Racial Discrimination, Racial Socialization, and Crime: Understanding Mechanisms of Resilience*

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ABSTRACT

Taking a “strength approach” to African American families and cultures, recent research demonstrates that familial racial socialization provides resilience to the criminogenic effects of interpersonal racial discrimination among Black youth. Building on these nascent findings, the present study takes a process-oriented approach to understand how racial socialization reduces and counteracts the effects of discrimination on offending. Building on a social schematic theory of offending (Burt & Simons 2011), this study explores whether two social psychological factors, positive racial identities and spirituality, serve as mechanisms through which racial socialization provides resilience. We test our hypotheses with structural equation models using data from the Family and Community Health Study (FACHS), a longitudinal, multisite study of roughly 700 African American youth and their primary caregivers followed from late childhood to early adulthood. Consistent with our theoretical model, findings suggest that familial racial socialization practices provide resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination in large part by increasing positive racial identities and spirituality. Implications of these findings and directions for future research are discussed.

KEYWORDS: racial discrimination; racial socialization; crime; racial identity; resilience
For many years scholars neglected the cogent insights of Du Bois (1899) that racial discrimination is directly implicated in the genesis of crime among African Americans. This oversight is being corrected, as at least 15 recent studies have evinced the criminogenic consequences of racially discriminatory interactions for African Americans (e.g., Burt et al. 2012; Martin et al. 2011; Simons et al. 2006; Unnever et al. 2009). The evidence is clear and moving to the mainstream: interpersonal racial discrimination—the blatant, subtle and covert actions, verbal messages, or signals that are supported by racism and malign mistreat or otherwise harm racial minorities (Essed 1991; Feagin 1991)—is a risk factor for street crime and, therefore, plays a role in explaining racial disparities in offending.\textsuperscript{1} The costs of racial discrimination, in addition to other negative social, psychological, and physiological outcomes (e.g., Clark et al. 1999; Krieger 2000; Williams 1997) thus include an increased risk of crime for African Americans (e.g., Burt et al. 2012; Unnever and Gabbidon 2011). These findings imply that reducing or eradicating discrimination would be a potent crime prevention strategy in addition to being a just goal in its own right.

Unjustly, interpersonal racial discrimination persists (Feagin 2010). Given both the stubborn persistence of racial discrimination and the fact that most African Americans do not engage in crime in response to racial discrimination, scholarly attention has turned to sources of resilience—factors that enhance an individual’s ability to overcome challenging or threatening circumstances (Masten, Best, and Garmezy 1990; Rutter 1987). Recognizing the strengths of racial minorities in the face of racial oppression, scholars have focused on identifying aspects of African American cultures that foster resilience to racism (Bowman and Howard 1985; Peters and Massey 1983). In contrast to earlier and misguided cultural deficit approaches, which neglected racialized structural constraints and blamed Blacks for their position in society (see Muhammad 2010), this “strength approach” highlights adaptive facets of African American cultures that contribute to positive adjustment in a racist context (e.g., Essed 1991).

Over the past several decades, an impressive body of research has identified racial socialization—which includes adaptive and protective practices used by minorities to promote healthy functioning in a society stratified by race—as a key cultural resource equipping minority youth with competencies to
overcome racism (e.g., Hughes et al. 2006; Stevenson 2003). Particularly relevant, two recent studies have shown that racial socialization provides resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination (Burt et al. 2012; Burt and Simons 2015). Specifically, these studies showed that two salient forms of racial socialization—cultural socialization and especially preparation for bias—buffer and compensate for the effects of racial discrimination on increased offending.

The present study seeks to build on these recent findings and enhance our understanding of these risk and resilience processes among African American youth by examining how racial socialization reduces the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination. In other words, we seek to identify some of the individual mechanisms through which racial socialization fosters resilience. Broadening the focus beyond documenting the presence of a protective effect of racial socialization to the mechanisms that underlie this effect is important both for knowledge and for informing preventative interventions. Only when we understand the processes through which racial socialization practices provide resilience can we effectively strategize about their uses for informing policies that seek to foster prosocial coping and persistence towards valued goals in the face of racial hostilities.

Theory and research on culture, stress, and coping from sociology, African American studies, and psychology suggest two potential mechanisms: racial identity and spirituality (e.g., Brown 2008; Nicolas et al. 2008). We hypothesize that through teachings about cultural heritage and pride, racial socialization practices strengthen positive racial identities, which buffer youth against some of the potential harmful effects of racial discrimination (e.g., Cross et al. 1991; Neblett et al. 2009; Sellers et al. 2006). In addition, we expect that by providing a system of meaning and purpose, faith, hope, and a sense of interconnectedness, spirituality/religiosity is an important mechanism through which racial socialization inculcates resilience to racial discrimination (e.g., Barnes 2009; Bowen-Reid and Harrell 2002; Stevenson 1997). Based on this research, we propose that these factors are individual mechanisms through which racial socialization compensates for and buffers the criminogenic effects of racial socialization.

In sum, the present study attempts to fill gaps in our understanding of linkages between race, culture, and crime by elaborating an integrative, micro-level model of racial discrimination, racial socialization, and
offending among African American youth (Burt et al. 2012; Burt and Simons 2015). We build on recent efforts that link racial discrimination to offending through a life-course learning theory, known as the social schematic theory (Simons and Burt 2011; Simons et al. 2014). In so doing, we highlight the role of race-specific risk and cultural resilience factors in the lives of Black youth and investigate the mechanisms through which these interactional factors influence development and criminal behavior.

Notably, we build upon research that establishes interpersonal racial discrimination as a criminogenic risk factor. Our theoretical model prioritizes the role of racist structural arrangements—specifically white racism instantiated in discriminatory interactions—as a causal force setting in motion a developmental cascade that may increase the likelihood of offending, an outcome that has been (and continues to be) argued to result largely from cultural (e.g., Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967) or biological deficits (e.g., Wright and Morgan 2014). As we elaborate below, our model highlights (unconscious) cognitive adaptations that promote self-protection and survival in the face of social hostilities. Importantly, we do not conceive of these cognitive adaptations or social schemas as unique to racial minorities. That is, we do not posit the existence of a unique Black psychology or distinct personality traits (e.g., Poussaint 1983; Curtis 1975). As we discuss, we focus on the development of criminogenic cognitive schemas that result from internalizing the lessons inherent in hostile, unpredictable social experiences—racist and non-racist in origin (Simons et al. 2014). Moreover, our approach emphasizes the adaptive strengths of African American families in fostering healthy development in the midst of a racially stratified society (e.g., Burt et al. 2012). At its core, our model locates “the problem” in racist structural arrangements and explores how racist social acts influence development among minority youth with the goal of better understanding the remarkable resilience to racial discrimination that is rooted, in part, in everyday cultural practices within African American families.

In the following pages, we discuss the theory and research undergirding the present study. The data that will be used to test the study hypotheses is the Family and Community Health Study (FACHS), a survey of African American families from Iowa and Georgia. The FACHS study is unique. It is the largest in-depth panel study of African Americans in the United States. It examines Black families from a range of
socioeconomic situations from the very poor to the upper middle class. With its developmental focus and wealth of familial information, the FACHS is particularly well suited for the present study.

