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**Dissertation title:** Reimagining what it means to be Black in the U.S.: Family cultural socialization practices that shape racial identities among diverse young adults

**ABSTRACT**

This study explores racial identity development as it is influenced by family cultural socialization practices across diverse ethnic groups who identify either racially or ethnically as Black. Historically, literature on Black racial identity development has relied predominantly on the experiences of African Americans in the United States. This study aims to build on earlier Black identity research by exploring the developmental experiences of the growing ethnic and cultural Black population in the United States.

Young adults between the ages of 18-35 who identify as African American, Afro-Latinx, and Afro-Caribbean were recruited to complete a brief questionnaire and participate in an open-ended interview. Participants were also invited to participate in a focus group at a later date. Using Holland and Lave’s Social Practice Theory as a theoretical framework, Black racial identity was explored with a special focus on identity as practice and shaped by ongoing social systems in which individuals continuously engage.

This qualitative study gives special attention to the interactions between ethnicity, culture, gender, and other social identity contributions to race. The multimethod approach highlighted the shared cultural and systemic experiences that influence the meaning that young Black adults ascribe to their family cultural socialization practices that shape Black identity development and blackness as a whole. In addition, participant responses demonstrated the significance of family social culturalization discourse on how they understood their racial identities and how this understanding impacts how they navigate their social worlds.