BLACK FEMALE VICTIMIZATION MATTERS: A MULTIRACIAL FEMINIST APPROACH TO VIOLENT VICTIMIZATION

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ABSTRACT

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Black women's experiences are often subsumed under categories of female or Black. Multiracial feminism considers that marginalized groups, such as Black women should be made the focus of inquiry and their experiences should be assessed from their position as Black and female. Furthermore, criminologists have begun to call for the exploration of victimization experiences in regards to interactive demographic characteristics. The following study addresses these calls by examining patterns of violent victimization between Black women, Black men, White women, and White men in Detroit. The study's results demonstrate that there are unique experiences that Black women have in regards to violent victimization. The findings contribute to feminist understanding by finding support for assessing phenomena with an intersectional perspective through quantitative analysis.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family and friends for the countless time they invested in my craziness.

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Introduction

Race, class and gender have been autonomously applied to studies of crime, but in recent decades, with the emergence of multiracial feminism there has been a call to study crime in regards to the intersections of race, class and gender (Barak, Flavin & Leighton, 2001; Burgess-Proctor, 2006). Multiracial feminism assesses how the intersections of race, class and gender act as forces that structure an individual's social location and position them within the matrix of domination, which is the multiple and crosscut relationship of the concepts of race, class, gender and other locations of difference (Collins, 2000). Traditionally women of color have been left out of epistemologies and placed at the margins of society. Multiracial feminism empathizes that we look at disadvantaged and privileged groups to make comparisons in an effort to inform the narrative of oppressed groups. Furthermore, intersectionality can help to explain the ways in which relations between race, class and gender can produce inequality.

A multiracial feminist perspective using an intersectional framework can provide insight into the unique position of Black women in society. Black feminist scholars have largely argued for the centering of Black women's experiences due to their unique position at the margins of society (Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Jones, 2006; Ritchie, 2012). Viewing the experiences of Black women by subsuming them into either categories of "Black" *or* "woman" negates experiences central to being "Black" *and* "woman."

While many feminist scholars have begun to employ a multiracial perspective, it remains under-utilized when analyzing issues of crime, especially victimization (Burgess-Proctor, 2006). Black female scholarship on crime primarily reflects issues with sentencing, increased offending and other criminal justice system disparities, but focus is lacking on how race, class and gender intersect to inform Black women's victimization. Furthermore, most intersectional analyses

utilize qualitative methodologies, however quantitative methods can also be useful in understanding the ways in which race, class and gender intersect. Using quantitative methods can allow for good comparison between privileged and oppressed groups at a macro-level.

This study addresses the literature by examining violent victimization patterns between Black women, Black men, White women and White men in Detroit using multiracial feminism and intersectionality to inform understanding of unique experiences in regards to Black female victimization. Quantitative analysis will be preformed on data retrieved from the Detroit Community Based Violence Prevention Initiative to gain an understanding of how Black female victimization patterns may vary in comparison to Black male, White female, and White male victimization patterns. The importance of this study lies in its ability to possibly shed light on Black female victimization and open dialogue about issues pertinent to Black female experiences apart from just being female or Black.

A Conceptual Framework

Multiracial feminism is a perspective that attempts to go beyond recognition of difference among women and examine the matrix of domination, as well as the importance of examining other locations of difference that interact with gender (Collins, 2000). Multiracial feminism arose out of distain by women of color with the universalism of feminism in the analysis of women (Baca Zinn & Thornton, 1996; Burgess Proctor, 2006; Collins, 2000). These scholars viewed traditional feminist perspectives as reflective of the interests of White middle class women. They contend that White feminists decided to address issues such as working outside the home, without the voices of all women, as evidenced by the fact that women of color had no choice but to work outside the home already. The strife of the 1960s acted as a catalyst for women of color

to take up the gauntlet and have their voices and experiences heard, challenging hegemonic feminism.

Early feminist exploration focused on finding universal or essential characteristics among women (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996). Among women of color and other outsiders there was a call to drop universal definitions of women, because those definitions only included the issues of White middle class women. It can be argued that an assessment of difference occupies the focus of women studies today, but that focus on difference has been contested by scholars (Anderson, 2009; Baca Zinn & Dill, 1996; Bowleg, 2008; McCall, 2005) and a call for a mutually constitutive instead of an additive assessment for locations of inequality (race, class, gender sexuality etc.) is warranted, because "difference is often a euphemism for women who differ from the traditional norm" (Baca Zinn & Thorton-Dill 1996, p. 323).