**Interpersonal Racial Discrimination and Crime**

As noted, more than a dozen studies over the past decade have linked interpersonal racial discrimination to an increased risk of offending among Black Americans (see Unnever and Gabbidon 2011, for a review). More recently, scholarship has focused on understanding the processes through which interpersonal racial discrimination increases the likelihood of general offending. The challenge is explaining how discrimination augments the risk of general offending, not limited to immediate backlash against the perpetrator(s). Addressing this challenge, several recent studies have linked racial discrimination to offending drawing upon a recently developed social schematic theory of crime (Simons and Burt 2011; Burt and Simons 2015). Building on these efforts, the present study links racial discrimination to an increased risk of offending through this developmental learning theory.

The social schematic theory (SST; Simons and Burt 2011) is a life-course learning theory that elucidates the social psychological processes through which social-environmental adversities and supports influence individual differences in propensities to offend. Drawing on insights from social learning (e.g., Akers 1985), structural-cultural (e.g., Anderson 1999), and information-processing theories (e.g., Dodge and Pettit 2003), SST emphasizes the role of the lessons communicated by the persistent and recurring interactions that comprise an individual’s everyday existence. These lessons are stored as social schemas, defined as cognitive representations of the patterns in social interaction that influence future behavior by specifying the import and meaning of various social stimuli and the probable consequences of various lines of action (Crick and Dodge 1994). Numerous theories in social and developmental psychology suggest that social schemas (and similar concepts such as social heuristics and scripts) serve as the link between past experiences and future behavior, as they are tacitly relied upon when defining situations and forming lines of action (e.g., Crick and Dodge 1994; Shank and Abelson 1977).

Focusing on criminal behavior, SST proposes that various social insults—such as racial discrimination—increase individuals’ propensities to crime because they foster criminogenic social schemas, or those that increase the likelihood that situations are defined as justifying or excusing law
violation (see also Simons et al. 2014). In brief, SST postulates that individuals who are frequently exposed to unpredictable, harsh, and unfair social interactions and environments internalize messages that delayed rewards rarely materialize, the world is a hostile, unpredictable place, and social rules and punishments do not apply equally to everyone.

Drawing on established theories in criminology and developmental psychology, Simons and Burt (2011) identified three key criminogenic schemas. These include impulsivity or low self-control (e.g., Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990), hostile views of relationships (e.g., Anderson 1999; Dodge 2006), and disengagement from conventional norms (e.g., Akers 1985; Hirschi 1969). Arguing that because the schemas are rooted in the same set of harsh, unpredictable social conditions, which communicate similar lessons about the world, Simons and Burt (2011) contend these three schemas coalesce into a higher-order criminogenic knowledge structure (CKS) that makes situational definitions compelling or legitimating crime more likely, thereby increasing propensities to offend. Research supports the contention that the CKS mediates between social conditions and criminal behavior (e.g., Burt and Simons 2011; Simons et al. 2014).

Focusing on racial discrimination, several studies have linked racial discrimination to offending through one or more of the schemas in the CKS (e.g., Simons et al. 2006; Stewart and Simons 2006). More recently, Burt and Simons (2015, see also, Simons and Burt 2011; Simons et al. 2014) demonstrated that racial discrimination increased the risk of offending in large part through the CKS. Together, these results provide evidence that racial discrimination increases the risk of offending in large part through its effects on these criminogenic cognitive schemas. This is the theoretical model we adopt in the present study. Thus, consistent with prior work, we expect that racial discrimination increases the risk of crime in large part through the CKS, in other words, by fostering a view of the world as hostile, unpredictable, and unfair.

**Racial Socialization as Cultural Resilience**

Recognizing that resilience to racial discrimination, including its criminogenic effects, is the rule rather than the exception, scholars have identified racial socialization as an important racially-specific cultural practice that promotes resilience to racial discrimination among minority youth (e.g., Hughes et al. 2006). Broadly, racial socialization is “the process through which children come to understand their own and
others’ identities, roles, and positions vis-à-vis race in various contexts, and how race will function in their lives” (Winkler 2011: 274). Although children receive racial socialization messages from numerous sources, scholarship has highlighted familial racial socialization—defined as explicit or tacit messages that family members communicate to children about their racial cultural heritage and history, the realities of racism, and how to cope with racism effectively (e.g., Hughes et al. 2006; Stevenson et al. 2003). Research among Black families suggests that, to varying degrees, family members communicate messages to children about African American pride, strength, and achievement and impart values, attitudes, and a set of critical tools for negotiating a racially hostile society (Hughes et al. 2006; Winkler 2011). Indeed, a trove of studies documents the existence and importance of familial racial socialization among Black families, demonstrating that youth draw upon this cultural resource as they navigate a society hostile to racial differences (for a review, see Hughes et al. 2006; Lesane-Brown 2006). Two forms of racial socialization have been identified as particularly relevant to youths’ resilience: preparation for bias and cultural socialization.

**Preparation for Bias.** Given that most African Americans will face discrimination in their lives, a critical component of parenting for Black families is making children aware of prejudice and discrimination and giving them tools and tips to deal with its various manifestations (e.g., Peters 1985; Hughes et al. 2006). Scholars have argued that preparing children for racial discrimination facilitates healthy, prosocial coping with racial hostilities (Spencer 1983; Stevenson et al. 1997). Examples include talking to youth about the potential for experiencing discrimination and discussing ways to cope with such inimical experiences as well as pointing out or talking about examples of discrimination experienced by family members or covered in the media (e.g., differential treatment of crimes against whites vs. those against African Americans or stereotypical portrayals of Black Americans on television shows; e.g., Winkler 2011). These various actions by which adults warn youth about and discuss discrimination and provide skills and strategies for coping with and overcoming racial barriers are known as preparation for bias (Hughes et al. 2006). Through these practices African American children learn to place specific social
occurrences in a general context of race relations and develop strategies to resist and overcome racism (Essed 1991).

Research suggests that the majority of black families engage in at least some preparation for bias, with studies of African American families reporting prevalence rates usually between 60-90% (e.g., Hughes et al. 2006). Moreover, several studies have found that preparation for bias buffers the negative effects of racial discrimination on indicators of psychological well-being (e.g., Bynum et al. 2007; Fischer and Shaw 1999; Harris-Britt et al. 2007). Furthermore, as aforementioned, two recent studies using the FACHS found that preparation for bias reduced the effects of racial discrimination on offending (Burt and Simons 2015; Burt et al. 2012). Burt and colleagues’ findings indicated that preparation for bias had a strong protective effect in two ways: it reduced the effect of discrimination on criminogenic cognitive schemas (the CKS), and it reduced the effects of the CKS on offending.

**Cultural Socialization.** Cultural socialization practices emphasize racial heritage and promote cultural customs and traditions, thereby fostering children’s racial pride and sense of belonging (Stevenson 1995). These practices “include teaching children how to be proud of their culture because its substance is historic, African derived, culturally empowering, and not dependent on oppressive experiences” and a “view of the self as extended and interactional as opposed to individualistic” (Stevenson 1995: 51-52; see also Hughes et al. 2006). Specific practices include discussing the achievements and contributions of prominent African Americans in spite of racial oppression, sharing familial stories of strength, and broadly celebrating African culture in ways that promote racial pride and the negation of racist ideas youth will encounter in broader society (Winkler 2011; Peters 1985). These caregiving strategies have evolved to encourage esteem and a sense of racial pride and belonging among minority children in a racist society (Billingsley 1992; Bowman and Howard 1985). Cultural socialization is a salient part of child rearing among Black families. Studies of African American families indicate that the percentage of parents who report cultural socialization is invariably higher than 80% (Hughes et al. 2006).

