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Racial Identity, Racial Socialization, and Perceptions of Police

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BARRY UNIVERSITY

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By

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Abstract

Lack of police legitimacy has long been an issue in the Black community, as many are hesitant in trusting in the police. Unfortunately, negative attention towards police misconduct has increased over the past several years due to highly publicized police killings of civilians such as Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Eric Garner, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, and many more (Reynolds, Estrada-Reynolds, & Nunez, 2018). Research suggests that race plays an important role in perceptions of police (e.g., Najdowski, Bottoms, & Goff, 2015; Smith & Holmes, 2003; Tonry, 2011). Given the importance of racial attitudes in this context, it is important to understand whether and to what extent Blacks' experiences and perceptions about their racial status influence their trust in police. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between the racial identity and racial socialization of Blacks and their attitudes towards police.

Racial identity is described by Helms (1990) as a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he/she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group. The five stages of racial identity are known as the nigrescence models developed by Cross (1971). They outline the process in which Blacks become aware of being Black in the United States. Earlier stages involve an orientation towards White culture and away from Black Culture., the latter stages reflect a firm self-identity and devotion to the liberation of all oppressed people such as the LGBTQ community. Thus, it could be predicted that individuals in the Pre-encounter stage are more likely to perceive police more favorably than individuals in the later stages.

Racial socialization is another important construct relevant to how Blacks may perceive police. Racial socialization is described by Stevenson (1995) as a process involving messages and behaviors about race that parents or other members of a person's social context transmit to children and adolescents. Beliefs, attitudes, and worldviews that come from people of African descent are Africentric values, which are often subtle and promote African heritage pride. Research has found that positive racial socialization messages such as cultural pride reinforcement and cultural alertness to discrimination can help minimize how personal racial discrimination is internalized among Black adolescents (Caughy, Randolph, & O'Campo, 2002).

It was hypothesized that the more one's racial identity, and racial socialization were developed/fostered, the less positively they will perceive law enforcement. It was predicted that scores on the pre-encounter assimilation subscale would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of police. It was also predicted that scores on the internalized subscales (Afrocentric and Multiculturalist Inclusive) would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of police. It was predicted that racial socialization would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of police and that racial socialization and racial identity scores would predict perceptions of police.

After providing informed consent, 64 undergraduate and graduate students completed an online survey consisting of a demographic questionnaire followed by the three questionnaires: the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) measuring racial identity, the Scale of Racial Socialization (SORS) measuring different aspects of racial socialization in educational, family, and societal venues, and finally, the attitudes towards police legitimacy scale (APLS) measuring perceptions of police legitimacy.

A correlation analysis examined the relationships between scores on the CRIS (racial identity), SORS-A (racial socialization), and APLS (police legitimacy). A multiple regression analysis examined whether racial identity and racial socialization predict attitudes toward police legitimacy. The analysis revealed the model was statistically significant, $F(10, 38) = 4.07$, $p = .001$, where $R^2 = 0.52$. The CRIS Immersion/Emersion Anti-White subscale was a significant predictor of perceptions of police, ($\beta = -2.55$, $t = -2.98$, $p = .005$), as was the SORS Racism Awareness subscale, ($\beta = 3.92$, $t = 4.161$, $p < .001$). The findings suggest that the more one's racial identity was developed and fostered, the lower one's perceptions of police legitimacy, however the results regarding the role of racial socialization were not as clear. Insight into the role of socialization processes and stages of racial identity growth could offer insight on how to improve perceptions of police and build interventions to promote positive community relationships with police.

Introduction

Disparities in the United States Justice System are obvious to many. African Americans receive harsher sentences for similar crimes committed by their White counterparts. According to Wiley (2001), in 1996, the incarceration rate for whites was 289 per 100,000 people while for African Americans it was 1,860 per 100,000 people, and the chances of an African American male going to jail is one in four, while the chances of a White male going to jail is only one in twenty-three. These harsh punishments of African Americans have been around and made acceptable for centuries, from the era of slavery, to the era of legal lynching, to the present-day disparities in the justice system. Many have studied racial discrepancies within the legal system, which have been linked to racial bias and discrimination on the part of police, jurors, judges, etc. (Wiley, 2001). This in turn causes a justifiable distrust of police and the justice system by the African American community. For example, growing body of scholarly research has revealed that Blacks are more likely than Whites to make complaints regarding police brutality (Smith & Holmes, 2003). Added to the negative feelings experienced by these men and women is the belief that the rules that apply to citizens do not apply to members of law enforcement (Chaney & Robertson, 2013). Given the importance of racial attitudes in this context, it is important to understand whether and to what extent African Americans' experiences and perceptions about their racial status influence their trust in police. Therefore, the purpose of the proposed study is to examine the relationship between the racial identity and racial socialization of African Americans and their attitudes towards police.

The following section will discuss the constructs of police legitimacy and factors that influence perceptions of police, followed by a description of the constructs of racial identity and racial socialization.

Perceptions of Police and Police Legitimacy

In the United States' legal system, the extent to which police earn the respect and support of the public is critical to the success of law enforcement. Police are out in the community, interacting with citizens on a regular basis and can therefore be considered the face of the U.S. justice system. Unfortunately, tensions between police and the Black community in particular have spanned for decades and were particularly problematic in the South (Greene & Gabbidon, 2013). The media coverage of the beating and passing of Rodney King, and the subsequent acquittal of some of the officers involved served as the spark that brought to light police brutality against minorities and served as the catalyst for the Los Angeles riots of 1992 (Chaney & Robertson, 2013). More recently, negative attention towards police misconduct has increased over the past several years due to highly publicized police killing of civilians such as Michael Brown, Philando Castile, Eric Garner, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, and many more (Reynolds, Estrada-Reynolds, & Nunez, 2018). The public has criticized the lack of police accountability which puts a strain on police and community relations, particularly in the African American community (Jones, 2015; Morin, Parker, Stepler, & Mercer, 2017). Punishment disparities between police and the citizens they serve have been highlighted by the National Police Misconduct Reporting Project (2011), which reported that police officers spent an average of 14 months in prison, while the average length of incarceration for the general public was 49 months. Perhaps most importantly, the African American

community has been disproportionally targeted with respect to police misconduct.

According to Smith and Holmes (2003), Blacks are more likely than Whites to make

complaints regarding police brutality and according to Tomaskovic-Devey, Wright,

Czaja, and Miller (2006), Blacks are more likely than Whites to be accosted while

operating a motorized vehicle ("Driving While Black"), suggesting discrimination against

Blacks in a wide range of police activity. Whites also tend to underestimate racial bias in

policing (Gallop & Newport, 2003) and excuse police brutality against Blacks because of

the racial animus that they hold against Blacks (Tonry, 2011).

      Police Legitimacy. Given the importance of maintaining positive perceptions of

police and the growing tension between police and the community, there is a large body

of literature devoted to measuring perceptions of police and examining the factors that

influence perceptions of police legitimacy. According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance

(BJA), police legitimacy is defined as when people have trust and confidence in the

police, accept police authority, and believe officers are fair (2014). The BJA states that

police legitimacy can be built by treating people with respect and dignity, making

impartial decisions based on facts (not illegitimate factors such as race), giving people a

"voice" (a chance to tell their side of the story), and behaving in ways that encourage

community members to trust that they will be treated with compassion. The BJA

acknowledges that the lack of police legitimacy has long been an issue in the African

American community, as many are hesitant in trusting in the police.

      Others have introduced more complex definitions of police legitimacy. For

example, Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) have proposed a multifaceted model of police

legitimacy in which legitimacy is best viewed as a continuous dialogue between power-

holders (police-officers) and their audiences (citizens) in which all parties agree that the

power is "rightful" or legitimate because the underlying principles are socially accepted.

Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) argue that within democratic societies, *rightful* power is

power that embodies four elements: lawfulness, distributive fairness, procedural fairness,

and effectiveness. The first element of the Bottoms-Tankebe Police Legitimacy Model,

police lawfulness concerns the issue of whether police are acting under the rule of law

(i.e, enforcing the established law versus making the law) and doing so within the

boundaries of the law (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012; Tankebe, 2013a). For example, the

extent to which police are accepting bribes or misusing force would relate to the

lawfulness dimension of police legitimacy. The second element, distributive fairness

reflects whether outcomes or the allocation of police resources are fair among groups or

individuals with competing claims or needs (Roemer, 1996). Two types of resources are

described; concrete, and symbolic. Concrete resources are the resources that are easily

observable and quantifiable such as court fines, tickets for traffic offenses, and police

personnel. Symbolic resources include respect, courtesy, and dignity. Therefore, the

second element refers to how fairly police allocate these resources across different social

groups, different ethnic groups, and different genders. The third element, procedural

fairness describes the fairness of the processes employed to reach specific outcomes or

decisions (Tyler, 1990). For example, the quality of everyday police-citizen encounters

provides information to citizens about their standing and membership in society which

can build or undermine individual perceptions of police legitimacy. The fourth and last

element, effectiveness is an integral aspect of what makes power rightful. For example,

the public hold certain expectations of the police, one being the ability to demonstrate

their effectiveness by reducing crime and responding to the security and safety needs of

citizens. Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) argue for a distinction between police use of

incentives to encourage cooperation and obedience and the claim that part of what it

means for legal authorities to establish and maintain rightful power is for them to be seen

as responding to the security and safety needs of citizens.

