

Racial Discrimination, Ethnic-Racial Socialization, and Crime: A Micro-sociological Model of Risk and Resilience.

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Source

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Abstract

Dominant theoretical explanations of racial disparities in criminal offending overlook a key risk factor associated with race: interpersonal racial discrimination. Building on recent studies that analyze race and crime at the micro-level, we specify a social psychological model linking personal experiences with racial discrimination to an increased risk of offending. We add to this model a consideration of an adaptive facet of African American culture: ethnic-racial socialization, and explore whether two forms-cultural socialization and preparation for bias-provide resilience to the criminogenic effects of interpersonal racial discrimination. Using panel data from several hundred African American male youth from the Family and Community Health Study, we find that racial discrimination is positively associated with increased crime in large part by augmenting depression, hostile views of relationships, and disengagement from conventional norms. Results also indicate that preparation for bias significantly reduces the effects of discrimination on crime, primarily by reducing the effects of these social psychological mediators on offending. Cultural socialization has a less influential but beneficial effect. Finally, we show that the more general parenting context within which preparation for bias takes place influences its protective effects.

KEYWORDS:

crime, ethnic-racial socialization, parenting, race, racial discrimination

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