Research demonstrates the beneficial effects of cultural socialization on development, linking these practices to fewer externalizing problems, including less fighting and better anger management (Stevenson
2003), and fewer internalizing problems (e.g., reduced depression, anxiety, anger, and distress [e.g., Burt 2009; Bynum et al. 2007; Caughy et al. 2002]). In addition, a recent study using the FACHS data revealed that cultural socialization was negatively associated with disengagement from norms among males (Burt et al. 2012). Although not having as strong a resilience effect as that observed for preparation for bias, there is ample research suggesting that cultural socialization may indirectly foster resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination through its influence on racial identity, discussed below.

<Figure 1 about here>

Figure 1 depicts the theoretical model on which the present study builds. As discussed, this model shows that racial discrimination leads to offending in large part by increasing the CKS. Prior research shows that racial socialization provides resilience indirectly by buffering the effects of racial discrimination and the CKS on crime (buffering effects displayed with dashed lines) as well as directly by decreasing the CKS and crime (compensatory effects). The mechanisms by which racial socialization provides resilience, however, are not well understood. Shedding light on this gap in knowledge is the primary goal of the present study. Scholarship suggests that racial identity and spirituality are associated with racial socialization and contribute to positive adjustment among African Americans. We consider whether these serve as individual mechanisms through which racial socialization exerts some of its resilience effects.

<B>Resilience Mechanisms</B>

<C>Racial Identity. Scholarship suggests that racial socialization practices may promote resilience to racial discrimination in part by fostering positive racial identities. Among Black Americans, racial identity is defined as “the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute to being Black in their conceptualizations of self” (Sellers and Shelton 2003:180). Scholars have identified several dimensions of racial identity (e.g., Sellers et al. 1997). The two key dimensions that emerge from this work are centrality and regard (e.g., Sellers et al. 2006). Centrality is defined as the extent to which race is an important part of one’s identity, whereas the extent to which one holds positive or negative attitudes about one’s race is termed private regard (e.g., Sellers et al. 1998). Evidence, including our preliminary analyses, suggests that both high centrality and high private regard are influenced by shared factors, operate in a similar fashion,
and coalesce. As such, we use the general term *positive racial identity* to refer to the combination of high centrality and high regard, such that individuals with high scores on this measure have positive attitudes towards their race that are more central to their self-concept. Phrased alternatively, we conceive of a positive racial identity as a sense of belonging to one’s racial group, the importance of this internalized sense of belonging, and a strong favorable attitude toward that group.

Racial identity and racial socialization are closely linked. In the process of racial identity development, African Americans attempt to integrate the values of their culture and the larger society into an internalized representation of their self-concept (Sellers et al. 2006). This integration entails asking the question: “Who am I racially?” and “What does it mean to be an African American?” (Tatum 1997:72). Racial socialization shapes a child’s beliefs and attitudes about race and is intimately connected to the process of racial identity development (e.g., Hughes et al. 2009; Neblett et al. 2009). Murray and Mandara (2002: 84) note, “When children overhear parents talking about race, observe their reactions to people of other races, or receive direct instructions from the regarding other races [racial socialization], their racial awareness and identity are being developed.” Consonant with these ideas, several studies using different samples and measures suggest that racial socialization is strongly associated with the development of a positive racial identity (e.g., Demo and Hughes 1994; Hughes et al. 2009; Stevenson 1995). Consequently, we hypothesize that racial socialization increases positive racial identities.

Having a positive racial identity has been conceptually and empirically linked to psychological health among African Americans (e.g., Cross 1991; Miller and McIntosh 1999; White and Parham 1990). Studies have shown, for example, that a more positive racial identity is directly associated with psychological well-being, including less depression, perceived stress, and anxiety as well as higher self-esteem among Black adults and youth (e.g., Carter 1991; Cross 1991; Hughes et al. 2015; Sellers et al. 2006). Given this, we expect positive racial identities mediate a portion of racial socialization’s compensatory effects on the CKS. Specifically, we hypothesize that a more positive racial identity is negatively related to the CKS. On the other hand, studies linking racial identity directly to fewer deviant or antisocial behaviors are scant and inconclusive (e.g., Caldwell et al. 2004; Hughes et al. 2009; Yasui et al.
Thus, while we examine whether positive racial identities have a direct compensatory effect on crime, we expect that this effect will be indirect through the CKS.

In addition to its compensatory effects, we expect that a positive racial identity will indirectly reduce offending by buffering the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination (e.g., Cross et al. 1991; Sellers et al. 2003, 2006). Scholars have argued, for example, “the internalization of a strong sense of racial centrality and group affiliation may offset the stigmatization and marginalization that being [African American] in this society engenders” (Caldwell et al. 2004: 100). Research suggests that the psychological insult of racial discrimination is weaker for youth who have a positive racial identity, which can serve as a “suit of armor against the hostilities of the environment” (Miller and MacIntosh 1999:160). In particular, several recent studies provide evidence that positive racial identities reduce the effects of discrimination on mental health, stress, and well-being (e.g., Neblett et al. 2009; Sellers et al. 2006); academic self-concept and achievement (Wong et al. 2003); self-esteem (Greene et al. 2006); and school bonding (Dotterer et al. 2009). Focusing on the buffering effect of racial identity on antisocial behavior, research shows that racial centrality buffers the effects of racial discrimination on violence among African American males (Caldwell et al. 2004), and group pride (a component of ethnic identity similar to private regard) attenuates the effects of racial discrimination on aggression, delinquency, and criminal offending (Williams et al. 2014), echoing findings from Umaña and colleagues (2012) among Latino youth. Drawing on this body of research, we hypothesize that racial socialization reduces the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination in part by fostering positive racial identities. In other words, we expect that a positive racial identity is a mechanism that mediates the buffering effects of racial socialization, particularly cultural socialization.

To sum up the role of positive racial identity in our theoretical model, we hypothesize that racial socialization is associated with more positive racial identities. More positive racial identities, in turn, are hypothesized to decrease the CKS (compensatory effect) as well as buffer (protective effect) the effects of racial discrimination on the CKS and offending. These hypotheses are depicted in Figure 2. (Note that dotted lines refer to protective (moderating) effects while solid lines refer to direct effects.)
Spirituality. For many African Americans, spirituality is a key source of strength and resilience (e.g., Billingsly 1992; Du Bois 1899; Nicolas et al. 2008). Theory and research suggest both the importance of spirituality in Black culture generally as well as the strength it provides to individuals, including mitigating some of the harms caused by discrimination (e.g., Blaine and Crocker 1995; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Not surprising given the historical and present-day salience of spirituality and “the Black Church” in African American cultures (e.g., Billingsley and Caldwell 1991; Mattis and Jagers 2001), there exists a strong tie between racial socialization and spirituality (e.g., Nicolas et al. 2008; Stevenson 1997). Racial socialization practices that promote cultural traditions and the importance of cultural practices may draw upon or point to the important role of the Black Church and the value of spirituality in life (Mattis and Jagers 2001). Given this, we hypothesize that racial socialization is associated with increased spirituality.

