Black Communalism and Social/Mental Health During this Movement for Black Lives

NYASHA GRAYMAN-SIMPSON, PHD
Questions

Q1. What Is Black Communalism?
Q2. How Does It Show Up In The Community?
Q3. What Motivates It?
Q4. What, If Any, Health Indicators Are Associated With It?
Q5. What Should The Preceding Answers Mean For Black Community Work?
Black Communalism

Morality of Justice | Morality of Care
Characteristics (N = 205; No Missing Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>100% Black</td>
<td>80% African American</td>
<td>77% (F)</td>
<td>44% South</td>
<td>88% 21-59 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10% Multiethnic</td>
<td></td>
<td>23% (M)</td>
<td>42% Northeast</td>
<td>12% ≥ 60 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5% West Indian/Carib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10% Midwest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3% Continental African</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4% West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2% Latinx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Two Dimensions of Black Communalism

### Significant Item Loadings for Revised Two-Factor Communalism Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Statement</th>
<th>Factor 1 (PSE)</th>
<th>Factor 2 (TGD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my family it is expected that the elderly are cared for by the younger</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy being part of a group effort</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to concern myself with my own affairs than involving myself with</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my family there are close friends which we consider family</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is family group membership which gives me a sense of personal identity</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older members of my family are often relied on for advice and guidance</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t mind if my cousins come to live with me</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I would prefer to live in an area where I know I have family members.  
I believe that a person has an obligation to work cooperatively with family and friends.
It is not unusual for me to call close family friends “uncle” or “cousin.”
I enjoy helping family members accomplish their goals.
I prefer to work in a group.
I am more concerned with personal gains than with those of my family and friends.
Among my family members, it is understood that we should turn to another in time of crisis.
I place great value on social relations among people  .25  .55
I make sacrifices for my family and they do the same for me  .56  .14
I believe that when people are “close” to one another
(like family and friends) they should be accountable for each other’s
welfare  .21  .59
I place high value on my duty to the group  .33  .64

Communalism Scale Cultural Validity Study
**Revised Communalism Scale Descriptive Statistics (N = 205)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>-.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: 1 = Completely false; 2 = Very false; 3 = False; 4 = True; 5 = Very true; 6 = Completely true
Black Communalism In Action

- Engaging in Self Care
- Providing Emotional Support
- Mentoring Adults and Youth
- Providing Community Safety
- Providing Material Support
- Supporting Historically Black Institutions
- Supporting Non-Historically Black Institutions
Serving the Black Community
Baltimore Manifestations

- Black Dirt Farm
- Urban Foli
- Holistic Life Foundation
- Orita’s Cross Freedom School
- Baltimore Algebra Project
- Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle
- Baltimore Cease Fire
- Mentoring Male Teens In The Hood
- Progressive Life Center
Motivations for Black Communalism

Social Production of Altruism: Motivations for Caring
“When I do my part to uplift the Black community I am directly helping myself. I am at one with my people from those on the ‘bottom rung’ to the most ‘elite’ in the upper echelon.”
Implications for Black Community Work

Join | Replicate | Extend | Sustain

Extending Provision of Community Safety

Baltimore Children and Youth Fund Task Force | Community Defined Practice and Evidence
Recommended Foundational Readings

- Michael Gomez, History - *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*
- Linda James Myers, Cultural Psychology - *Understanding an Afrocentric World View: Introduction to an Optimal Psychology*
- Marimba Ani, Anthropology - *Let The Circle Be Unbroken: The Implications of African Spirituality in the Diaspora*
- Joanne Martin & Elmer Martin, Social Work - *The Helping Tradition in the Black Family and Community*
- Janie Victoria Ward, Developmental Psychology - *The Skin We’re In: Teaching Out Teens To Be Emotionally Strong, Socially Smart, and Spiritually Connected*