Research has examined a variety of factors that influence attitudes toward police

and/or police legitimacy. According to Chermak, McGarrell, and Gruenewald, (2006),

one of these factors is routine media coverage, which offers a conflicting portrayal of

police as heroic and professional crime fighters, while simultaneously portraying police

as ineffective and incompetent (Surette, 1998). According to Chermack et al. (2006, news

media may be the primary source for citizens' perceptions of police legitimacy. Research

has suggested that consumption of certain media positively impacts perceptions of police

(i.e., mainstream news) while other content negatively influences perceptions of police

(i.e., political talk shows). Surette (1998) has argued that the news media has

sensationalized many events to capture viewers' attention and compete with other news

media outlets resulting in serious implications for the public's understanding of crime,

policing, and case processing. Perhaps more importantly, research suggests that race

moderates the effects of media on attitudes toward police. For example, research has

suggested that compared to Whites, minorities are more likely to consume media

coverage of police misconduct, leading to more negative perceptions of police (Weitzer

& Tuch, 2004a & b) and also, are more likely to interpret media portrayals of police

behavior as evidence of misconduct (Kaminski & Jefferis, 1998). Following highly

publicized media depictions of police misconduct, research has found that attitudes

toward police become less positive, especially among African Americans (Weitzer, 2002). Other research suggests that media exposure to specific, celebrated police misconduct cases does not necessarily influence overall public opinions of police, but can have an "erosion of support" effect on Black individuals if the victim of the misconduct is Black (Chermack et al. 2006).

In addition to media coverage, research on public perceptions of a major city suggests that perceptions of police are related to two aspects of their performance: job approval and officer demeanor (Maxson, Hennigan, & Sloane, 2003). Job approval refers to citizens' satisfaction with police officers preventing crime, helping victims, and solving problems. Officer demeanor refers to whether police officers are respectful, trustworthy, fair, or helpful and how concerned they act (Maxson et al., 2003). Within this framework, researchers believe that overall the following factors influence public opinion of police: perceptions of the neighborhood, contact with the police, prior crime victimization, demographic characteristics, and the role of the media. Perception of the neighborhood describes the residents' perceptions of the levels of disorder and crime in their neighborhood and the neighbors' sense of mutual trust and responsibility. Research suggests that higher neighborhood cohesion was associated with more positive perceptions of police. Contact with the police describes both formal contacts such as residents' calls to police stations requesting service, police questioning of residents regarding a crime, arrests, etc.; and informal contacts including conversations with police officers on patrol and interacting with police at community meetings. Informal contact is associated with more positive perceptions of police while formal contact is associated with negative perceptions of police. Prior crime victimization describes prior experiences

as victims of violent and property crime. Generally speaking, residents who have been

the victim of a crime tend to have less positive perceptions of police compared to when

they have been a victim of crime. Victims of violent crimes have less positive perceptions

of police than victims of property crime. Demographic characteristics address racial and

ethnic differences in perceptions of police (discussed in race and police legitimacy

subsection). The role of the media addresses how highly publicized incidents might have

a widespread negative influence on residents' view of the police. Research suggests that

when residents report that they rely on media to form their opinions, do not necessarily

report more negative perceptions of police than those who rely on personal experience

(Maxson et al., 2003).

      Race and Police Legitimacy. General population surveys suggest that racial

identity influences trust in the police. Public polls have shown that trust in police is lower

in ethnic minorities, particularly Blacks, than in Whites; Whites express higher opinions

of police performance and demeanor than any other race/ethnic group; and Blacks were

less likely than Whites to think that local police were trustworthy, fair, helpful,

concerned, and respectful of others in both orderly and disorderly neighborhoods

(Maxson, Hennigan, & Sloane, 2003). Additional research suggests that current

perceptions of police are not very favorable. For example, according to Morin and Stepler

(2016) only about 36% of the public say they have a lot of confidence in their police

department. An additional 41% of Americans say they have some confidence in their

community's police department. Importantly, Blacks are considerably less confident in

their local police than are their White counterparts. Only 14% of Blacks say they have a

lot of confidence in their local police, while 41% say they have some confidence. About

four-in-ten whites (42%) say they have a lot of confidence in their local police, while

39% say they have some confidence. And among Hispanics, 32% say they have a lot of

confidence in their police, while 48% say they have some confidence (Morin & Stepler,

2016).

Of importance to the present research, some studies have suggested that race can

influence perceptions of encounters with police officers. For example, Cochran and

Warren (2012) examined racial variation and perceptions of the police by assessing

whether citizens' evaluations of their encounter with police officers vary as a function of

the officer's race and their own. They aimed to address the following two research

questions: Does officer race influence perceptions of police encounters? And do the

combined effects of race, ethnicity and gender influence evaluations of police behavior

differently for White and for minority officers?

Empirical data for this study was taken from the 2005 Police Public Contact

Survey (PPCS). The PPCS is conducted as a supplement to the National Crime

Victimization Survey (NCVS) and includes all respondents 16 years old and older who

were part of the NCVS during the last 6 months of 2005. For the purposes of the current

study the researchers were interested in those citizens who reported a recent traffic stop

(in the past 12 months) who indicated the race of the officer who stopped them, either as

White, Black, or "other" racial minority. The final sample size used for this study was

3,439 cases.

The researchers found that Black males and females are more likely to negatively

evaluate police behavior when the stop is initiated by a White officer; even after

controlling for the reported reason given for the stop. Conversely, this is not the case

when the officer is a minority. No citizen–race or ethnicity effects were found for minority officer stops; and the primary predictor of citizens' perceptions of the legitimacy of the stop was the "reason" given to the citizen by the officer. This finding suggested in part that citizens, particularly minority citizens, rated officer legitimately more positively when minority officers stopped them. Minority citizens viewed officer behavior more skeptically when White officers stopped them. These findings provide some baseline support for the notion that some minority citizens tend to view minority officers less apprehensively or less critically than White officers. This conflicts with prior policing research, which has suggested that police forces with larger proportions of minority officers respond more harshly to minority citizens (Brown & Frank, 2006; Wilkins & Williams, 2008, 2009). In contrast, the above findings suggest that diversification practices of police forces may actually be one viable option for improving citizens' views of officer legitimacy for some racial groups. But the results demonstrate that in some cases minority officers may tend not to incite the same type of initial skepticism that minority citizens seem to display when the officer is White.

Research has suggested that racial stereotypes can influence perceptions of police encounters and shape behaviors of African Americans while they are interacting with police. Najdowski, Bottoms, and Goff (2015) conducted two studies to examine how cultural stereotypes that depict Blacks as criminals affect the way Blacks experience encounters with police officers. In study 1, they hypothesized that Black participants would be more likely than White participants to report concerns about being racially stereotyped by police officers. In study 2, they hypothesized that Black men (being judged and treated unfairly because of the negative stereotype of Black criminality) might

behave differently—more "suspiciously"—than White men in encounters with police officers.

For study 1, participants were 49 Black (37% men) and 184 White (52% men) undergraduate psychology students from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Participants were on average 19 years old. For study 2, participants were 79 Black and 100 White men from two samples: (a) undergraduate psychology students from the University of Illinois at Chicago and (b) from contexts where students were likely to be (e.g., on campus). For study 1, the participants completed a self-report survey assessing their experiences of police-related stereotype threat and demographic factors along with various unrelated questionnaires submitted by other researchers. Stereotype threat was measured with five items from a modified version of the Explicit Stereotype Threat Scale (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008; Marx & Goff, 2005; Marx, Stapel, & Muller, 2005). It assessed stereotype threat specific to police encounters (e.g., "I worry that police officers might stereotype me as a criminal because of my race"). Responses were given on a 7-point scale ranging from -3 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree).