Research examining the effects of spirituality/religiosity in the lives of youth indicates that spirituality is positively associated with psychological well-being and prosocial outcomes and negatively related to delinquency, substance use, and risky health behaviors (e.g., Donahue and Benson 1995). These general findings are consistent with those among African American youth. For example, Jagers and Mock (1993) reported that spirituality was associated with less delinquency and heightened focus on prosocial values, including cooperation and empathy. Stevenson (2003) reported that African American males who are exposed to more messages about religion and spirituality (and presumably internalize them) demonstrate better anger control and less aggression. Such findings indicate that spirituality promotes prosocial coping and behaviors in part by fostering emotional and behavioral self-regulation and concern for others (Mattis and Jagers 2001). Given this we hypothesize that spirituality is a compensatory factor, which decreases the likelihood of crime through the mechanisms identified by SST. In other words, we expect that the CKS mediates the negative effects of spirituality on crime.

Focusing on protective effects, a wealth of scholarship has highlighted the protective effects of spirituality (e.g., Feder et al. 2010; Pargament et al. 1998). Spirituality has been identified as a resilience resource through its effects on coping (see Pargament 1997 for a review). Theory and research indicate that spirituality facilitates coping with adversity by providing a sense of meaning and purpose, emotional
comfort, personal control, and intimacy with others (e.g., Ellison 1994; Spilka, Saver, and Kirkpatrick 1985; Pargament et al. 1998), and, as a consequence, spirituality is associated with less distress in response to stressful life experiences (e.g., Park, Cohen, & Murch 1996; Pargament and Cummings 2010).

Particularly apposite, evidence suggests that spirituality promotes resilience to racial discrimination and plays “a vital role in infusing Black youth with messages of strength and hope” (Nicolas et al. 2008:270). For example, research on African Americans suggests that spirituality can increase optimism and hope in the face of racial barriers and hence promote persistence towards valued goals, greater self-efficacy, and active problem solving in the face of racist obstacles while protecting against despair (see Pargament and Cummings 2010). Scholarship has highlighted the role of spirituality in providing individuals with a system of meaning through which racism and discriminatory events can be interpreted (Brega and Coleman 1999; Blaine and Crocker 1995; Nicholas et al. 2008). Although evidence is sparse, a few studies suggest that spirituality/religiosity buffers some of the effects of racial discrimination on negative psychological health (e.g., Brown and Gary 1987; Bowen-Reid and Harrell 2002). In short, research suggests that spirituality can aid in coping with racist experiences through its effects on sustaining meaning and perseverance in pursuit of valued goals, creating an emotional cushion for dealing with racism, and fostering positivity, persistence, and sustained purpose in the face of racist obstacles and adversities. Given this, we also expect that spirituality reduces the effects of discrimination on crime and that it does so by buffering the effect of discrimination on the CKS and/or the link between the CKS and crime. These hypotheses are depicted in Figure 2.

Notably, given their common antecedents in racial socialization practices as well as the fact that these processes overlap and are mutually reinforcing (e.g., Demo and Hughes 1990; Sanchez and Carter 2005), we expect that racial identity and religiosity are positively associated. This covariation is represented in Figure 2 by the dotted line linking the two concepts.

**<A>SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES</A>**

The present study aims to elaborate a developing model of racial discrimination, racial socialization, and offending to enhance understanding of the social psychological mechanisms through which a cultural
resource—familial racial socialization—compensates for and buffers the criminogenic effects of crime. To this end, we hypothesize that positive racial identities and spirituality are two distinct, but related, individual mechanisms fostered by racial socialization that mediate much of its protective effects. As shown in Figure 2, we test whether racial socialization counteracts and attenuates the criminogenic effects of discrimination by increasing positive racial identities and spirituality building upon the SST model. This implies both mediation of compensatory effects and mediation of buffering effects identified in prior research.

**<A>Research Design and Methods**

**<B>Sample**
The present study uses data from the first five waves of the FACHS, a longitudinal, multisite investigation of health and development among African American families living in Iowa and Georgia at the first interview. The FACHS was designed to analyze the particular risks and resources—both general and culturally specific—that disrupt or promote African American family functioning and youth development in various contexts. As the only longitudinal study of African Americans with measures of the distinctive risks and resources faced by individuals and communities of color as well as general measures such as crime and social schemas, the FACHS unique strengths make it particularly well-suited for testing the research questions addressed in the present study.

At the initiation of the study, the FACHS sample consisted of 889 African American families living in Georgia and Iowa with a child in the 5th grade. Using 1990 census data, block groups were identified in both Iowa and Georgia in which the percent of African American families was high enough to make recruitment economically practical (10% or higher), and in which the percent of families with children living below the poverty line were variable (ranging from 10% to 100%). Using these criteria, 259 block group areas were identified (115 in Georgia and 144 in Iowa). In both Georgia and Iowa, families were randomly selected from these rosters and contacted to determine their interest in participating in the project. The response rate for the contacted families was 84%. Researchers compared census tracts included in the FACHS sample with those in Georgia and Iowa to ensure variability and representativeness. More detail on the sampling procedure can be found elsewhere (see Burt et al. 2012; Simons et al. 2005).
At the initiation of the study, 28% of the study children lived with both of their biological parents, 38% with a cohabitating or married stepparent, and 35% with a single parent. Most (84%) of the primary caregivers (PCs) were the target child’s biological mothers (6% were fathers, 6% were grandmothers). Their mean age was 37.1 years and ranged from 23 to 80 years. Ninety-two percent of the PCs identified themselves as Black. Median family income was $26,227, and the average number of children was 3.42.

**Attrition and Follow-up**
The FACHS retention rate has been remarkably high. Of the 889 target youth who participated in the first wave of the study, 779 (88%), 767 (86%), 714 (80%), and 689 (78%) were re-interviewed in waves 2 through 5, respectively. Data collection was completed for these waves in 1998, 2001, 2004, 2007, and 2009. The mean age of the target youths was 10.5 (range: 10-12), 12.6 (12-14), 15.7 (15-17), 18.8 (18-20), and 21.6 (20-23) at waves 1 through 5. Over the years, there has been little evidence of selective attrition (e.g., Simons et al. 2014). Although when compared to earlier waves, a higher percentage of the wave 5 respondents were female and slightly less delinquent, there were no significant differences between participants and non-participants with regard to community measures, family structure, or parenting practices at earlier waves. In this study, we use all available observations for pairwise correlations, which range from 627 to 804; we use listwise deletion for the multivariate analyses, which produces a study sample of 609. Notably, to examine potential bias from missing data, we replicated our findings with path models using full information maximum likelihood (FIML) under missing at random (Little and Rubin 2002). Below we describe the measures that are utilized in our analyses. Because the youths’ experiences are the focus of this investigation, we use youth self-reports to measure key constructs.

