coding variables and the questionnaire variables related to identity and well-being.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a correlation between Elaboration and aspects of identity development on the CERIS and the BIIS.

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's bivariate correlation was conducted with elaboration, the CERIS and the BIIS. Marginal results were obtained with the CERIS. Given the low n, the results did not meet statistical significance, but the *r*-statistic reached a moderate effect size. The results moderately supported the hypothesis that greater elaboration is related to high identity development. Elaboration was moderately negatively correlated with the Assimilation subfactor of the CERIS (r (19) = -.32, p = .16), suggesting that those who describe their racism experiences in more detail place less emphasis on their national identity and greater emphasis on their ethnic identity. Elaboration was also moderately positively correlated with Ethnocentricity

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(r (19)= .30, p = .19), suggesting that those who describe their racism experiences in more detail feel that their ethnic values should inform their daily living.

There were no significant correlations between elaboration and the BIIS.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a correlation between Identity Distress and narrative codes elaboration and coping.

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's bivariate correlation between elaboration and the IDS was performed. No significant correlation was found; however, the analysis did show a significant positive relationship between a subfactor of the IDS scale, IDS time and narrative elaboration (r (28) = .46, p = .01), suggesting that those who elaborate more in their narratives have experienced identity distress over long periods of time. A Pearson's bivariate correlation between Coping and the IDS was also performed. Results found a positive correlation between the coping narratives and the subscale, time, in the identity Distress survey (r (34) = .36, p = .03), such that those who use more effective coping strategies express dealing with identity distress for longer periods of time.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a correlation between Growth and Identity development on the CERIS and the BIIS.

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's bivariate correlation was run between Growth and the CERIS and BIIS. Given the low n, the results did not meet statistical significance at the $p = 0.05$

level, but the *r*-statistic reached a moderate effect size between growth and the miseducation subfactor of the CERIS ($r(23) = -.31, p = .14$), suggesting that those who exhibit more positive growth in their narratives are less likely to endorse stereotypes of their racial/ethnic group. With the BIIS, there was a moderate correlation between growth and blendedness ($r(28)= .33, p = .08$), suggesting that those who described their racism experiences with more growth, experience more blendedness between their national and racial/ethnic identities.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a correlation between growth and identity distress.

To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's bivariate correlation was run between Growth and Identity distress. No significant correlations were found between the two factors.

Hypothesis 5: There will be a correlation between the four narrative coding schemes:
      Elaboration, Coping, Growth, and Effects of racism.

To test this hypothesis a Pearson's bivariate correlation was conducted and revealed a significant correlation between the Elaboration rating scale and the Coping rating scale ($r(34) = .63, p < .001$) suggesting that individuals who elaborate more in their narratives use more positive coping mechanisms when they experience a microaggression. Results also found a significant positive correlation between the Elaboration coding scheme and the Growth coding scheme ($r(22) = .51, p < .011$), suggesting that those who elaborate more in their narratives experience more growth in their racial identity. The effects of racism coding scheme revealed

positive correlations with the Growth coding scheme ($r(25) = .38$, $p = .05$) such that experiencing more positive effects of racism is related to more growth in racial identity development.

No other narrative variables significantly correlated with each other.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a correlation between The Effects of Racism coding scheme and subfactors of the BIIS and CERIS.

This hypothesis was tested by conducting a Pearson's bivariate correlation. Results found that the Effects of Racism coding scheme was positively correlated with the blendedness vs. compartmentalization subscale of the Bicultural Integration Scale ($r(25) = .39$, $p < .05$). This suggests that individuals who experience more positive effects of racism tend to combine their majority and minority culture together. There was also a moderate correlation between the Effects of Racism coding scheme and the Harmony vs. Conflict subscale of the Bicultural Integration Scale ($r(25) = .32$, $p = .101$), such that experiencing more positive effects of racism is related to easily combining the values of the dual cultures. Lastly, the bivariate correlation found a moderate correlation between the Effect of Racism coding scheme and the Assimilation subscale in the CERIS ($r(21) = .37$, $p < .10$), suggesting those who experience more positive effects of racism place greater emphasis on their national identity and less emphasis on their ethnic identity.

The Effects of Racism Scale was not related to any other questionnaire.