Thus, multiracial feminism as a perspective can be understood through intersectionality, which emphasize race as mutually constitutive with other inequalities to shape a person's social location (Baca Zinn & Dill, 1996; Burgess-Proctor, 2006; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989). Race, class and gender are the salient intersections analyzed in most multiracial feminist scholarship, however some scholars address that other locations of inequality can also enter the intersectional analysis (i.e. ability, nationality, sexuality).

Intersectionality

An intersectional framework for studying gender is a natural evolution from the approaches of unitary analysis by early feminists. However, the term "intersectionality" continues to be ambiguous. It has come to be understood as "the interaction between race, class, gender and other locations of inequality in individuals lives, social practices institutional arrangements and cultural ideologies and the outcome of these interactions in terms of power"

(Davis, 2008: p. 68). Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), "intersectionality" was meant to capture the experiences of women of color that were traditionally lost due to the assumptions inherent in the women's and civil rights movement; that all women are white, and all Blacks are men. What that means is the experiences of women of color were strategically excluded to advance these movements, resulting in their omission and a need to incorporate into epistemologies their unique experience. Crenshaw's initial work highlights the unique challenge that Black women face in trying to prove the discrimination they experience. The discrimination is usually based on their race *and* gender, but at the time anti-discrimination law did not recognize, what it contends as compound classes, being both Black and female (Crenshaw, 1989).

Intersectionality was constructed with the intention of giving voice to those in oppressed positions. Hancock (2009) and McCall (2001) highlight the importance of studying multiply marginalized groups. Hancock emphasizes "multiple intersections" and McCall uses "intra-categorical" approaches, which focus on the different and unique experiences of subgroups within categories; such as Black women within women. This means it is true that all women share a standpoint unique to women, but Black women specifically have a shared worldview due to their position at the margins of society and their gender as racialized (Collins, 2000). Furthermore, comparisons to White women and Black men to understand the discrimination, unequal treatment and violence Black women experience as *Black women,* is not enough because it does not take into consideration the intersection of their experience (Crenshaw, 1989). Victimization research often focuses on specific gendered crime such as sexual victimization, with little exploration of differences among women, and inner city violent victimization tends to focus its exploration in the experiences of Black men. As stated, Black women have unique

experiences due to their social location, and so it is important to look intersectionally to capture Black women's patterns of violent victimization.

Violent Victimization Literature: Race, Class & Gender

The most reliable information about race, class and gender relationships in regards to victimization come from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Criminologists are aware that violent victimization has gendered aspects, with women reporting more incidents of rape, intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual assault, and men reporting more instances of robbery and assaults. Many studies have assessed gender and violent victimization finding that males far outnumber females in rates of victimization, except violence by intimate partners and sexual assault (Felson, 2002; Lauritsen & Heimer, 2008).

Outside of intimate partner violence and sexual assault, much research on violent victimization and gender has examined homicide, due to the availability of data (LaFree & Hunnicutt, 2006; Lauritsen & Heimer, 2008; Marvel & Moody 1999). Many studies concerned with race and violence focus on homicide, due to the seriousness of the issue, as well as the sociostructual race differences (Lauritsen, 2006). Homicide studies largely find that male and female rates vary similarly over time and across gender in disadvantaged areas. Not surprisingly, studies that limit homicide by intimate partner find that rates have decreased over the last few decades, but female rates have declined slower than males (Dugan, Nagin & Rosenfeld, 2003).

Community characteristics are well-developed measures in homicide research and allow for the ability to look at neighborhoods and regional characteristics that account for differences in Black and White homicide (Krivo & Peterson, 2000). Independent of demographic characteristics (such as gender) researchers have found that neighborhood poverty, residential mobility and family structures increase the likelihood of violent victimization (Lauritsen, 2001;

Sampson 1983; Sampson 1985). Overall, homicide research is the best developed in regards to race, class and gender intersections when assessing victimization.

In regards to assault trends in victimization research, both aggravated and simple assaults have closed gender gaps with male rates declining to a greater degree than female rates (Lauritsen & Heimer, 2008). Steffensmeier, Zhong, Ackerman, Schwartz, and Agha (2006) found that gender gaps in assault arrest rates for males and females have declined, with female rates staying constant while male rates decrease. This can aid in beginning to understand victimization trends in assault, due to the links between offending and victimization. Overall, gender specific analysis of violent victimization find similar, yet unique differences between men and women, and find higher rates of victimization in areas with concentrated disadvantage. Although major contributions have been made in developing gender or class and race aspects separately, the research is lacking. Most studies tend to focus on gender and violent victimization, or race and class in regards to violent victimization (Lauritsen & Heimer, 2008; Steffensmeier, Zhong, Ackerman, Schwartz & Agha, 2006). Seldom are the effects off all three analyzed to explain an individual's victimization experiences.