**Measures**

*Crime.* The measure of offending was generated using youth self-reports at wave 5 and consists of the number of different illegal acts or “street crimes” (out of 11) respondents committed in the past year, such as shoplifting, aggravated assault, illegal drug use, vandalism, theft, and assault with a weapon. Previous research has shown that offending variety scales are preferable to frequency and dichotomous scales, which largely reflect variation in the least serious offenses (e.g., Sweeten 2012). The instrument was derived from a measure created by Huizinga and Elliott (1986). The resulting variety scale gives one point for every type
of crime committed by the respondent in the past year ($\alpha = .80$). Roughly 69 percent of respondents reported no acts of crime, 16 percent reported 1 act, 7 percent reported 2 acts, and 6 percent reported 3 or 4.

The control for prior crime/delinquency was created with the combined waves 1 and 2 scales. At these waves, items were culled from the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children, Version 4 (DISC-IV; American Psychiatric Association 1994). Although the wording and exact content of these scales varies across these the instruments (for a list see Burt et al. 2014), this is not unusual since the prohibited behaviors vary over this same time period as well.

*Interpersonal Racial Discrimination.* The 13-item short form of the widely used and validated Schedule of Racist Events (SRE; Landrine and Klonoff 1996), which measures perceived racial discrimination over the past 12 months, is used at waves 4 and 5. This scale has been used in a number of previous studies utilizing the FACHS and has demonstrated high validity and reliability (e.g., Brody et al. 2006; see Burt et al. 2012 for a list of items). Respondents are asked to indicate how often various discriminatory acts or microaggressions occurred “because of your race or ethnic background.” The measure incorporates racially based slurs and insults, physical threats, false accusations from law enforcement officials, and disrespectful treatment from others “because of your race or ethnic background.” Items include, “How often has someone yelled a racial slur or racial insult at you…?”; “How often has someone said something insulting to you…?”; and “How often has someone suspected you of doing something wrong…?” Response categories ranged from 1 “Never” to 4 “Frequently.” The 13-item scales at waves 4 and 5 ($\alpha = .90$ for both) were standardized and combined to create a measure of persistent interpersonal experiences with racial discrimination ($\alpha = .69$).

Experiencing racial discrimination was not uncommon; yet there was considerable variation in the frequency among the respondents. Focusing on wave 4, the overwhelming majority (88%) of the youth reported experiencing at least one of the racial discrimination events in the past year. On average, the youth experienced 5 different acts of discrimination in the year preceding the wave 4 interview (when the youth were aged 17-19). Although males and females reported experiencing similar amounts of racial
discrimination at wave 4, males reported experiencing significantly more racial discrimination than females at wave 5.  

Racial Socialization. These measures are created from scales adapted from Hughes and colleagues (Hughes and Chen 1999; Hughes and Dumont 1993), originally derived from focus groups of African American families. The items measure the frequency of a range of familial behaviors and communications with children around the issue of race in the previous 12 months and have demonstrated high validity and reliability. Cultural socialization was measured at waves 3 and 4 with youth responses to five questions about how often adults in their family engaged in activities or communications that highlighted African American culture and history or promoted black pride, such as “celebrating cultural holidays” or “talking about important people or events. Coefficient alpha for the measure was approximately .85 at both waves. These scales were standardized and averaged to create a measure of cumulative cultural socialization across the two waves (α = .53).

Preparation for bias was measured at waves 3 and 4 with 6 items that assess the frequency of a variety of messages youth received about prejudice and discrimination from adults in their families (α = .87 and .91, respectively). The measure includes discussions about poor or unfair treatment on the basis of race and racist mistreatment observed on television as well as the idea that youth will “have to be better than others”. At wave 5, four items were retained and the instrument was changed to assess messages and communications in the past year from family or friends (α = .83). The preparation for bias scales across the three waves loaded onto a common factor, and thus, were standardized and combined to create a measure of cumulative exposure to preparation for bias (α = .65).

Criminogenic Knowledge Structure (CKS). Consistent with prior work on SST (Burt and Simons 2015; Simons and Burt 2011), this construct is measured at wave 5 as a composite of three scales, including immediate gratification (12 items α = .74), hostile views of relationships (18 items; α = .90), and disengagement from conventional norms (7 items; α = .85). These subscales coalesce with high loadings on a common factor predicted by discrimination and predictive of offending (Burt and Simons 2015; Simons et al. 2014). Thus, to create the CKS the three subscales were standardized and averaged (α = .62).
**Positive Racial Identity.** This construct is assessed by combining two scales from a shortened version of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI, Sellers et al. 1997), which has demonstrated reliability and validity and has been used in studies of Black adolescents and young adults (Sellers et al. 1997; Shelton and Sellers 2000). Respondents indicated their agreement with the items on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). *Racial centrality* is measured with 7 items that assess the extent to which being Black is an important part of respondents’ identities. Items include: “In general, being Black is an important part of my self-image,” and “I have a strong attachment to other Black people.” A higher score on this scale indicates that race is a more central or important aspect of individuals’ self definitions ($\alpha = .62$). Five items were used to assess *private regard*—the extent to which respondents generally have positive feelings about being African American—including: “I am happy to be Black,” and “I am proud to be Black” ($\alpha = .67$). These two scales were standardized and averaged to form the measure of positive racial identity ($\alpha = .61$). High scores on this scale are indicative of positive views towards African Americans and being African American, views that are a more central part of respondents’ self-concepts/definitions of self.

**Spirituality.** This measure consists of respondent’s answers to the question: “In general, how important are religious or spiritual beliefs in your day-to-day life?” Responses ranged from 1 “Very important” to 4 “Not at all important,” and were reverse coded. This measure is related to, but distinct from, measures of religious involvement.\(^{11}\)

**Controls.** Several control variables are included where appropriate to capture theoretically relevant characteristics of youth and their families. These include the respondents’ age and sex/gender; primary caregiver’s race, gender, and age; and, as noted, involvement in prior delinquency. In addition, given its association with racial socialization and offending, a composite measure of supportive parenting is controlled in the models. This measure, used in numerous prior studies (e.g., Burt et al. 2006; Simons et al. 2014), is a composite of four scales from youth reports of primary caregiver warmth, monitoring, problem solving, and (reverse coded) harsh parenting taken at wave 3 ($\alpha = .77$) and wave 4 ($\alpha = .72$), which were then standardized and combined ($\alpha = .60$). We also considered including neighborhood heterogeneity,
neighborhood disadvantage, household structure, and secondary caregiver characteristics, but preliminary analyses indicated that these variables were not significantly associated with the processes under consideration; hence, they were not incorporated in the models.

**<B>Analytic Strategy**

We investigate the hypothesized moderating and mediating effects in a series of structural equation models (SEM) in Mplus, Version 7.3 (Muthén and Muthén 2012) corresponding to the path models depicted in Figures 1 and 2. SEM has a number of advantages over alternatives, such as multiple regression, including the ability to model correlated error terms and multiple endogenous variables. Perhaps most important for the proposed study, SEMs allow us to test the significance of the hypothesized direct and indirect effects, including the significance of specific paths, as well moderating effects through the incorporation of interactions in a series of equations (Bollen 1989).