Between-subjects analyses

Our hypotheses surrounding group differences focused on how identity and well-being varied depending on the type of coping strategy used in the narrative. ANOVAS were conducted to examine the role of coping strategy in the narratives with identity, well-being, and level of coping in the narrative (the coping rating scale from 0 to 4).

Hypothesis 7: Those who engaged in more positive coping strategies will demonstrate better racial identity development and well-being.

To test this hypothesis, a 3 (coping categories: problem focused, positive emotion focused, and negative emotion focused) x 7 (CERIS subscales) multivariate ANOVA, with coping strategy as a fixed factor and the CERIS subscales as a within subjects factor was conducted. The ANOVA found a significance in the Self Hatred subscale (F (3, 31) = 3.07, p =.05), such that people who engaged in more negative emotion focused coping (M = 2.9, SD = .90) compared to those who engaged in more problem focused coping (M = 1.4, SD = .60) disliked their membership in the Racial/ Ethnic group. A post-hoc Tukey HSD found a significant difference between the problem focused and negative emotion focused coping (p <.05) for those with greater self-hatred on the CERIS. The ANOVA results were not significant for any other subfactor of the CERIS.

Additionally, a 3 (coping categories) x 5 (Coping with Discrimination subfactors) multivariate ANOVA, with coping strategy as a fixed factor and the CWD subscales as a within subjects factor was conducted. Results found a significant difference in the Internalization (F (3,38) = 3.80, p =.02), and Resistance subscale (F (3,38) = 6.39, p =.001) of the CWD scale. For

the Internalization subscale, those who engage in negative emotion focused coping ($M = 18.13$, $SD = 6.22$) compared to problem focused coping ($M = 9.90$, $SD = 4.72$), and positive focused coping ($M = 9.57$, $SD = 7.70$) were more likely to cope with racial experiences by blaming themselves. A post hoc Tukey HSD revealed a significant difference between negative emotion focused coping and problem focused ($p < .05$), and negative emotion focused coping and positive emotion focused coping ($p < .05$).

For the Resistance subscale, those who express positive emotion focused coping in their narratives ($M = 19.43$, $SD = .5.62$) compared to problem focused coping ($M = 12.00$, $SD = 5.06$), and negative emotion focused coping ($M = 10.88$, $SD = 2.75$) typically coped with racist experiences by challenging the perpetrator. A post hoc Tukey HSD revealed a significant difference between positive emotion focused coping and problem focused coping ($p < .01$) and positive emotion focused coping and negative emotion focused coping ($p < .01$). The ANOVA results were not significant for any other subscale of the CWD scale.

Lastly, a 3 (coping categories) x 6 (RYFF subscales) multivariate ANOVA, with coping strategy as a fixed factor and the RYFF subscales as a within subjects factor was conducted. Results found a significant difference in the autonomy subscale ($F (3,34) = 4.22$, $p = .01$), such that those who are more independent and self-determining engage in more positive emotion focused coping ($M = 34.43$, $SD = .4.76$) than problem focused coping ($M = 31.78$, $SD = 4.99$) and negative emotion focused coping ($M = 29.14$, $SD = 5.81$). The ANOVA results were not significant for any other subfactor of the RYFF scale.

A univariate ANOVA was conducted between coping categories and coping scores (as rated on a 4 – point scale) averaged over 3 narratives. The ANOVA showed a significant difference

$(F (3,34) = 8.37, p <.001)$, such that those who score higher in their coping narratives on the rating scale engaged in more problem focused coping ($M = 2.80, SD = 1.01$) than positive emotion focused coping ($M = 2.33, SD = 1.14$), and negative emotion focused coping ($M = 2.00, SD = .80$).

For means and standard deviations for all ANOVA results, see Table V.