For study 2, a thought-induction task modified from Archer and colleagues (1979) and Haegerich and Bottoms (2000) was used to engage participants in active imagery concerning a hypothetical police encounter. A hypothetical police encounter is a specific made up scenario involving a police officer and an individual and the participants had to assess the potential downstream consequences of stereotype threat. Stereotype threat was measured indirectly as stereotype activation via spontaneous reactions to the thought-induction task and a word-stem completion performance.

Anticipated anxiety was measured with seven items on 5-point scale, ranging

from 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), created to assess anticipated anxiety in

the hypothetical police encounter. Anticipated self-regulatory efforts were gauged with

eight items on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely),

created to assess the extent to which participants thought it was likely they would think

self-regulatory thoughts. Anticipated suspicious behavior was gauged by asking

participants to think about how they would act in the hypothetical police encounter and to

rate on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), the

likelihood that they would "look nervous," "try to avoid looking nervous," "smile"

(reverse-scored), "avoid making eye contact," or "freeze up," behaviors that police

commonly perceive as deceptive (e.g., Akehurst et al., 1996; Vrij et al., 2006; Vrij &

Semin, 1996).

Study 1 revealed that Black participants were significantly more likely than White

participants to report concerns about being racially stereotyped by police officers,

supporting their hypothesis. Study 2 provided further evidence that Black men, but not

White men, experience stereotype threat in police encounters. As hypothesized, study 2

suggested Black men being judged and treated unfairly because of the negative stereotype

of Black criminality might cause them to behave differently—more "suspiciously"—than

White men in encounters with police officers. This study demonstrated that the racial

difference in stereotype threat appears even when all participants envision the same kind

of police encounter in terms of how likely it would have been for the police officer to

confront them or target them as suspects. Black men were significantly more likely than

white men to think they would feel anxious and would monitor the situation and their

behavior for risk of being stereotyped. These preventive behaviors may in turn be perceived as deceptive or suspicious.

This study sheds light on the social psychological processes that contribute to race biases, which is an important step toward improving racial equity in the criminal justice system. The studies provide evidence that Blacks anticipate stereotype threat when they encounter police officers, and this could translate into an actual experience of threat in a real encounter. In addition, stereotype threat might affect behaviors that police commonly perceive as suspicious, which helps to explain why police officers target Blacks as suspects disproportionately more often than Whites. While it is clear that race influences perceptions of police and interactions with police, particularly in the African American community, it is unclear how aspects of one's racial identity influence responses to police misconduct, racial disparities in the justice system, and perceptions of police legitimacy.

Racial Identity

Racial identity is described by Helms (1990) as a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he/she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group. According to Helms, African Americans progress through a series of five stages of racial identity: Pre-encounter, Dissonance, Immersion and Emersion, Internalization, and Internalization-Commitment. These stages, also known as nigrescence models, take into account the process in which Blacks become aware of being Black in the United States by providing a template of what happens during each of the above-mentioned stages that African Americans go through to reach racial awareness. During the first stage, Pre-Encounter, there is an orientation towards White culture and away from Black culture. People in this stage often feel ashamed and embarrassed about

being African American and may hold White culture values. They also feel that Blacks

are responsible for their own oppression, fate, and lack of success. They do not believe

that the historical background of slavery, discrimination, and segregation are relevant

factors. People in this stage are more likely to engage in activities with Whites or

activities that they assume are culturally white and seek acceptance among Whites.

During this stage, people display emotions of defensiveness, avoidance, and anxiety.

During the second stage, Dissonance, the individuals encounter an event or series of

events that shatter their perceptions of themselves or the conditions of Blacks in America.

The individuals then begin to wonder what it might be like to have an identity as a Black

person. They become motivated to learn about Blacks and begin reading and seeking out

information about Blacks and question what they previously believed to be true about

Blacks and Whites. During this stage, people display emotions of vigilance and anxiety.

During the third stage, Immersion and Emersion, the individuals go through two phases,

Immersion, which is the beginning phase and Emersion, which is the end phase.

Individuals in this stage have overvalued beliefs about the goodness of being Black. They

believe that Blacks are good, and Whites are bad. They want to affiliate with other

Blacks, therefore attending events and participating in activities that affirm and support

their African American identity. During the phase of Immersion, individuals display

emotions of energy and elation. During the phase of Emersion, there is a leveling off of

that previous energy and elation. During the fourth stage, Internalization, the individual

has internalized a new identity. The conflicts between the old identity and the new one

have been resolved, and the anxiety, emotionality, and defensiveness of the prior stages

are gone. The individuals experience calm and security as they know who they are and do

not feel the need to constantly display their Blackness in order to prove that they are

Black. Their primary peer groups are Blacks, but friendships and interactions with Whites

are possible. They also do not exclusively participate in Black organizations as their

thinking is more flexible, and they are more tolerant of people from different cultural

groups. During the fifth and final stage, Internalization-Commitment, the individuals

possess all of the characteristics of the internalization stage, however, not only do they

have a firm self-identity, they also work for the liberation of all oppressed people such as

the LGBTQ community.

Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, and Smith (1997) have proposed an

alternative theory of racial identity known as the Multidimensional Model of Racial

Identity (MMRI). The Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) assumes that

African Americans have a number of hierarchically ordered identities, race being one of

them. It also argues that racial identity has stable and situationally specific properties

(Sellers et al., 1997). They propose salience, centrality, ideology, and regard as the four

dimensions of racial identity. The salience dimension refers to the extent to which a

person's race is a relevant part of her or his self-concept at a particular moment in time.

Salience is dependent on the context of the situation as well as the person's proclivity to

define her or himself in terms of race. The centrality dimension refers to the extent to

which a person normatively defines her or himself with regard to race. It is a measure of

whether race is a core part of an individual's self-concept. The ideology dimension of

racial identity is the individual's beliefs, opinions, and attitudes with regard to the way

she or he feels that the members of the race should act, live, and interact with other

people in society. The regard dimension of racial identity refers to a person's affective

and evaluative judgment of her or his race. Private regard is the extent to which individuals feel positively or negatively towards African Americans and their membership in that group and public regard is the extent to which an individual believes that out-group members view African Americans positively or negatively. This dimension of racial identity is important in understanding the variability in African Americans' perceptions of race-related events (Sellers et al., 1997).

Sellers' MMRI provides a useful framework to understand research examining racial awareness. For example, Neville and Cross (2017) studied the phenomenon of racial awakening or epiphanic experiences of Black adults in a sample of men and women in Australia, Bermuda, South Africa, and the United States. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore epiphanies or encounters that provoked change in the participants' understanding of their race and what it means to be Black. Black racial identity, usually triggered by an encounter, stresses the importance of racial awareness and consciousness of what it means to be Black psychologically, politically, and socially. This study had no clear hypothesis as it was designed to serve as an initial step towards identifying the interconnected themes related to racial awakening. Participants were individually interviewed using an interview protocol adapted from McAdams' (1995) General Life Story Interview. The interview consisted of questions about critical incidents stimulating an awareness of race or what being Black means in one's life and potential turning points in one's racial life story.

Participants were 64 Black adults between the ages of 19 and mid-70's in four sites: Australia (9 men; 10 women), Bermuda (7 men; 8 women), South Africa (7 men; 8 women), and United States (7 men; 8 women). Most participants partook in an individual

interview (n = 52); three participants wrote out their narratives and nine participants joined in one focus group. Participants were ethnically diverse; in South Africa 8 participants ethnically identified as rivals Xhosa or Zulu, 3 as "Coloreds," and 4 participants of Indian descent self-identified racially as Black. In Australia 16 participants ethnically identified as Aboriginals and 3 as Torres Strait Islanders.

The majority of the participants described experiencing an epiphany or "awakening". Racial awakening was characterized by an experience that triggered personal heritage exploration. It included awareness of racism, areas of struggles and resistance to racism, and the contributions and strengths of Black people in their communities and internationally. Racial awakening consisted of an external event and a series of changes that led to establish a sense of connection to something broader than the individual self. A few participants used the word "awakening" and two named a chapter in their lives as "awakening". Participants gained a new understanding of what it means to be Black through personal experiences and/or observations. Some participants described gaining an increased awareness about race, racism, and resistance through becoming active politically. Keeping that in mind, it can be argued that such increased awareness could lead to negative perceptions of police, especially when racially biased police behaviors are salient in the media or in one's personal life.

Racial identity has been shown to influence how African American individuals perceive ambiguous events and racial discrimination. Hoggard, Jones, and Sellers (2017) examined the effects of racial cues (none, blatant, or ambiguous) and racial identity (level of *public regard*) on perceptions of fairness and affect in an experimental setting. The participants were 78 self-identified African American college students from a large

public university in the Midwest. Participants earned $15 or an hour of course credit for participating in the hour-long experiment.