In terms of the specific model form, the various measures are modeled as continuous manifest variables with the exception of crime, which is treated as a count variable and a Poisson regression is used. We conduct Chi-square difference tests based on log-likelihood values and scaling correction factors to compare the fit of various models (Muthén and Muthén 2012). Using an indirect effect test utilizing Monte Carlo integration, we assay a series of mediating pathways. When significant moderating effects were present, post hoc analyses of significant interaction terms were conducted using simple slope tests.

**<A>RESULTS**

**<B>Descriptives and Preliminaries**

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlation matrix for the study variables. The zero-order pattern of associations is largely as expected. For example, racial discrimination is positively associated with crime and the CKS. Preparation for bias and cultural socialization are strongly associated (r = .49), and neither are directly associated with crime. Consistent with prior research using the FACHS, cultural socialization is negatively correlated with the CKS whereas preparation for bias is positively associated with the CKS. Consistent with our predictions, both forms of racial socialization are positively associated with the two proposed mechanisms: spirituality and positive racial identity. In contrast to positive racial identity, which is not associated with crime, spirituality has a significant negative correlation
with crime, and both racial identity and spirituality are inversely associated with the CKS. Among the controls, supportive parenting is associated with most of the study variables as expected, including a positive association with cultural socialization, spirituality, and racial identity, but is not significantly correlated with preparation for bias. In addition, having an African American primary caregiver (versus other racial/ethnic group) is associated with a lower CKS and higher levels of racial socialization, spirituality, and racial identity. <Table 1 about here>

Notably, a few sex/gender differences were observed, supporting the inclusion of the control in the models. As noted, due to higher reports of discrimination in the year preceding wave 5, being male is correlated with more frequent racial discrimination. Consistent with extant scholarship, males had higher levels of crime, CKSs, and prior delinquency; females, on the other hand, had higher average levels of spirituality than males. No sex/gender differences in the measures of racial socialization or positive racial identity were found.

Mediation Model: Compensation Effects

Figure 3 displays the results of the reduced SEM of racial discrimination on crime through the proposed mechanisms (standardized coefficients presented). We assessed model fit using the chi-square difference test. The results showed that the chi-square difference between the fully recursive and our reduced models did not approach statistical significance, indicating that the models displayed provide a more parsimonious fit to the data. Consonant with bivariate correlations, the direct paths between racial socialization and crime were nonsignificant and thus were dropped from the model in the reduction process. <Figure 3 about here>

Consistent with our expectations and past work, Figure 3 reveals that racial discrimination significantly increases the CKS, which in turn is strongly associated with crime. Specific indirect effects and their significance are presented in Table 2. Also consonant with prior work, much of the effect of racial discrimination on crime is indirect through the CKS. As can be seen at the bottom of Table 2, the indirect effect of racial discrimination on crime through the CKS is -.16 (p<.001), which is approximately 82% of the total effects of racial discrimination on crime. <Table 2 about here>
Turning to the novel hypotheses that are the focus of the present study, Figure 3 reveals that cultural socialization is significantly linked to higher levels of spirituality ($\beta = .14$) and positive racial identity ($\beta = .09$). Notably, cultural socialization continues to have a direct negative effect on the CKS ($\beta = .14$). Turning to the other form of racial socialization we examine, preparation for bias is significantly related to positive racial identity ($\beta = .12$), but not with spirituality. Moreover, no significant direct relationship between preparation for bias and either the CKS or crime is observed. Among the final links in the pathways, consistent with our hypotheses, both spirituality and positive racial identity have a significant negative relationship with the CKS. Although both are negatively related to crime, these pathways are not statistically significant. Consistent with our hypotheses, this suggests that by decreasing the CKS, which is positively associated with crime, positive racial identities and spirituality are individual mechanisms that mediate the compensatory effects of racial socialization.

We again examine the significance of these indirect effects and directly assess our hypotheses that racial identity and spirituality mediate the compensatory effects of racial socialization on crime. The results are displayed in Table 2. Here one can see that cultural socialization has a significant negative effect on the CKS through spirituality, whereas preparation for bias has a marginally significant negative effect on the CKS through positive racial identity. Notably, both explain a significant portion of the variance in the CKS. Spirituality and positive racial identity, in turn, have a significant indirect effect on less crime through the CKS. Thus, the findings from this mediation model indicate that racial socialization decreases crime in part by increasing spirituality and positive racial identities, which in turn, are inversely associated with crime indirectly through the CKS. Next we turn to the question of whether these two mechanisms buffer the influence of racial discrimination or the CKS on offending.

**Moderation Model: Buffering Effects**

Figure 4 displays the results of the model where we incorporate hypothesized buffering effects. First, inconsistent with our expectations, neither spirituality nor positive racial identities buffered the effects of racial discrimination on the CKS. Notably, including these moderation effects reduced the fit of the model; hence, they were dropped in the model reduction process. Consistent with hypotheses, however, both
spirituality and positive racial identity significantly attenuate the effect of the CKS on crime; these buffering effects are displayed with dotted pathways in Figure 4. Notably, model fit comparisons between Figures 3 and 4 with the added moderation pathways indicate that the addition of these two moderating effects significantly improved the fit of the model ($\Delta$chi-square = 15.117, df = 2, p = .000).

The two significant interactions were graphed to facilitate interpretation and are displayed in Figures 5 and 6. As shown in Figure 5, while no differences in the link between the CKS and crime are observed for groups low and high in spirituality at low levels of the CKS, significant differences in the predicted probability of offending for groups low and high in spirituality are observed at moderate high to high levels of the CKS. The same buffering pattern is observed for positive racial identity in Figure 5, such that the effects of a high CKS on increased offending is significantly attenuated by positive racial identities. Thus, consistent with our hypotheses, these results suggest that spirituality and positive racial identities are individual mechanisms through which racial socialization practices buffer the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination.

**DISCUSSION**

Building on recent studies that demonstrated that familial racial socialization practices provide resilience to the criminogenic effects of interpersonal racial discrimination (e.g., Burt and Simons 2015; Burt et al. 2012), we sought to advance knowledge by investigating the individual mechanisms through which racial socialization—an external developmental asset common among African American families—provides resilience. Specifically, this study asked, how—through what social psychological mechanisms—does familial racial socialization reduce the criminogenic effects of discrimination among Black youth? We examined two psychosocial resources, spirituality and racial identity, which have been shown to be fostered by racial socialization and attenuate the negative effects of racial discrimination on development. In so doing, we drew upon a recently elaborated social schematic theory of offending that links racial discrimination to crime through social schemas that promote situational definitions conducive to crime.
Several important findings emerged from our study and these are discussed below. This is followed by a discussion of our study’s implications, limitations, and directions for future work.

Building on scholarship that highlights the link between racial socialization and racial identity (e.g., Hughes et al. 2009; Neblett et al. 2009), as well as the positive effects of racial identities in promoting psychological functioning and reducing the effects of racial discrimination (e.g., Cross et al. 1991; Sellers et al. 2003; 2006), we examined the role of positive racial identity as a mechanism through which racial socialization promotes resilience. Conceptualizing positive racial identities as the combined extent to which individuals feel positively towards African Americans and their belonging to that group (private regard) and the extent to which race is an important part of their self-concepts (centrality; e.g., Sellers et al. 1998), we hypothesized that racial socialization practices increase positive racial identities, which, in turn, provide resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination.