Structural Disadvantage, Crime, and Victimization

Blacks live in areas with the most concentrated disadvantage in U.S. cities, despite increased racial and ethnic diversity (Wilson, 1996). Research has consistently shown that areas of extreme disadvantage have increased victimization and criminal activity. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Blacks who resided in metropolitan areas are more likely to live in racially diverse areas whereas Whites tend to reside in neighborhoods that are predominately White (Logan & Stults, 2011). While gentrification has led to declines in Black-White segregation

overall, Massey, Rosewell & Domina (2009) find that segregation remains within census tract levels.

Concentrated disadvantage can have serious consequences, many of which are related to access that communities have to resources, and victimization in the community. Institutions and social resources such as quality schools, housing, political and police representation, and businesses are all connected to a neighborhoods location (Massey & Denton, 1993). Furthermore, structural characteristics such as unemployment, inequality, racial isolation and social dislocation aid in increased victimization in these areas (Peterson & Krivo, 1999). That lack of access disproportionately affects Blacks, as they are the ones that reside primarily in these locations (Massey, Rosewell & Domina, 2009).

The burden of living in neighborhoods with extreme levels of social and economic disadvantage and high levels of crime falls overwhelming on the shoulders of Black women (Like-Haislip & Warren, 2011). Blacks in general are less likely to live in ecological equality with Whites, which can be used to explain disproportionate victimization rates within Black communities (Cobbina, Morash, Kashy & Smith, 2014). Poverty is increasingly becoming the problem of women, particularly Black women (Like-Haislip & Warren, 2011). Given the disadvantage of Black women, their increased rates of violent victimization in contrast with White men and other women are not surprising (Lauritsen & White, 2001) As studies of concentrated disadvantage discuss, demographic characteristics are important for understanding violent victimization, and studies have assessed gender and race and class in regards to violent victimization (Logan & Stults, 2011;Massey & Denton, 1993;Massey, Rothwell & Domina, 2009).

Although significant contributions have been made, intersections of race and gender as well as class have not been fully developed. Feminist scholars have critiqued previous scholarship on violent victimization on the grounds that existing theories cannot be haphazardly applied to women. They have called for an emphasis on the interactive nature between gender and other demographic characteristics, and their impact on female experiences with violence, however most criminological scholarship ignores the interactions, or views them simply as control variables (Simpson & Gibbs, 2006). While calls for the creation of theories specific to these experiences have been made, I contend that a multiracial feminist perspective through an intersectional framework can aid in advancing exploration of Black female victimization.

Black Female Victimization

The research on Black female violent victimization is scant, with interpersonal violence (IPV) being the exception. Victimization research posits that violence occurs often in impoverished Black communities; therefore, race and class can aid in an analysis of the experiences of Black female victimization. Inner city Black women witness violence on a day-to-day basis, and Black females in areas of concentrated disadvantage have to constantly navigate between being victims of violence and perpetrators of violence (Cobbina, Miller & Brunson, 2008; Jones, 2009). This is due to the hostile environments in which these women reside, which threaten their safety, and lead to a heightened sense of fear (Jenkins, 2002).

As much as the community can be detrimental to Black women, victimization exists in great numbers within their households. Black women experience higher rates of IPV than their White counterparts (Taft, Bryant-Davis, Woodward, Tillman & Torres, 2009). Furthermore, Black women have the highest risk of dying from IPV, being two to three times more likely to be killed by an intimate partner than White women (Catalano, Smith, Snyder & Rand, 2009). Black

women in poor communities are also at greater risk for IPV, and younger Black girls are vulnerable to sexual victimization by family members (Ritchie, 2012). The lack of safety in home environments adds to the compound issues of race, class and gender in the lives of Black women and girls.