Upon arriving at the lab, each participant was told that s/he was taking part in a study examining mood responses to three visual stimuli presented on a computer screen. Once informed consent was provided, the participants were presented with each stimulus and they reported their baseline affect using the Digital Analogue Slider and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule–Short (PANAS-S). Affect was gauged by a shortened state version of the PANAS-S (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) at four different time points: two pre-manipulation and two post-manipulation. It must be noted here that the stimuli are not the manipulations in study. There were two manipulations: (1) the race (White or AA) of the late second "participant" and (2) the absence or presence of the primary experimenter explicitly stating that he did not want to select the participant for a separate Mac logo study because the participant is Black. The late second "participant" is actually a study confederate – a White or African American female – arrives to the lab 2 to 3 minutes after the first participant to partake in the experiment. Upon the completion of the PANAS-S after the first visual stimulus, an individual knocked on the door, interrupting the experiment. The individual – a White female study confederate – explained that she was working with Apple, Inc. on a 2-minute study that assesses college students' Mac logo preferences, and that she was looking for one final participant who had a good chance of winning an iPod for participating. The individual asked the experimenter to invite his participant to partake in her Mac logo study, and the experimenter informed her that he had two participants in the lab, and she suggested that he should select the participant who arrived first. In the no race and ambiguous cues

conditions, the experimenter went against the Mac logo study experimenter's suggestion and chose the late second "participant" without sharing his reasoning. In the blatant cues condition, the experimenter went against the Mac logo study experimenter's suggestion and chose the late second "participant", stating that his reasoning being that he did not want to invite the participant who arrived first because s/he was Black. After 3 minutes, the late second "participant" came back into the lab with an iPod. The first participant then watched the second visual stimulus and reported his or her continuous affect using the Digital Analogue Slider; s/he also reported his or her continuous affect for the 1.5 minutes thereafter and then completed the PANAS-S. Next, the participant viewed the third and final visual stimulus and reported his or her continuous affect during and immediately after the presentation of the visual stimulus, and completed the PANAS-S. Finally, the participant completed the race-based attribution and manipulation check question. Race-based attributions were gauged by the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they were not selected to participate in the Mac logo study because of their race using a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Racial identity was gauged by a shortened version of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (Martin, Wout, Nguyen, Gonzalez, & Sellers, 2010), a 27-item questionnaire that assesses the three stable dimensions of the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997).

The researchers hypothesized that the higher the blatantness of the racial cues, the more likely participants would be to interpret the events as being race-related. They expected that participants who believe that out-group members hold less positive attitudes toward African-Americans (low on *public regard*) would experience the

ambiguous event as being more race-related. Lastly, they hypothesized that participants

in the ambiguous cues condition would report the highest levels of post-manipulation

negative affect (upset/distress and continuous negative affect) than participants in no race

cue condition. They expected individuals who were lower on public regard to report

feeling less negatively in the blatant condition (i.e., protective factor). They also expected

individuals who were lower on public regard to report feeling comparatively more

negatively in the ambiguous condition (i.e., vulnerability factor). Lastly, they expected no

interactive effects in the no-race cue condition, as racial identity should only be related to

outcomes in the context of race-related situations.

There was a significant interaction between racial cues and public regard. As

anticipated in the first hypothesis, public regard was not meaningful in the no-race cue

condition. In contrast, public regard was meaningful in the blatant racial cues condition,

as well as in the ambiguous racial cues condition (marginally). Counter to their second

hypothesis, the ambiguous stressor was not experienced more negatively than the blatant

stressor. As hypothesized, the participants were most likely to experience the unfair

treatment as race-related when in the blatant condition and were least likely to experience

the unfair treatment as race-related when in the no race cue conditions. The findings are

consistent with previous research documenting the negative association between

interpreting events as racially discriminatory and public regard, suggesting that there is

variability in how African Americans experience racial discrimination. The participants

in the ambiguous racial cues condition were significantly more likely to offer race as an

explanation than the participants in the no race cue condition (Hoggard, Jones, & Seller,

2017). Although these findings are a cause for concern given the frequency with which

African Americans report experiencing racial discrimination (e.g., Sellers & Shelton, 2003), they provide researchers and practitioners with a better understanding of the impact of racial discrimination in their lives.

In sum, racial identity is described as a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he/she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group (Helms 1990), which may be an important factor influencing African Americans' perceptions of police. Theories of racial identity suggest that dimensions of racial identity can influence perceived discrimination, an important facet of perceived police legitimacy. For example, it can be predicted that individuals will perceive police differently (more or less favorably) based on the stage of Helms' racial identity that the individual is in: Pre-encounter, Dissonance, Immersion and Emersion, Internalization, and Internalization-Commitment. Specifically, individuals who are in the Pre-encounter stage are oblivious to the injustices against African Americans, compared to individuals who are in the Internalization-Commitment phase, who are advocates for all oppressed group, including their own. Thus, it can be predicted that individuals in the Pre-encounter stage are more likely to perceive police more favorably than individuals in the later stages.

Racial Socialization

Racial socialization is another important construct relevant to how African Americans may perceive police. Parents pass many of their beliefs and values to their children as they raise them. Racial socialization is described by Stevenson (1995) as a process involving messages and behaviors about race that parents or other members of a person's social context transmit to children and adolescents. Beliefs, attitudes, and worldviews that come from people of African descent are Africentric values. Racial

socialization can be seen as a learned behavior as Africentric values are often subtle and promote African heritage pride. Stevenson (1995) suggests that African American children who grow up surrounded by African American toys, books, artwork, music, etc., show greater factual knowledge and better problem-solving skills. He also believes that being exposed to positive images of African American culture creates a better sense of belonging within children and adolescents. Many African American girls grew up playing with blue eyed, blonde haired White dolls, while boys played with blue eyed White superhero figurines; such exposure to Eurocentric values and beauty standards hinder African American children's racial socialization (Stevenson, 1995). Racial socialization messages have been shown to reduce anxiety and delinquency in adolescents depending on the type of messages given, as certain messages have yielded mixed results. Some racial socialization messages, in excess, can trigger negative results (Saleem et al., 2016).

Caughy, Randolph, and O'Campo (2002) developed an Africentric observational scale assessing racial socialization in African American homes. Using this scale, Saleem and Lambert (2016) examined whether racial socialization messages emphasizing racial pride and racial barriers protected against anger and depressive symptoms for African American adolescents who experienced personal and institutional racial discrimination. African American adolescents and their female caregivers were interviewed at local community sites or in their homes. Racial discrimination was gauged using The Perceived Racism Scale-Child (PRS-C; Nyborg & Curry 2003). It assesses the frequency that youth are exposed to racism by using a six-items, six-point Likert scale, 0 (not applicable) to 5 (several times a day), to assess youth's individual encounters with racial discrimination. The four-item institutional racism scale assessed youth's perceptions of

the effects of institutional racial discrimination in African American communities on a

five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Depressive symptoms were gauged using the 13-item, 3-point Likert scale, ranging from

0 (not true) to 2 (true), Short Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (SMFQ; Angold et al.,

1995). Items were reverse coded and summed so that higher scores indicated more

depressive symptoms. Anger was assessed using a 10-item State-Trait Anger Expression

Inventory on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 4 (almost always;

STAXI; Spielberger, 1999). Racial Socialization was assessed by using two subscales

from the Teenager Experience of Racial Socialization Scale (TERS; Stevenson et al.,

2002). They examined the degree to which African American adolescents reported

receiving two different types of racial socialization messages. The 6-item cultural

alertness to discrimination scale contains items about receiving messages that emphasize

racial barriers that exist in society and the tensions between Blacks and Whites. The 9-

item cultural pride reinforcement scale contains messages about racial pride and

knowledge. All items are rated on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 3 (a lot

of times) and summed to create separate subscale scores. Higher scores indicate youth's

perceptions of receiving more frequent messages about cultural alertness to

discrimination and cultural pride reinforcement.

Participants were 106 (57% female) African American adolescents (mean age =

15.41) and their maternal caregivers from an urban metropolitan district in the mid-

eastern region of the United States. Adolescents were in grades 7–12, with the majority of

youth in grade 9. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the adolescents lived with their biological

mothers at the time of the interview, and the remaining lived with their grandmother,

aunt, or other female guardians. Approximately one quarter (21%) of the participating

female guardians had less than a high school degree; 27.4% received a high school

diploma, equivalent degree, or vocational certificate; 27.4% had some college

experience; 10.4% received their bachelor's degree, and 13.2% experienced some

graduate education or received a graduate/higher level degree.