Our findings were largely consistent with our hypotheses. Both preparation for bias and cultural socialization increased positive racial identity. A positive racial identity, in turn, was inversely associated with the CKS. Decomposition of the indirect effects revealed that the effects of both forms of racial socialization on the CKS through racial identity were significant. In addition, we found that racial identity accounts, in part, for the buffering effects of racial socialization. Although racial identity did not buffer the link between discrimination and the CKS, as we predicted, positive racial identity did reduce the effect of the CKS on offending. Recall, these findings were net of various controls including general positive parenting. Thus, the first finding from our study was that racial socialization provides resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination in part by fostering a more positive racial identity.

We also focused on spirituality/religiosity as a potential resilience mechanism. Theory and research have linked racial socialization to increased spirituality among African Americans (e.g., Nicolas et al. 2008; Stevenson 1997). Moreover, numerous studies have identified spirituality as an important resilience factor (e.g., Pargament and Cummings 2010). In general, spirituality has been found to promote optimism and hope for the future and hence perseverance in the pursuit of valued goals in the face of adversity. Drawing on the reports of individuals who have demonstrated resilience, Masten and Wright (2010: 227)
noted: “The belief that life has meaning, faith, hope for a better future or afterlife, and related convictions and attitudes appear to sustain mastery motivation” and efforts to adapt and thrive in the face of risk to development. In addition to general research on the protective effects of spirituality, research has also highlighted the salience of spirituality and religiosity among African American families and cultures and its protective role in the face of racist obstacles and adversities (e.g., Blaine and Crocker 1989; DuBois 1899; Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Based on this work, we hypothesized that that spirituality is a mechanism through which racial socialization reduces the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination.

Our results were generally consistent with our expectations. Cultural socialization, but not preparation for bias, was associated with increased spirituality, which in turn, was negatively associated with the CKS (which was positively associated with crime). Thus, racial socialization had an indirect compensatory effect on less crime through spirituality and the CKS. Notably, spirituality was not directly associated with crime, which is consistent with our expectation that the CKS should mediate the negative effects of spirituality on crime. Decomposition of effects revealed that these indirect pathways were significant. In addition to its effect crime through the CKS, spirituality also buffered the effects of racial discrimination. Specifically, spirituality significantly attenuated the link between the CKS and higher offending. Thus, our results indicate that spirituality is an individual mechanism through which racial socialization, specifically cultural socialization, reduces the criminogenic effect of racial discrimination.

In sum, our findings suggest that racial socialization fosters positive racial identities and spirituality, which, in turn, are negatively related to the CKS (tendencies to view the world as threatening, problematic, or distressing). Furthermore, these protective mechanisms blunt the effects of the CKS on crime, such that these factors reduce the effects of potentially criminogenic worldviews on offending. That these factors reduce the link between the CKS and crime but not the link between discrimination and the development of the CKS is explicable from the social schematic perspective. Recall, SST proposes that individuals develop CKS’s as a consequence of learning and adapting to the environments; racial discrimination is proposed to lead to these criminogenic social schemas as individuals internalize these negative, unpredictable, hostile messages. From this perspective, positive racial identities and spirituality do not decrease the link between
racial discrimination and the CKS because the harsh messages and experiences associated with racial discrimination are still internalized in individuals’ schemas. Internalizing these messages is “adaptive” in the sense that it promotes survival (in the face of racist hostilities). Instead, these protective mechanisms reduce the likelihood that such potentially criminogenic social schemas engender criminal behavior.

The present study advanced knowledge on the resilience effects of familial racial socialization by identifying psychosocial resources that are fostered by racial socialization and that operate to reduce the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination. In so doing, it enhances our understanding of patterned variations in response to racial discrimination at the micro-sociological level. Although we believe the results of this study make an important contribution to this body of work, it is not without limitations. Several deserve mention. First, the sample consists of African American families originally living in various communities in Iowa and Georgia at the initiation of the study (though the respondents had spread to 26 different states at wave 5). We assume that the processes identified here are not limited to this sample or these contexts, an assumption bolstered by similar patterns of relationships observed in other samples relating to racial socialization, racial identities, and psychological functioning (e.g., Sellers et al. 2006; Neblett et al. 2009). Nonetheless, it is hoped that future research replicates these findings on different samples.

Another caveat is related to our “perceptual” measure of discrimination. We assume our respondents were relatively accurate in reporting their experiences with racial discrimination, and a growing body of scholarship attests to the validity of perceptual measures of racial discrimination, including the SRE instrument utilized here (Brody et al. 2006; Klonoff and Landrine 2000). Even so, it is important that future work continue to probe the validity of various perceived discrimination measures. In addition, our measure of spirituality/religiosity was based on a single item. While we believe that this single item captures the concept we are focusing upon, future work should utilize different measures to test the robustness of our findings with different measures.

Despite these limitations, this investigation contributes in important ways to our understanding of the resilience effects of racial socialization and suggests a number of lines of future inquiry. In our view,
research should continue to explore the mechanisms through which familial racial socialization contributes to resilience in conjunction with the processes identified here. For example, research might expand the focus to the way that racial socialization fosters other external developmental assets, such as familial social support, as well as internal assets, such as self-esteem, agency, and mastery.

Broadly, resilience researchers have underscored the fact that resilience is not a static trait or characteristic (e.g., Masten and Wright 2010). The risk and resilience processes examined here are dynamic, developing within the individual and his/her transactions with various (also dynamic) cultures and contexts. Resilience has been conceptualized in terms of developmental cascades, in which resilience begets more resilience, thereby “catalyzing or setting into motion a cascade of positive experiences” (Ong et al. 2010: 88). For example, White (1959) highlighted the role of “effectance motivation” in resilience, noting that humans are wired to adapt to their social and physical environments and experience positive emotions when they are successful. Similarly, Bandura (1997) demonstrated that individuals with more optimistic views about their own effectiveness expend more effort to succeed and achieve their goals. Such individuals are also more likely to persist in the face of adversity, which makes them more likely to succeed under adverse conditions. In this way, competence begets competence; resilience engenders future resilience (Masten and Wright 2010). Given the dynamic nature and cumulative effect of resilience, we hope that future work takes a life-course approach, seeking to further understand these risk and resilience processes across the life span and relate these patterns to shifts in the salience of various age-graded goals and identities, recognizing that “resilience is an active process, not just the absence of pathology, and it can be promoted by enhancing protective factors” (Feder, Nestler, and Charney 2009: 455).

Additionally, the degree of cross-situational consistency of resilience deserves more research attention, as individuals can be resilient to certain stressors (e.g., certain forms of racial discrimination) or outcomes but not others (Rutter 1997). Moreover, future research might benefit from examining how these risk and resilience processes examined are influenced by culture and community. Individuals and families are embedded in distinct contexts that shape racial socialization practices and condition their effects (Hughes et al. 2006; Winkler 2010). The perspective taken in this study is that such practices are
adaptations to a racist context, and thus the efficacy of various racial socialization practices, including specific messages and teachings, will differ based on contextual variations that influence the way race shapes institutions and cultures in more localized milieus.