Table V

ANOVA Means and Standard Deviations

<u>Coping Categories</u>

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Problem Focused</u>	<u>Positive Emotion Focused</u>	<u>Negative Emotion Focused</u>
Self- Hatred	M = 1.41,	M= 1.54,	M= 2.85,
subscale (CERIS)	(SD = .60)	(SD =1.31)	(SD = .90)
Internalization	M= 9.9,	M= 9.57,	M= 18.13,
subscale (CWD)	(SD= 4.72)	(SD=7.70)	(SD= 6.22)
Resistance	M =12,	M= 19.43,	M= 10.88,
Subscale (CWD)	(SD= 5.06)	(SD=5.62)	(SD= 2.75)
Autonomy	M= 31.78,	M= 34.43,	M= 29.14,
subscale (RYFF)	(SD=4.99)	(SD= 4.76)	(SD= 5.81)
	M= 2.8,	M= 2.33,	M= 2.00,
Coping scheme	(SD=1.01)	(SD= 1.14)	(SD= .80)

Table V shows the means and standard deviations for the ANOVA results between the coping categories and the CERIS, the CWDS, the RYFF, and the coping coding scheme.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine narrative elaboration, coping, effects of racism, and personal growth in the racism narratives of college students who identify as African or Hispanic American, and to determine how these narrative properties relate to their racial identity development and psychological well-being. We found that individuals who tell more elaborative racism narratives and describe more positive coping and more positive growth in their narratives overall show indicators of higher racial identity development and overall psychological well-being. We further found that the type of coping individuals engaged in was related to their level of racial identity development.

We first hypothesized a relationship between elaboration and aspects of identity development on the CERIS and the BIIS. We found a negative relationship between elaboration and the subfactor Assimilation of the CERIS, suggesting that those who describe their racism experiences in more detail place less emphasis on their national identity and greater emphasis on their ethnic identity. Greater elaboration in narratives of highly significant experiences demonstrates a depth of processing of the events that took place and how those events fit into our perceptions of the world and self (McCabe & Peterson, 2011). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that those who process their racism experiences deeply think about their ethnic identity more and how it affects their life.

The results also found a positive relationship between elaboration and the CERIS subfactor, Ethnocentricity, suggesting that those who describe their racism experiences in more detail feel that their ethnic values should inform their daily living. This finding supports our hypothesis and previous literature describing how traumatic narratives, such as those revisiting a

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racist experience, influence our racial identity and in this case, make ethnic identity and values more salient to inform daily tasks. Taken together, these findings support literature that illuminates how individual identity is inseparable from the narratives used to describe our experiences (McAdams, 2001).

Results however found no significant correlations between elaboration and the BIIS. The BIIS is a measure of how well individuals with dual cultural identities harmonize and blend those two identities. Perhaps because the narratives prompt specifically for perceptions of racist events, making ethnic identity more salient, they might not have captured intersections between the two cultures. Also, elaboration only identifies how deeply someone has processed an event, rather than how that event influences their perception of their dual cultures. Thus, the constructs of the BIIS might have a significant relationship with a narrative construct that prompts for relationships between the two competing cultures, rather than depth of processing racist experiences.

Results found a positive relationship between IDS time, and the elaboration and coping narrative constructs, suggesting that those who are more detailed in their narratives and use more effective coping strategies have expressed feeling distressed over their identity for longer periods of time. It is possible being distressed over identity for a longer period causes individuals to think about their situation in more depth, creating more detailed narratives, which in turn lead them to pursue more positive coping methods like therapy. Similarly, there was no relationship between the growth coding scheme and the identity distress survey. It is therefore possible that since the IDS is a measure of distress in Eriksonian identity, its relationship to elaboration,

coping and growth in narratives of racist experiences may have nothing to do with distress in racial identity.

We hypothesized there would be a relationship between growth and identity development on the CERIS and BIIS. The results found a moderate negative relationship between growth expressed in the narratives and the Miseducation subfactor of the CERIS, such that those who exhibit more positive growth in their narratives are less likely to endorse stereotypes of their racial/ethnic group. Results also found that those who described their racism experiences with more growth, experience more blendedness between their national and racial/ethnic identities. This finding supports previous research that individuals who display higher levels of meaning making (Growth) in their narratives have more developed racial identities (Mclean & Pratt, 2006). Because growth is described as coming to terms with, and feeling a sense of pride and belongingness with one's racial/ethnic group, it is possible that those who show higher growth in their narratives have accepted their racial identity, and are therefore less likely to buy into miseducation and stereotypes about their racial group, thus allowing them to cohesively combine their ethnic racial identity and their identification with the majority American culture.