Analyses revealed that personal racial discrimination was associated with more

anger and depressive symptoms for adolescents reporting less cultural alertness to

discrimination messages, and for adolescents reporting fewer cultural pride reinforcement

messages. There were no associations between personal racial discrimination and anger

and depressive symptoms for adolescents who reported high cultural alertness to

discrimination and high cultural pride reinforcement messages. In contrast, neither

cultural pride reinforcement nor cultural alertness to discrimination protected against

anger or depressive symptoms for adolescents reporting institutional racial

discrimination.

This study provides evidence that cultural pride messages may help youth

internalize positive messages about their racial group and prevent them from internalizing

personal encounters with racial discrimination. If youth do not receive positive messages

about their racial group and history but have personal experiences with racial

discrimination, these encounters may cause youth to attribute negative racially charged

experiences to personal shortcomings and consequently provoke depressive symptoms.

Similarly, adolescents who perceive unfair treatment due to their race may react with

anger, particularly if they have not received positive messages about their racial group,

culture, or heritage. These findings offer a better understanding of the potential role of

racial socialization in perceptions of police and the justice system, which have a known

history of institutional racism. Adolescents who witness their family and peers being

treated unfairly by police officers may be angrier and mistrusting in police, regardless of

having received positive messages about their racial group.

Some research suggests that the degree of racial socialization may be influenced

by African American parents' experiences of racial discrimination and perceptions of

trust in the community. For example, Saleem, English, Busby, Lambert, Harrison, Stock,

and Gibbons (2016) examined whether the effect of parents' racial discrimination

experiences on the racial socialization messages they communicate to their children

varies according to parents' perceptions of neighborhood cohesion and the gender of the

child.

Data was extracted from the Family and Community Health Study (FACHS), a

large-scale multisite study of 889 African American families living in Iowa and in

Georgia (Cutrona et al. 2000; Gibbons et al., 2004; Simons et al., 2002). Saleem et al.

(2016) used data from the wave 3 (April 2002-August 2003), and wave 4 (March 2005-

August 2006), which are referred to as time 1 and time 2. The study's sample consisted of

608 African American adolescents and caregivers. Parent racial discrimination was

assessed using the Schedule of Racist Events (SRE; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996), a 13-

item scale used to evaluate negative experiences attributed to being African American,

rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (several times). Parent

perception of neighborhood cohesion was measured using a modified version of the

Social Cohesion and Trust Scale (Sampson et al., 1997). The modified measure contains

15 items used to assess community social cohesion and trust, informal social ties, and

neighborhood social control rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (none) to 4 (six or more); 2 items were rated on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (often) to 3 (never); and 12 items were rated on a 2 point scale ranging from 1 (true) or 2 (false). Parental Racial Socialization Messages was gauged through three commonly reported racial socialization messages: cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust (Hughes et al., 2006). It was assessed using a modified version of the self-report racial socialization measure developed by Hughes and Johnson (2001). The measure contains 15 items examining the frequency of three different types of racial socialization messages. The 5-item Cultural Socialization scale contains items about racial and cultural knowledge and pride. The 4-item Promotion of Mistrust scale comprised items that convey caution and suspicion when encountering individuals from other racial-ethnic groups. The 6-item Preparation for Bias scale includes items on teaching about discrimination and prejudice that youth may encounter. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (10 or more times).

There was a significant and positive correlation between parent racial discrimination and racial socialization across gender. There was no significant correlation between promotion of mistrust and gender. There was a significant positive correlation between neighborhood cohesion and cultural socialization for boys, and a significant negative correlation between neighborhood cohesion and parent racial discrimination for girls. The results of this research revealed that parents' racial socialization messages are influenced not only by their own racial discrimination experiences but also by their perception of neighborhood cohesion and the gender of their adolescents. Specifically, when neighborhood cohesion is considered low, increases in perceived discrimination

were associated with increased socialization messages promoting distrust in other races.

Results from this research also suggest that parents' perception of neighborhood cohesion

may influence the extent to which parents expect neighbors to help other families

socialize their children about and assist them in managing experiences with racial

discrimination (Saleem et al., 2016). It is well known that racial discrimination is one of

the many factors that puts a strain on the relationship between African American

communities and the police. The findings from this study shed light on the importance of

neighborhood cohesion on the community's response to that racial discrimination.

It is known that positive images and representation are important to Black

children and adolescents' racial socialization. These images and representations are

sourced from books, television, videogames, magazines, newspapers, the Internet, etc.

Adams-Bass, Stevenson, and Kotzin (2014) examined the relationships among exposure

to and endorsement of media images of Black people, racial identity, and racial

socialization for Black adolescents; and they examined how racial/ethnic socialization

and Black identity are associated with Black history knowledge, self-esteem, and body

image. Their aim to create a measure of how youth experience the negative imaging of

Black characters was based on the following assumptions: (a) print and television media

often present negative stereotypes of Black people and (b) these images inform and

influence adolescents perspectives about Black people.

McQuail (2005) defines media socialization as the process of teaching norms and

values by way of symbolic reward and punishment for different kinds of behavior as

represented in the media; or a learning process whereby people learn how to behave in

certain situations and the expectations which go with a given role or status in society.

Adams-Bass and Stevenson created the Black Media Messages Questionnaire (BMMQ)

to (a) determine if Black adolescents would be able to identify stereotype messages

associated with images of Black people on TV and in print magazines, (b) assess their

belief in the media messages identified, and (c) estimate the frequency of exposure to the

selected message when watching TV and/or reading magazines.

The focus group phase of this study centered on answering: what are the dominant

messages represented by images of Blacks in the media? During the first segment of the

focus group, Black youth between the ages of 14 and 21 were shown images projected

onto a large screen and asked to describe the message they believed to be associated with

the image. During the second segment, the participants were asked to complete a pilot

version of the Black Media Messages Questionnaire (BMMQ) containing twenty-three

items of images of famous Black actors, athletes, politicians, and popular culture

celebrities gathered from newsprint and visual media. Each image was followed by four

pre-determined messages, and participants were asked to select one of the four that best

described the meaning of the image or choose other and write their own message in blank

space provided. The "other" responses were collated and analyzed, and messages that

occurred most frequently were incorporated into the item options for the final version of

the BMMQ. Due to the confusing nature of the images and their lack of popularity, items

21 to 23 were dropped resulting in a four-subscale final version BMMQ with each

subscale required different response formats.

The first subscale is Black Image Meaning Subscale (BIMS), images are

presented to participants and they are asked to select the statement they believe best

represents the message. After determining whether each image message in the BIMS was

positive or negative, participants completed the second subscale (BMMB subscale) of the

BMMQ by indicating how much they agreed with the positivity or negativity of each

image's message. Participants were instructed to circle the choice that reflected their

agreement and given the following options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly

disagree. The third subscale is Black Television Message Exposure (BTME) and the

participants have to answer the following question: "When viewing TV (cable, dishTV,

movies, sitcoms, dramas) how often do you see images that present this message?" The

response options were never (0), hardly ever (1-2), lots of times (4-6), and all of the time

(7 or more times). The fourth and final subscale is the Black Media Message Magazine

subscale (BMME subscale) and the participants were asked about frequency of viewing

the selected message in magazines. Participants respond to the following question:

"When flipping through magazines how often do you see images that present this

message?" The response options were never (0), hardly ever (1-2), lots of times (4-6), and

all of the time (7 or more times).

      According to the findings, participants high in racial socialization will also score

high on the factors of the Black media message measure. Black youth who watch a lot of

media are exposed to a high volume of images that often project negative stereotype

messages about Black people (Adams-Bass et al., 2014). Youth who receive affirming

racial socialization messages seem more able to identify negative and positive

stereotypes, and youth with higher Black history knowledge scores were also more likely

to identify stereotypes, but not to endorse negative stereotypes as valid representations of

Black people. The findings of this study also suggest that the endorsement of negative

stereotype images on TV and to a lesser extent on magazines is related to the racial

identity and racial socialization of Black adolescents.

Stevenson (1995) believes that being exposed to positive images of African

American culture creates a better sense of belonging within children and adolescents.

Adams-Bass and colleagues' study sheds light on the prevalence of negative Black media

images and their consequences on adolescents' racial socialization. When children and

adolescents do not feel that sense of belonging that Stevenson refers to, they may be less

likely to relate to the issues that are going on in their community such as police brutality,

and may even perceive the police differently than their peers who do feel a sense of

belonging to their community.