In combination with issues of IPV, Black women and girls are unlikely to disclose intimate victimization for fear of being considered "traitors to their race" (Collins, 2000). Lorde (1992) notes the need for racial unity has made Black women particularly vulnerable to the false accusation that anti-sexist is also "anti-black". Within the Black community, being Black is thought to be enough of a burden to carry, so racial solidarity is expected. To bring attention to intraracial issues that may lead to more Black men becoming involved with the criminal justice system is to be a traitor. hooks (1981) states that Black women and men who support patriarchy have an investment in presenting Blacks as only oppressed by racism but not sexism. This points to the intersections of race, class and gender as mutually constitutive and worthy of intersectional analysis in the lives of Black women.

In addition to issues surrounding neighborhoods and homes, Black women constantly face negative stereotypes in the media and society. Alexander (1995) posits that Black women are the ultimate outsiders and perhaps the most consistently marginalized segment of our society in terms of economic and political power. Black women's bodies have been regulated and objectified throughout world history. The construction of Black female sexuality is shaped within the context of slavery, which can explain Black women's experiences with intimate partner violence and sexual victimization. In regards to sexual victimization, stereotypes of Black women as sexually available jezebels have facilitated their discrediting when raped. Collins (2000) discusses controlling images of Black women as "matriarchs", "mammies",

"jezebels", "welfare queens" and "hoochies" and how these images have lead to the policing of

Black women's sexuality and motherhood. Davis (1998) states Black women have "always

suffered in far greater proportion and intensity the effects of institutionalized male supremacy"

(p. 186). The experience of violence against Black women is made greater by classism and

racism when analyzing Black sexuality. It is not illogical to assume that the socialization of the

public to view Black women as "whores" has contributed to victimization of Black women.

Application of Intersectionality Using Quantitative Methods

Multiracial feminism through its intersectional approach emphasizes that race, class, and

gender are structuring forces that affect how people act, their access to opportunities and how

their behavior is defined (Lynch, 1996). Traditionally, intersectionality is an approach used to

critique generalizations about groups, and incorporate thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Inherently that appears to make intersectional analysis divergent with quantitative methods.

Some intersectional scholars have abhorred the use of quantitative methods, stating that they get

away from the theoretical understanding of intersectionality and reduce groups to categorical

comparison (Alexander-Floyd, 2012). However, there are also feminist scholars who find value

in using quantitative methods for intersectional research, and have carried out the task

sufficiently (Harnois, 2005; Harnois & Ifatunji, 2011; McCall, 2005; McCall, 2007; Perry,

2009;Veenstra, 2011).

Despite debate around quantitative and qualitative methods it stands that both can help

inform research in different ways. While qualitative analysis allows for rich data filled with

emotions and thought processes, quantitative data are better suited for capturing macro effects of

phenomena such as inequality on victimization rates (McCall, 2005). It also allows for an easy

comparison across multiple groups and categories. While race, gender and class are comprised of

complex sets of relations, encapsulating them in a quantitative measure can allow for researcher to observe macro level effects that these intersecting relationships have on an individual's experiences. Using a quantitative intersectional approach to analyzing violent victimization patterns among Black women in comparison with other groups places them at the center of inquiry and can help inform how quantitative methods can have merit in intersectional analyses.

Purpose of the Study

This study explores previous research by examining three research questions:

> **Research Question 1**: How are types of violent victimization different between Black men, White men, White women and Black women in Detroit?

> **Hypothesis 1**: Men more likely to experience assault and murder and women more likely to be victims of sexual assault.

> **Research Question 2**: Does structural disadvantage have differential effects on Black male, Black female, White female and White male violent victimization rates?

> **Hypothesis 2:** Structural disadvantage will have differential effects on the four groups, with Blacks experiencing greater rates of victimization in areas characterized by more disadvantage.

> **Research Question 3:** Does gender inequality have differential effects on Black and White female violent victimization rates?

> **Hypothesis 3:** Victimization rates for women will be higher in areas that have high gender income inequality.

Methods

The primary sources of data for this study consist of police reports from the City of Detroit Police Department, along with information from the United States Census. Victimization

data were collected for Detroit Community Based Violence Prevention Initiative. The data set contains rich information about various crimes reported to police in Detroit between 2008 and 2013, including crime incident location, date, type, victim demographic information (i.e. race, gender, age), and other incident participants, such as witness and offender information. In total, the data contain nearly two million documented crime incidents. Because the unit of analysis in the first part of this study is "victim", a victim-based file was created from the incident-based file, consisting of only UCR defined violent crime incidents. This resulted in a final sample size of 71,308 victims and will allow examination of victim characteristics.