Because the narrative constructs were developed to identify racial identity development, we hypothesized there would be correlations between the four narrative coding schemes. Results found a positive relationship between elaboration and coping such that those who elaborate more in their narratives use more positive coping mechanisms after experiencing a microaggression. Positive coping strategies like social support, and cognitive restructuring require individuals to think about their experiences deeply and find meaning from them, thus requiring more narrative processing, which is expressed as elaboration. However negative coping strategies like

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avoidance and drug use distract individuals from deeper processing and this lack of processing is reflected in the narratives through a lack of detail and depth.

Elaboration was also positively correlated with growth, such that those who elaborate more in their narratives experienced more growth in their racial identity. This may be because experiencing growth in racial identity is a function of accepting and being proud of one's membership regardless of the stereotypes and history of the group. Juxtaposed with racism, being able to think positively about one's race even after experiencing racism shows deeper processing as captured by narrative elaboration, and this deeper processing may in fact lead to more positive conclusions about one's race, and thus more growth in racial identity.

The growth coding scheme was positively correlated with the effects of racism coding scheme, such that those who explained experiencing more positive effects of racism showed more growth in their narratives. Those who reported positive effects of racism overwhelmingly responded that experiencing racism made them stronger or work harder, which increases positive perceptions of one's ethnic identity captured in the growth coding scheme. This supports previous research suggesting that positive resolutions from negative experiences is correlated with greater meaning making because it requires more reflection of the self (McLean & Thorne, 2003).

The effects of racism narrative coding scheme showed correlations with both the BIIS and the CERIS. The effects of racism coding scheme was positively correlated with the blendedness vs. compartmentalization subscale of the Bicultural Integration Scale, such that individuals who experience more positive effects of racism tend to combine their majority and minority cultures together. There was also a moderate correlation between the effects of racism

coding scheme and the Harmony vs. Conflict subscale of the Bicultural Integration Scale, such that reporting more positive effects of racism in one's narratives was related to easily combining the values of the dual cultures. Experiencing positive effects of racism, such as a sense of strength or pride in one's racial identity, is strongly linked to growth in racial identity development. Being able to overcome these experiences, and not grow in hatred for the majority culture allows individuals to effectively blend and harmonize their dual cultures. This is consistent with research that links blendedness and harmony between cultural identity to more successful outcomes in minority students (Herrmann, & Varnum, 2018).

Lastly, a moderate correlation was found between the effects of racism coding scheme and the Assimilation subscale in the CERIS, suggesting those who experience more positive effects of racism place greater emphasis on their national identity and less emphasis on their ethnic identity. This finding supports the previous finding that experiencing positive effects of racism allows individuals to blend and harmonize their dual cultures. After experiencing a racial experience, individuals can either withdraw from the majority culture as an act of self-preservation or reappraise the situation to feel positively about one's membership in a group. Those that decide to reappraise the situation avoid withdrawing from the majority culture and can incorporate the values and beliefs of the majority culture into their own. And it is possible that in order for members of minority groups to blend in with the majority culture, there has to be a conscious effort. This conscious effort that minorities have to employ daily in their occupations and social life to fit in might cause them to place more emphasis on their national rather than their ethnic identity.

Coping strategies are an important area of study in racial research. How individuals cope with their experiences directly relates to how they will incorporate their experiences into their narrative and racial identity. Results from the current study supported our hypothesis that positive coping strategies would demonstrate better racial identity development and wellbeing. Firstly, results between coping categories and the CERIS found that people who engaged in more negative emotion focused coping disliked their membership in their racial group compared to those who engaged in more problem focused emotion coping. Negative emotion focused coping includes destructive behaviors, such as avoidance of dealing with the racist experience. Therefore, it is probable that because these individuals actively endorse stereotypes about their culture, they internalize them, believing they are fixed internal characteristics and thus are more likely to engage in behaviors that avoid thinking and coping with the event because they feel incapable of changing these "fixed" characteristics

Secondly, results between coping categories and the Coping with Discrimination scale found that individuals who coped with discrimination by engaging in self-blame were more likely to engage in negative emotion focused coping in the narratives than problem and positive focused coping. If these individuals believe they caused the racial event upon themselves, they feel more responsible, yet unable to control the situation, thus avoid coping and engage in non-helpful behaviors such as frustration and anger, rather than addressing the issue head on. This is consistent with literature examining the relationship between locus of control and coping behaviors. A study by Anderson (1977) found that internal locus of control, believing one can control their surroundings is correlated with more problem focused coping, while external locus of control is associated with emotion focused coping.