The Present Study

In summary, racial disparities in the justice system and rising tensions between

police and the Black community suggest that race plays an important role in

understanding police legitimacy. Previous research has suggested that both racial identity

and racial socialization could be important variables when assessing the African

American community's perception of the police. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is

to analyze the perception of law enforcement in the Black community as it relates to the

stages of racial identity and racial socialization. It was hypothesized that the more one's

racial identity, and racial socialization were developed/fostered, the less positively they

will perceive law enforcement. It was also hypothesized that the less one's racial identity

and racial socialization were developed/fostered, the more positively they would perceive

law enforcement. Specifically, it was predicted that scores on the pre-encounter

assimilation subscale would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of police.

It is also predicted that scores on the internalized subscales (Afrocentric and

Multiculturalist Inclusive) would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of

police. It was predicted that racial socialization would be negatively correlated with

positive perceptions of police and that racial socialization and racial identity scores would

predict perceptions of police.

Method

Participants

A total of 99 participants accessed and completed the survey, however complete

data is available for a sample of 64 participants, as 35 participants skipped one or a

number of items in the survey. The targeted population was individuals aged 18 years or

older who identify as Black, African-American, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, or African as

the study requires participants who hold Black identities. Participants were recruited from

Barry University undergraduate and graduate programs via flyers and email recruitment.

Community participants were also recruited from various social media and online study

advertisement platforms. Finally, historically black universities were contacted to request

assistance in distributing the online survey link. Interested participants were directed to

an online link to the study.

Descriptive statistics indicated that the sample was approximately 81% female (n

= 67) and 19% male (n = 16) ranging between the ages of 18 and 36 (M = 21.95; SD =

4.09). All participants held Black identity, but they represented different ethnic groups:

72.3% of the participants identified as Black (n = 60), 12% as Biracial (n = 10), 4.8% as

Multiracial (n = 4), 3.6% as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (n = 3), and lastly 7.2% as

other (n = 6). Of the 6 participants who identified as other, 1.2% identified as Caribbean

(*n* = 1), and lastly 6% as Hispanic/Latino (*n* = 5). Of the participants, 27.7% completed

high school or earned a GED (n = 23), 41% earned college credits but no college degree

(n = 34), 1.2% received trade/technical/vocational training (n = 1), 15.7% held an

associate degree (n = 13), 12% held a Bachelor's degree (n = 10), and 2.4% held a

Master's degree (n = 2).

Materials

      Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS; 2000). Participants completed the Cross

Racial Identity Scale developed by Vandiver, Cross, Fhagen-Smith, Worrell, Caldwell,

Swim, and Cokley that measured six of the nine nigrescence attitudes originally

introduced by William E. Cross Jr back in 1971. It consisted of 40 items, 30 of which

made up the 6 subscales: Pre-Encounter Assimilation (PA), Pre-Encounter Miseducation

(PM), Pre-Encounter Self Hatred (PSH), Immersion-Emersion Anti-White (IEAW),

Internalization Afrocentric (IA), and Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive (IMCI: see

Appendix B). Each subscale contains 5 items which are rated on a 7-point Likert scale;

from 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. The remaining 10 items are mixed

among the subscales to minimize response bias and to diminish the obviousness of the

CRIS item. They are not scored, as they are not part of any subscale. To highlight what

typifies and distinguishes one subscale from another, Table 1 lists a sample item from

each subscale.

      There is substantial reliability and validity information for CRIS scores. Vandiver

and colleagues (2001) state that the CRIS has been supported in three independent

samples using both exploratory and confirmatory factors analyses, with item coefficients

on factors ranging from .5 to .9. The scores have been shown to be independent of social

desirability and the big five personality factors; the only significant correlation found is

between Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred (PSH) and self-esteem (Vandiver, 2002). Convergent

validity analyses with the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI; Sellers et

al., 1998) provided construct validity support for CRIS scores. Reliability estimates for

the six CRIS subscale scores have ranged from .70 to .85. For the present study,

reliability analyses revealed high internal consistency for the pre-encounter assimilation

subscale (α = .87; M = 17.21, SD = 7.37), for the pre-encounter miseducation subscale (α

= .91; M = 16.03, SD = 7.59), for the pre-encounter self-hatred subscale (α = .93; M =

14.50, SD = 7.96), for the immersion-emersion anti-white subscale (α = .95; M = 12.33,

SD = 7.48), and for the internalization Afrocentric subscale (α = .88; M = 18.89, SD =

5.96).

Table 1.
Sample CRIS Item by Subscale

1. Pre-Encounter Assimilation
   I think of myself primarily as an American and seldom as a member of a racial group.

2. Pre-Encounter Miseducation
   Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.

3. Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred
   I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black

4. Immersion-Emersion Anti-White
   I hate White people.

5. Internalized Afrocentric
   Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.

6. Internalization Multiculturalist Inclusive
   I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays, lesbians, Jews, and Whites).

Scale of Racial Socialization (SORS; 1993). Participants also completed the

scale of Racial Socialization, developed by Stevenson that measures different aspects of

racial socialization in educational, family, and societal venues (see Appendix C). There

are two versions, one for adolescents (SORS-A) and one for parents. It originally

consisted of 45 items, scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to

strongly agree. The content areas include perception of education, extended family,

spirituality, racism and society, child rearing, and African American heritage and pride.

The Scale of Racial Socialization is mostly used on adolescents but is arguably an

appropriate retrospective tool to assess adult socialization processes as well. The original

scale contained 5 subscales: spiritual and religious coping (SRC), extended family caring

(EFC), cultural pride reinforcement (CPR), racism awareness teaching (RAT), and global

racial socialization (GRS). Through factor analysis only the 37 items in the first 4

subscales were found to be reliable and the global racial socialization subscale was

dropped from the scale. To highlight what typifies and distinguishes one subscale from

another, Table 2 lists a sample item from each subscale. Previous studies have reported

moderate reliability coefficients via Cronbach's alpha, ranging from .60 to .74 (Spiritual

and Religious Coping, alpha = .74; $M = 26.8$, $SD = 4.9$; Family Rearing, alpha = .70, $M =$

44.4, $SD = 5.9$; Cultural Pride Reinforcement, alpha = .63, $M = 27.7$, $SD = 4.3$; Racism

Awareness Teaching, alpha = .60, $M = 38.8$, $SD = 6.7$; Stevenson, 1994). In the present

study, reliability analyses revealed high internal consistency for the spiritual and religious

coping subscale ($\alpha = .89$; $M = 24.00$, $SD = 5.70$), for the extended family caring subscale

($\alpha = .89$; $M = 41.18$, $SD = 7.34$), for the cultural pride reinforcement subscale ($\alpha = .81$; M

= 36.54, SD = 5.88), and for the racism awareness teaching subscale (α = .89; M = 21.83,

SD = 7.55).

Table 2.
Sample SORS Item by Subscale
_____
Spiritual and Religious Coping
Families who talk openly about religion or God are helping their children to grow

Extended Family Caring
Relatives can help Black parents raise their children

Cultural Pride Reinforcement
Black parents should talk about their roots to African culture to their children

Racism Awareness Teaching
When children are younger than 5, racism doesn't bother them
_____

Attitudes Towards Police Legitimacy Scale (APLS; 2018). Finally, participants

completed the attitudes towards police legitimacy scale (APLS) developed by Reynolds,

Estrada-Reynolds, and Nunez (2018) that measures perceptions of police legitimacy. The

final version of the APLS contains 34 items scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from

1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating higher (more

positive) beliefs of police as legitimate authority figures (see Appendix D). Table 3 lists

sample items from the scale. When previous research has assessed the of the APLS, the

Cronbach's alpha was .987, thus demonstrating very high reliability. Higher APLS scores

were reliably related to higher scores on both the Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale

(RWA, $r = .268$, $p = .001$) and the Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO, $r = .207$, p

$= .014$). In the present study, reliability analyses also showed high internal consistency

for the APLS in the current sample (α = .98; M = 126.71, SD = 37.67).

Table 3.

Sample APLS Items

1. Police officers usually have a reason when they stop or arrest people.
2. Police do their best to be fair to everyone.
3. People become police officers to serve their communities.
4. I feel relieved to see police officers when I am out in the community
5. I can rely on police officers to ensure my safety

Design and Procedure

The present study was correlational and examined the relationships between racial identity, racial socialization and police legitimacy via an online survey administered through the online survey platform, Psychdata.

After providing informed consent, participants were given a demographic form, including questions about the participants' age, race, level of education, gender identity, ethnicity, country of origin, parents' ethnicity, and parents' country of origin (see Appendix A). Participants then completed the three questionnaires: CRIS, SORS-A, and the APLS. Participation took approximately 45 minutes.