Sociostructual information about the Detroit area (economic deprivation, social disorganization and gender inequality) will be mapped onto the data in order to fully capture structural disadvantage, and highlight concepts informed by multiracial feminism. Descriptive information on the variables can be found in Table 1. Furthermore, to the impact of structural disadvantage on rates of victimization, the victim data file was aggregated to the block group level. Data was compared against census block groups in Detroit resulting in a final sample size of 754 block groups.

Table 1. Characteristics of Detroit, MI compared to the United States

Variable	Detroit, MI	National
General Characteristics		
% female	52.7	50.8
% male	47.3	49.2
Median Age	33.8	35.8
% White	10.6	72.4
% Black	82.7	12.6
Economic Deprivation		
Median Income	$28,357	$51,914
% below poverty	34.5	13.8
% public assistance	4.2	1.3
% single parent	7.6 male	5 male
	31.5 female	13 female
% unemployed	24.8	7.9
Gender Inequality		
Median earnings of men &	$26,924 male	$39,084 male
women	$23,642 female	$26, 897 female
% Men & Women with HS	37.3 males	60.7 males
diplomas	31.4 females	54.4 female
% Men & Women in	43 male	61.9 male
management positions	57 female	38.1 female
Social Disorganization		
% Moved past 5 years	36	35
% Vacant	22.8	12.2

Source: US Census Bureau 2010, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

Table 1 displays characteristics of Detroit compared to national statistics. Detroit is a unique location for the current study, because it is 82.7% Black relative to 12.6% nationally; 50% female, fairly equal with national estimates of 51%; and in Detroit 35% of residents are living below the poverty level, whereas national estimates are 13.8%. Also worth noting, the median income gap between men and women in Detroit is smaller than nationally. This area allows for Black victimization to be captured due to the high number of Black respondents.

Many studies lack the number of respondents to adequately capture differences that may exist within this population.

Arguments can be made that findings generated from Detroit lack generalizability to the general population; however, I contend that the focus of this study is to capture Black male and female victimization patterns, so high numbers of Black respondents aids in being able to assess those patterns. Furthermore, many urban cities in the United States have high Black populations, and this assessment may be able to capture issues within these similar cities.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on the Sample (N=71,308)

Demographic Characteristics

% Female	44.3%
% Male	53.6 %
Median Age	29
% White	14%
% Black	82.1%
% Black Female	40.15%
% Black Male	45.29%
% White Female	5.30%
% White Male	9.26%
% Assault	57.60%
% Murder	2.38%
% Robbery	34.38%
% Sexual Assault	5.64%

Table 2 contains descriptive statistics on the sample. This table includes only individuals identified as "victims" in the DPD police reports. In addition, only UCR classified violent crimes are present in the sample. From Table 2, most of the victims were victims of assault, and the next

highest reported victimization was robbery at 35.5%. In order to explore intersections of race and gender, race and sex of victims were combined to create variables that represent the intersection. As is the case in Detroit as a whole, about half of the victim sample is female. In addition, the victim sample contains a similar racial distribution as the Detroit population as a whole (see Table 1). When the race and sex variables are combined, Black men comprise a majority of the sample at 43.5%. Black women are the next largest represented population at 38.6%. This is not representative nationally; however, this makes the sample ideal to examine Blacks and capture a portrait of victimization patterns in urban areas.

Dependent variables. The dependent variables used in this study to assess differences between groups are violent victimization and violent victimization rate among each group. The violent victimization variables come from the FBI definition of violent crime. Violent crime rates in Detroit are among some of the highest in the nation. When assessing the violent victimization of these groups in Detroit, it is important to keep that in mind, as it may artificially inflate conclusions.   The variable "incident category" was recoded as a dichotomous variable and indicates whether the offense was violent (0=no, 1=yes). Only violent victimization offenses as defined by the uniform crime index were kept in the data set. Also, once the data were aggregated victimization rate variables were calculated for the race/sex variable.

Independent variables. The data set contains coded variables that indicate individual characteristics (i.e. age, race, and sex). For the purpose of the current study, race and sex will be assessed in combination. Given the racial composition of Detroit, the data set allows for adequate assessment of Black victims. In the data, Black female victims make up 40.15% of the cases and Black male victims account for 45.29% of cases. White female victims comprise 5.30% of cases and white males 9.26% in the data set, which allows for comparison across race.