It was also expected that those who engage in resistance would also engage in problem focused coping - handling the problem directly. However, results between the Coping categories and the CWD scale found that those who engaged in positive emotion focused coping were more likely to challenge their perpetrator (resistance subscale) than those who engage in problem and negative emotion focused coping. Individuals who engaged in positive emotion focused coping in the narratives mainly used cognitive restructuring as a way of appraising the events as the perpetrator's fault, such as attributing their racist actions to jealousy or ignorance, which in turn might prompt them to actively challenge or resist the behaviors or beliefs of the perpetrator.

Third, results between coping categories and the RYFF found that individuals who are more independent engage in more positive emotion focused coping than problem and negative emotion focused coping. Autonomous individuals are described as independent, and capable of thinking for themselves rather than depending on others. Positive emotion focused strategies like cognitive restructuring depend on the ability of individuals to disagree with others and think for themselves to reappraise the experience in a way that leaves the perception of the self intact. The RYFF is a measure of overall well-being, so it appears that individuals who engage in more positive emotion focused coping have a better sense of self.

Lastly, analyses between coping categories and coping scores (as rated on a 4 – point scale) found that those who score higher in their coping narratives engaged in more problem focused coping than positive and negative emotion focused coping. This supports research that problem focused coping is the most effective form of coping (Blume, 2021). Therefore, those who express higher levels of coping in their racism narratives are trying harder to come to terms with the experience in their narrative, and cope in more effective and beneficial ways

Limitations and Future Directions

There are a few limitations to the study and future directions that can expound on the results found. First, this is a correlational rather than an experimental study. Therefore, the causal direction of the many variables cannot be determined, and there may be third variables that explain these relationships. Future studies could replicate the study using an experimental design where participants are subtly introduced to microaggressions, however if narratives are taken directly after the event occurs, they might lose their value as developing a narrative that becomes incorporated in identity, and presumably racial identity, occurs over time.

Secondly, this study is limited by its low sample size. Although 103 individuals signed up for the study, 57 of those were incomplete, leaving 46 participants who filled out portions of the questionnaires. A post hoc power analysis indicated that the low n restricted our findings, such that there was not enough power to find meaningful results in many of our hypotheses. The post hoc power analysis on the correlations found a power percentage of 54.6%, while a post hoc power analysis between the ANOVAs ranged from 27.5% to 95.1%. The power analysis demonstrates that the low n restricted some of our findings, specifically with the correlational data, however, numerous correlations were trending towards significance, therefore future studies should retest with a larger sample to detect more relationships between racial identity development, coping, and well-being.

The low n also limited our ability to test differences between the subgroups in our demographics, for example identifying differences in Hispanic individuals identifying as South American – Latinx, Central American- Latinx or Caribbean- Latinx. Since all individuals within a certain racial/ethnic group experience racism the same way it is important to recognize their

differing experiences which then relate to how their identity develops. Future research should further discussion on the experiences of racism within racial/ ethnic subgroups.

Thirdly, because some of the 46 participants did not fill out all the questionnaires, this also presents a limitation of this study. Those who filled out all the questionnaires may be entirely different in terms of coping and racial identity than those who did not compete all the questionnaires, which could result in alternative conclusions about the relationship between identity development and coping.

Lastly, the sensitive nature and manner in which this study collected data might have contributed to the limited participation and scant responses. Typically, individuals are more likely to give more detailed narratives through an in-person interview than through a written interview. Also, many participants might not have been as 'vocal' about their experiences with racism simply because it is a sensitive topic. Future studies might benefit from in-person interviews with same-race interviewers to make participants feel more comfortable talking about their racial experiences in more depth.