Results

Correlation analyses examined the relationships between scores on the CRIS (racial identity), SORS-A (racial socialization), and APLS (police legitimacy). Significant positive correlations were observed between the APLS scores and the following subscales: the three CRIS Pre-Encounter subscales of Assimilation, Miseducation, and Self-hatred and the SORS subscales of Spiritual Coping and Racism Awareness (see Table 4 for the pairwise correlation coefficients with the dependent measure).

A multiple regression analysis examined whether racial identity and racial socialization predict attitudes toward police legitimacy. The analysis revealed the model

was statistically significant, $F(10, 38) = 4.07$, $p = .001$, where $R^2 = 0.52$ (see Table 5).

The CRIS Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale was a significant predictor of perception of police, ($\beta = .238$, $t = 2.22$, $p = .031$), as was the CRIS Immersion/Emersion Anti-White subscale, ($\beta = -2.55$, $t = -2.98$, $p = .005$), and the SORS Racism Awareness Teaching subscale, ($\beta = 3.92$, $t = 4.161$, $p < .001$).

Table 4.
Correlation Coefficients

Predictors	Correlation between each predictor and the APLS	Correlation between each and APLS controlling for all other predictors
CRIS Pre-Encounter Assimilation	.48*	.29
CRIS Pre-Encounter Miseducation	.42*	-.01
CRIS Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	.23*	-.04
CRIS Immersion Emersion Anti-White	.17	-.39
CRIS Internalization Afrocentricity	.14	.11
CRIS Internalization Multiculturalistic Inclusive	.03	.04
SORS Spiritual Coping	.39*	.19
SORS Family Caring	.15	.01
SORS Cultural Pride	.07	.01
SORS Racism Awareness	.62*	.56

*$p < .01$.

Table 5.
Regression analysis.

Model	Perceptions of Police						
	B	*SE B*	*β*	*t*	*p*	*UB*	*LB*
CRIS Pre-Encounter Assimilation	1.15	.71	.24	2.22	.031	.13	2.54
CRIS Pre-Encounter Miseducation	-.01	.75	-.001	-.08	.935	-1.38	1.27
CRIS Pre-Encounter Self-Hatred	-.34	.80	-.07	-.28	.779	-1.37	1.03
CRIS Immersion Emersion Anti-White	-2.55	.86	-.47	-3.06	.003	-3.77	-.79
CRIS Internalization Afrocentricity	.25	1.00	.04	.80	.429	-1.05	2.43
CRIS Internalization Multiculturalistic Inclusive	.04	.98	.01	.26	.793	-1.43	1.86
SORS Spiritual Coping	.38	.98	.06	1.42	.160	-.47	2.75
SORS Family Caring	.15	1.15	.03	.10	.923	-1.68	1.85
SORS Cultural Pride	.56	1.44	.08	.06	.956	-2.22	2.35
SORS Racism Awareness	3.92	.94	.72	4.97	.000	2.26	5.31

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between the racial identity and racial socialization of African Americans and their attitudes towards police. To our knowledge, this is the first study to explore the topic of perceptions of police as it relates to one's

stages of racial identity and one's beliefs about racial socialization. Gaining a better

understanding of the role of race and police perceptions is of importance because tensions

between police and the African American community in particular have spanned for

decades. Within this context, it is possible to use the findings of this study to raise

positive perceptions of police though the understanding of the complex relationships

between racial identity, racial socialization, and beliefs in police legitimacy. It was

originally hypothesized that the more one's racial identity, and racial socialization were

developed/fostered, the less positively they will perceive law enforcement. It was also

hypothesized that the less one's racial identity and racial socialization were

developed/fostered, the more positively they would perceive law enforcement. It was

predicted that scores on the pre-encounter assimilation subscale would be negatively

correlated with positive perceptions of police. It was also predicted that scores on the

internalized subscales (Afrocentric and Multiculturalist Inclusive) would be negatively

correlated with positive perceptions of police. And lastly it was predicted that racial

socialization would be negatively correlated with positive perceptions of police and that

racial socialization and racial identity scores would predict perceptions of police. The

hypotheses of this study were partially supported. Overall participants who scored high

on the Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale of the CRIS perceived police positively

while high scores on the Immersion-Emersion Anti White subscale of the CRIS perceived

police negatively. As predicted, racial identity and racial socialization significantly

predicted attitudes toward police, accounting for 52% of the variance in police legitimacy

scores. This is consistent with prior research suggesting that race plays an important role

in perceptions of police (Tonry, 2011) and that a racial hierarchical pattern of citizen trust

and dissatisfaction with the police, with Whites at the lower end, Hispanics in the middle, and Blacks expressing the highest levels of police dissatisfaction (Weitzer & Tuch, 2006). Prior research also suggests that Black citizens are the most skeptical of police officers' behavior and are the most likely to perceive that they have been treated unfairly or racially profiled especially when the officer is White (Cochran & Warren, 2012). The present findings also extend prior research to suggest that the relationship between race and attitudes toward police depend upon one's stage of racial identity as described in theories of racial identity development.

Although our findings suggest that the more one's racial identity was developed and fostered, the lower one's perceptions of police legitimacy would be, the results regarding the role of racial socialization were not as clear. Specifically, for the participants who scored high on the Racism Awareness subscale of the SORS also perceived police positively. Participants who scored high on the Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale of the CRIS perceived police positively while those who scored high on the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White subscale of the CRIS perceived police negatively. According to Helms (1990), during the pre-encounter stage, there is an orientation towards White culture and away from Black culture which supports the findings that high scores on the Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale of the CRIS are associated with positive perceptions of police legitimacy. This positive correlation is likely due to the nature of the questions within the Pre-Encounter Assimilation subscale (e.g., "I think of myself primarily as an American and seldom as a member of a racial group"). According to Helms (1990), during the Immersion-Emersion stage there is a belief that Blacks are good and Whites are bad, and a desire to affiliate with other Blacks,

therefore attending events and participating in activities that affirm and support African

American identity. Consistent with this description, high scores on the Immersion-

Emersion Anti-White subscale of the CRIS were associated with negative perceptions of

police legitimacy. This negative correlation is likely due to the nature of the questions

within the Immersion-Emersion Anti-White subscale (e.g., "I hate White people").

Participants who scored high on the Racism Awareness Teaching subscale of the SORS

had negative perceptions of police. According to Stevenson (1995) racial socialization is

a learned behavior that promotes African heritage pride; which supports the finding of

that high scores on the Racism Awareness Teaching subscale of the SORS are associated

with positive perceptions of police. This positive correlation is likely due to the fact that

high scores on this subscale are associated with low perceptions of racism awareness

teaching within the home while low scores are associated with high perceptions of racism

awareness teaching due to the nature of the questions within the Racism Awareness

subscale (e.g., "When children are younger than 5, racism doesn't bother them").

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. Many of the participants skipped

questions, rendering their participation unusable. This limitation could be addressed in

future research by disabling participants from skipping scale questions and perhaps

developing a shorter version of the overall survey to discourage participant dropout rates.

All of the participants of this study held some form of Black identity, therefore there was

no control group or different race/ethnicities to compare the study's participant's results

to. Future research could include all races and ethnicities to offer insight on racial

differences regarding perceptions of police. This study only focused on the subscales of

the CRIS compared to previous surveys in which various other important variables were

used such as education, income, and socioeconomic status. This could also be addressed

by including as many other racial identity subscales to the survey. Many of the

participants immigrated to the U.S. therefore acculturation factors may also be at play.

Future research could explore the role of acculturation and/or constrict analyses to

African Americans, who hold Black identities and are native to the U.S. In addition, the

present study did not control for variables known to predict perceptions of police

legitimacy such as exposure, contact, media, political affiliation, race (apart from a black

identity), or sex. Future research studies should examine the predictive ability of racial

identity and racial socialization above and beyond variables known to predict perceptions

of police legitimacy. And lastly, the racial socialization scale selected in the current study

assessed attitudes toward socialization but not necessarily the extent to which

socialization processes existed in the participants' homes. This could be addressed by

developing a way to assess the extent to which socialization processes existed in the

participants' homes.