In conclusion, taking a micro-sociological perspective and drawing upon a recently elaborated social schematic theory the present study illuminates mechanisms whereby racial socialization provides resilience to the criminogenic effects of racial discrimination. This study advances our understanding of adaptive cultural practices that African American families are utilizing to promote resilience to racism based on evidence that resilience is a dynamic process that can be enhanced by social practices. Certainly, the onus should not be on African Americans or any other minority group to deal with racial discrimination. Given the persistence of racism, racial socialization is one tool that African Americans are using to promote resilience; thus, we believe that understanding how such cultural and familial practices foster resilience is worthwhile.
1 In noting that African Americans engage in higher rates of street crime than whites, we do not imply that law-breaking in general is more common among African Americans, nor do we deny the harms that are perpetrated by whites (including those against Blacks) that are not deemed illegal. It is unquestionably the case that certain crimes are committed more frequently per capita by whites (e.g., white-collar crimes) and that by focusing on street crimes, racial disparities are magnified (Reiman 1979). Even so, the damaging effect of street crime on African Americans as both victims and offenders deserves attention, even if only part of the larger construct of law violation. We use the term crime throughout this article, but readers should note that we focus on street crimes.

2 Parlance in the risk and resilience literature, compensatory factors are those associated with beneficial outcomes or that promote positive adjustment across all levels of risk (Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, and Notaro 2002).

3 We wish to emphasize at the outset that although we focus on various familial and cultural strategies that have been shown to provide resilience to the effects of racism, this focus does not imply that the onus should be on African Americans to deal with racism. Reducing or eliminating discrimination is the just solution; however, given the persistence of racism, we believe that identifying and better understanding how such cultural practices provide resilience against discrimination is a valuable endeavor.

4 For clarity in exposition, we use the term “spirituality” to refer to both spirituality and religiosity. Although some scholars have argued that these are distinct but related concepts (Mattis 2002), our measure inquires about the importance of “spirituality or religiosity,” thus tapping into both.

5 The focus of the current study is on the lived experiences of African Americans and how this influences risk and resilience factors influencing the likelihood of criminal behavior. This focus does not imply that Blacks are the only group facing ethnic-racial injustices. However, given that the peerless worldview of Blacks has been “shaped by their incomparable racial subordination” (Unnever and Gabbidon 2011:7), we believe that a focus on African Americans is warranted. This work builds, in part, on the scholarship of Black criminologists and critical race theorists who have highlighted the need for a distinctive body of
work focusing on African American lived experiences and offending (e.g., Du Bois 1899; Mann 1993). Even so, these findings have implications for risk and resilience processes among other ethnic-racial minority groups. It is hoped that future research explores these processes in other ethnic-racial groups.

6 Although out of the scope of the present paper, see Pargament and colleagues’ (1998) typology and informative discussion of various forms of spiritual coping, including seeking spiritual support and spiritual connection.

7 See Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of the discrimination measure and research behind it.

8 Significant differences were determined by t-tests with equal variances (p<.01). Although sex/gender differences are not the focus of our analyses, importantly, preliminary analyses revealed that the magnitude of the effect of discrimination on crime did not differ by sex/gender. Interested readers can consult an earlier paper (Burt and Simons 2015) that focused on sex/gender differences in racial discrimination, racial socialization, and offending using the FACHS sample.

9 See Burt and Simons 2015 for a list of the items and their frequencies by sex/gender.

10 See Burt and Simons 2015 for a list of all the items in the CKS measure.

11 We initially considered a measure that combined spirituality/religiosity and religious involvement, but preliminary analyses indicated that the item assessing spirituality was only moderately related to those measuring religious involvement. Analyses conducted separately indicated that spirituality was the more relevant mediating mechanism.

12 To be super clear, “adaptive” here is not used in the sense of promoting “success” in a cultural sense, such as that promoted by Western cultural values or in terms of individual health or happiness. Instead, the social schematic theory conceptualizes adaptation in the evolutionary sense to refer to evolved mechanisms that promote survival.
References


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<tr>
<td>12. Primary Caregiver RaceW4 (1 = Black)</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Primary Caregiver AgeW6</td>
<td>45.01</td>
<td>7.91</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. PC Sex/Gender (1=female)</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01; *p < .05; n ranges from 627 to 804 using all available cases for each pairwise correlation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Mediators</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indirect effect [95% CI]</th>
<th>The portion of the total variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Socialization_{w3+w4}</td>
<td>Spirituality_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic</td>
<td>-.037** [-.065, -.009]</td>
<td>25.517%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for Bias_{w3+w4+w5}</td>
<td>Spirituality_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic Knowledge Structure_{w5}</td>
<td>-.015 [-.043, .014]</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Socialization_{w3+w4}</td>
<td>Positive Racial Identity_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic</td>
<td>-.012 [-.026, .002]</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for Bias_{w3+w4+w5}</td>
<td>Positive Racial Identity_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic</td>
<td>-.017† [-.037, .003]</td>
<td>20.732%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic Knowledge Structure_{w5}</td>
<td>Crime_{w5}</td>
<td>-.129** [.194, -.064]</td>
<td>59.722%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Racial Identity_{w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic Knowledge Structure_{w5}</td>
<td>Crime_{w5}</td>
<td>-.060** [-.106, .015]</td>
<td>46.154%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial discrimination_{w4+w5}</td>
<td>Criminogenic Knowledge Structure_{w5}</td>
<td>Crime_{w5}</td>
<td>.158** [.088, .227]</td>
<td>81.865%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Social Schematic Model of Racial Discrimination, Racial Socialization, and Crime.

Note: Dashed lines refer to hypothesized buffering effects.
Control Variables:
- Sex/gender
- Age
- PC race, sex, age
- Prior delinquency
- Supportive parenting
- Neighborhood racial heterogeneity (%Black)

Racial Socialization:
- Preparation for Bias\textsubscript{W3+4+W5}
- Cultural Socialization\textsubscript{W3+W4}

Positive Racial Identity\textsubscript{W5}

Spirituality/Religiosity\textsubscript{W5}

Criminogenic Knowledge Structure\textsubscript{W5}

Crime\textsubscript{W5}

Note: Dashed lines refer to hypothesized buffering effects.
Figure 3. Poisson Model Depicting Racial Socialization Mechanisms: Mediating Model.

Control Variables:
Sex/gender
Age
PC race, sex, age
Prior delinquency
Supportive parenting

Note: Values presented are standardized parameter estimates; **p ≤ .01; *p ≤ .05, †p < .10 (two-tailed tests), n = 609.
Figure 4. Poisson Model Depicting Racial Socialization Mechanisms: Moderation Model.

Control Variables:
- Sex/gender
- Age
- PC race, sex, age
- Prior delinquency
- Supportive parenting

Note: Values presented are standardized parameter estimates; **p ≤ .01; *p ≤ .05, †p < .10 (two-tailed tests), n = 609.
Figure 5. The effect of the CKS on crime across levels of spirituality. The lines represent the regression lines for different levels of spirituality (low: 1 SD below the mean; high: 1 SD above the mean). Numbers in parentheses refer to simple slope test with 95% confidence interval.
Figure 6. The effect of the CKS on crime across levels of positive racial identity. The lines represent the regression lines for different levels of positive racial identity (low: 1 SD below the mean; high: 1 SD above the mean). Numbers in parentheses refer to simple slope test with 95% confidence interval.