Previous studies have examined the effects of racism on racial identity and well-being, however this study dives deeper to determine how individuals use stories of their experiences with racism to cope and how narrative variables inform their cultural and racial identity development and overall wellbeing. This study suggests that racial identity narratives are an important factor in how African and Hispanic American students cope with their racial experiences and how their racial identity impacts their overall wellbeing. Talking about and dealing with racist experiences are an important way for minority individuals to come to terms with these experiences, to grow from them, and to forego the anger associated with these

experiences, to develop meaningful and beneficial relationships with both their minority and

majority cultures.

APPENDIX I: Demographic Questionnaire

1. Select your gender

Male

Female

Unspecified

2. Select your age

18-23

24-29

30-35

Other (please Specify)

3. Select your race

White/ Caucasian

Hispanic/ Latinx

Black

Asian

Native American

Other (please specify)

4. Select your current level of employment

Full time

Part time

On call

Unemployed

Disabled; Cannot work

5. Select your class standing

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

6. What is your ethnic identity as a Black person in America?

African American

Afro- Caribbean

Immigrant from Africa (1st, 2nd, 3rd generation)

7. What is your ethnic identity as a Hispanic person in America?

South American – Latinx

Central American- Latinx

Caribbean- Latinx

8. How do you identify in terms of Race?

9. Select your marital status

Single

Involved in a relationship

Married

Divorced

Widowed

Separated

Other (please specify)

10. What is your first language?

11. What other languages do you speak?

APPENDIX II: Narrative Prompt Questionnaire

1.Have you experienced any open acts of racism?

Yes

No

1A. If yes, describe in detail a personal experience of racism. Describe your feelings, emotions, thoughts, location, social context, and who you were with, Be as detailed as possible.

1B. Describe in detail how you dealt/coped with the experience of racism described above.

2. Have there ever been specific expectations placed on you because of your race?

Yes

No

2A. If yes, describe the expectation placed on you? Describe your feelings, emotions, thoughts, location, social context, and who you were with. Be as detailed as possible.

2B. Describe in detail how you dealt/coped with the experience described above.

3. Have you experienced any acts of microaggression?

Yes

No

3A. If yes, describe in detail a personal experience of microaggression? Describe your feelings, emotions, thoughts, location, social context, and who you were with. Be as detailed as possible.

3B. Describe in detail how you dealt/coped with the experience described above.

4. Have you engaged in code-switching to avoid racism or microaggression or any backlash because of your race?

Yes

No

4A. If yes, describe in detail a personal experience of code-switching to avoid racism? Describe your feelings, emotions, thoughts, location, social context, and who you were with. Be as detailed as possible.

5. Describe in detail how acts of racism or microaggression directed toward you have affected your racial identity.

6. Describe in detail an experience of racism or microaggression that marked a turning point in your racial identity development. Describe your feelings, emotions, thoughts, location, social context, and who you were with. Be as detailed as possible and explain how this experience shaped your racial identity development.

APPENDIX III: IRB Approval Form

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

October 27, 2020

Dear Widaad Zaman:

On 10/27/2020, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

|	
Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Narratives of Racism: Relations to bi-racial and cultural identity development and well-being
Investigator:	Widaad Zaman
IRB ID:	STUDY00002344
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• 3. CERIS – A Preliminary Manual, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Beck Depression Inventory, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Bicultural Integration Scale, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Coping with Discrimination Scale, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Demographics Questionnaire, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Explanation of Research - HRP 254, Category: Consent Form; • Human Research Protocol Form 255 Request for Exemption, Category: IRB Protocol; • Identity Distress Survey, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Narrative Questionnaire, Category: Survey / Questionnaire; • Psychological Well-being Scale, Category: Survey / Questionnaire;

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the

human research, please submit a modification request to the IRB. Guidance on submitting Modifications and Administrative Check-in are detailed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, in-person research is not permitted to begin unless you are able to follow the COVID-19 Human Subject Research (HSR) Standard Safety Plan with permission from your Dean of Research or submitted your Study-Specific Safety Plan and received IRB and EH&S approval. Be sure to monitor correspondence from the Office of Research, as they will communicate when restrictions are lifted, and all in-person research can resume.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,
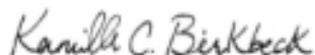
Kamille C. Birkbeck

Kamille Birkbeck
Designated Reviewer

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