Conclusion

There is substantial research examining the relationship between race and

perceptions of police and a few studies examining the relationship between racial

socialization and perceptions of police; however, the present study is the first to examine

the relationship between both racial identity and racial socialization in regard to

perceptions of police legitimacy. The main focus of this study was to address the lack of

research on the relationship between racial identity, racial socialization, and perceptions

of police. The present study shed light on potential personal factors influencing mistrust

of the police in the Black community above and beyond public encounters, reactions to

police misconduct, and exposure to police. Police officers, the justice system, and the

Black community could all benefit from a more complex understanding of potential

internal sources of negative perceptions of the police. Insight into the role of socialization

processes and stages of racial identity growth could offer insight on how to improve

perceptions of police and build interventions to promote positive community

relationships with police. Future research should investigate the sex differences because

some researchers have argued that women, comparatively, may have more positive police

attitudes because men tend to have negative experiences with the police (Lai & Zhao,

2010) and that minority males are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the police as

well as report more discriminatory treatment by police in comparison to White and

minority females (Weitzer & Tuch, 2006). Future research should also investigate the

influence of prior police encounters on perceptions of police alongside racial identity and

racial socialization. And lastly, future research should investigate if knowing a member

of law enforcement influences perceptions of police.

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Appendix A

Demographics

What is your age?

Please indicate your race

- ○ Black
- ○ Biracial
- ○ Multiracial
- ○ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ○ Other (specify)

Please specify your ethnicity

- ○ African
- ○ African-American
- ○ Afro-Latinx
- ○ Caribbean
- ○ Mixed
- ○ Other

Please specify your mother's ethnicity

- ○ African
- ○ African-American
- ○ Afro-Latinx
- ○ Caribbean
- ○ Other

Please specify your father's ethnicity

- ○ African

○ African-American

○ Afro-Latinx

○ Caribbean

○ Other

Please specify your country of origin

Please specify your mother's country of origin

Please specify your father's country of origin

What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other (specify)

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

○ No schooling completed

○ Less than high school

○ Some high school, no diploma

○ High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (GED)

○ Some college credit, no degree

○ Trade/technical/vocational training

○ Associate degree

○ Bachelor's degree

○ Master's degree

○ Professional degree

○ Doctorate degree

Appendix B

Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS, 2000)

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Somewhat Disagree

4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

1. As an African American, life in America is good for me.
2. I think of myself primarily as an American, and seldom as a member of a racial group.
3. Too many Blacks "glamorize" the drug trade and fail to see opportunities that don't involve crime.
4. I go through periods when I am down on myself because I am Black.
5. As a multiculturalist, I am connected to many groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
6. I have a strong feeling of hatred and disdain for all White people.
7. I see and think about things from an Afrocentric perspective.
8. When I walk into a room, I always take note of the racial make-up of the people around me.
9. I am not so much a member of a racial group, as I am an American.
10. I sometimes struggle with negative feelings about being Black.
11. My relationship with God plays an important role in my life.
12. Blacks place more emphasis on having a good time than on hard work.
13. I believe that only those Black people who accept an Afrocentric perspective can truly solve the race problem in America.
14. I hate the White community and all that it represents.
15. When I have a chance to make a new friend, issues of race and ethnicity seldom play a role in who that person might be.
16. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, which is inclusive of everyone (e.g., Asians, Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Whites, etc.).
17. When I look in the mirror at my Black image, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see.

18. If I had to put a label on my identity, it would be "American," and not African American.
19. When I read the newspaper or a magazine, I always look for articles and stories that deal with race and ethnic issues.
20. Many African Americans are too lazy to see opportunities that are right in front of them.
21. As far as I am concerned, affirmative action will be needed for a long time.
22. Black people cannot truly be free until our daily lives are guided by Afrocentric values and principles.
23. White people should be destroyed.
24. I embrace my own Black identity, but I also respect and celebrate the cultural identities of other groups (e.g., Native Americans, Whites, Latinos, Jews, Asian Americans, gays & lesbians, etc.).
25. Privately, I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
26. If I had to put myself into categories, first I would say I am an American, and second I am a member of a racial group.
27. My feelings and thoughts about God are very important to me.
28. African Americans are too quick to turn to crime to solve their problems.
29. When I have a chance to decorate a room, I tend to select pictures, posters, or works of art that express strong racial-cultural themes.
30. I hate White people.
31. I respect the ideas that other Black people hold, but I believe that the best way to solve our problems is to think Afrocentrically.
32. When I vote in an election, the first thing I think about is the candidate's record on racial and cultural issues.
33. I believe it is important to have both a Black identity and a multicultural perspective, because this connects me to other groups (Hispanics, Asian-Americans, Whites, Jews, gays & lesbians, etc.).
34. I have developed an identity that stresses my experiences as an American more than my experiences as a member of a racial group.
35. During a typical week in my life, I think about racial and cultural issues many, many times.
36. Blacks place too much importance on racial protest and not enough on hard work and education.
37. Black people will never be free until we embrace an Afrocentric perspective.
38. My negative feelings toward White people are very intense.
39. I sometimes have negative feelings about being Black.
40. As a multiculturalist, it is important for me to be connected with individuals from all cultural backgrounds (Latinos, gays & lesbians, Jews, Native Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.).

Appendix C

Scale of Racial Socialization for Adolescents (SORS-A, 1993)

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Spiritual and Religious Coping

1. Families who talk openly about religion or God are helping their children to grow.
2. A belief in God can help a person deal with tough life struggles.
3. Depending on religion and God can help a person make good life decisions.
4. Black children should be taught early that God can protect them from racial hatred.
5. Religion is an important part of a person's life.
6. It is important for families to go to church or mosque where spiritual growth can happen.
7. Spiritual battles that people fight are more important than the physical battles.

Extended Family Caring

8. Children should be taught that all races are equal.
9. Racism and discrimination are the hardest things a Black child has to face.
10. Getting a good education is still the best way for a Black child to survive racism.
11. Families of Black children should teach them to be proud to be Black.
12. Spending good time with relatives is as important for parents as for their children.
13. Having large families can help many Black families survive life struggles.
14. Children who have good times with their relatives become better people.
15. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and he will not tum away from it."
16. Relatives can help Black parents raise their children.
17. "Don't forget who your people are because you may need them someday."
18. Grandparents help parents to make decisions.

Cultural Pride Reinforcement

19. Relatives can teach children things that parents may not know.
20. Schools should be required to teach all children about Black history.

21. Teachers should make it so Black children can see signs of Black culture in classroom.
22. If Black parents teach their children that Blacks have fewer opportunities than Whites, it may help them to survive racism and be successful.
23. Parents can teach children to be proud to be Black without saying a word.
24. Teaching children about Black history will help them to survive a hostile world.
25. More job opportunities would be open to African Americans if people were not racist.
26. Spiritual battles that people fight are more important than the physical battles.
27. Black parents should talk about their roots to African culture to their children.
28. Black parents should teach their children about racism.

Racism Awareness Teaching

29. Whites do not think of Black people as lazy or aggressive today like they used to believe 30 or more years ago.
30. Families who talk about racism to their children will lead them to doubt themselves.
31. Black parents should not teach their children to speak their mind because they could be attacked by others in society.
32. Whites do not have more opportunities than Blacks.
33. Our society is fair toward Black people.
34. Black children will feel good about being Black in a school with mostly White children.
35. When children are younger than 5, racism doesn't bother them.
36. A Black child or teenager will not be harassed simply because she or he is Black.
37. My family taught me very little about racism in America.

Appendix D

Attitudes Towards Police Legitimacy Scale (APLS, 2018)

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Somewhat Disagree

4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly Agree

1. Police officers usually make fair decisions when enforcing laws.
2. Police officers usually have a reason when they stop or arrest people.
3. Police do their best to be fair to everyone.
4. Police officers treat people with respect.
5. Police officers communicate well with people.
6. The presence of police makes me feel safe.
7. Police officers are generally kind.
8. If I have a problem, I feel confident that the police can help me solve it.
9. I'm not afraid to call the police when I need to.
10. People should trust the police to help.
11. I feel that police officers are willing to listen to me when I come into contact with them.
12. I believe what police officers tell me.
13. I can rely on police officers to ensure my safety.
14. I feel relieved to see police officers when I am out in the community.
15. Police officers desire justice.
16. People become police officers to serve their communities.
17. The explanations that police officers give for a stop are typically reasonable.
18. Police officers take their duty to protect and serve seriously.
19. People become police officers to help others.
20. People become police officers because they want to maintain order.
21. Law enforcement agencies hire the best people available.
22. People should be confident that police officers are only there to help.
23. Police officers are held to higher standards than regular citizens.
24. For the most part, police do a good job maintaining order in society.
25. Police officers are respected by the communities they serve.
26. Police officers' interactions with others makes me feel like they are part of my community.

27. Police officers' goals are to protect the community.
28. Police officers are a welcomed presence at community events.
29. My community is a better place because of the police.
30. Most police officers care about the communities they work in.
31. Most police officers define right and wrong the same way that I do.
32. Police officers uphold values that are important to me.
33. The police usually act in ways consistent with my ideas about what is right and wrong.
34. The police and I have many values and beliefs in common.