Sociostructual variables are hypothesized to affect victimization by race and gender, based on prior research on structural disadvantage and victimization (Logan & Stults, 2011;Massey & Denton, 1993;Massey, Rothwell & Domina, 2009). These variables will be measured at the census tract level, and taken from the 2010 United States Census. Census data are publicly available, easily obtainable and include relatively homogenous geographic areas that include population characteristics, economic status, and living conditions (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The theoretical concepts measured by the sociostructual variables are economic deprivation, social disorganization and gender inequality. Indicators of each variable were selected based on prior research (Pizarro, DeJong & McGarrell, 2010). Confirmatory factor analysis was used to create and confirm scales. Economic deprivation was created using four indicators: median income, percentage of the population living below poverty, percentage of the population receiving public assistance, and percentage of population in single mother households with children. Social disorganization was comprised of two indicators: percentage of vacant homes, and percentage of population that did not live at the same address five years before. Finally, gender inequality is assessed with two indicators: median income of men and women, percentage of men and women with high school degrees.

Analytic Strategy

Analysis began with a bivariate crosstabulation, which determined how different types of violent victimization impacted White women, White men, Black en and Black women. Multivariate analysis was conducted using OLS regression due to the continuous nature of the dependent variables. This method tests the goodness of fit for the model and can determine the importance of the independent variables while controlling for other relevant factors.

The first hypothesis was tested using individual level victim data, to compare violent

victimization between groups. For hypotheses two and three the data was aggregated to the block

group level (N=754) to compare the victimization rates among groups using the independent

variables.

Findings

Table 3. Differences in Violent Victimization by Race and Gender (N=71,308)

Variable	Black Females (N=28,630)	Black Males (N=32,296)	White females (N=3,779)	White males (N=6,603)	Total
% Violent Victims	40.15	45.29	5.30	9.26	71308
% Assault Victims	42.96 N=17647	45.52 N=18697	4.30 N=1767	7.21 N=2962	41072
% Murder Victims	10.76 N=183	78.88 N=1341	1.71 N=29	8.65 N=147	1700
% Robbery Victims	31.19 N=7645	48.62 N=11917	6.12 N=1501	14.07 N=3450	24513
% Sexual Assault Victims	78.44 N=3156	8.48 N=341	11.98 N=482	1.09 N=44	4023

Table 3 contains the results of a crosstabulation, which was performed to assess

differences in violent victimization across groups of race and sex. The percentages presented

were calculated using individual-level data, representing all violent crimes reported to the Detroit

Police Department between 2009 and 2012. Because these data represent the population of

victimization incidents and is not a sample, the number of cases is very large and all differences

were statistically significant. Black women victims comprise 40.15% of violent crime victims in

Detroit, with Black men close to Black females in this regard. White men and women had significantly lower percentages of victimization than Black men and women at 9.26% and 5.30% respectively. With regard to specific violent crime incidents, Black women's victimization was largely assaults at 42.96%. White women had the lowest percentages of assault victimization.

The most likely group to experience homicide is Black males (78.88%), with Black women, White women, and White men having significantly lower reported percentages of homicide. Similar to murder, 48.62% of Black male victims were victims of robbery. In regards to robbery, White male victimization percentages were higher than White female victimization percentages, but not Black female percentages. In line with research on sexual assault, women are more likely to be victims than men, with White women only experiencing slightly higher percentages than Black women.

Table 4. Multivariate Regression (Standardized Coefficients) of Neighborhood Factors for Violent Victimization (N=754 block groups)

Variable	Model I Black Females	Model II Black Males	Model III White Females	Model IV White Males
Economic Deprivation	.161**	.127**	.007	.027
Gender Inequality	-.096**	-.081*	.124**	.119**
Social Disorganization	.147**	.153**	-.076*	-.041
Mean Age	-.159**	-.039	.039	.058
R-square	.079	.051	.022	.020

*P(t)<.05; **P(t)<.01

Multivariate Regression

       The model in Table 4 contains the results of four different regression models in which race of victimization for combinations of race and sex are analyzed. For instance, for the Black females model, the dependent variable is number of Black female victims in the neighborhood divided by the total population to produce the rate of Black female violent victims in a neighborhood. Each equation includes variables measuring economic deprivation, gender income inequality, social disorganization and mean age in a neighborhood. Gender inequality measures that ratio of male to female earnings in a neighborhood.   The four models in Table 4 analyze victimization rate for four different groups: Black females, Black males, White females and finally White males.

       The table reveals that Black female violent victimization in a neighborhood can be explained by each of the included variables. Looking at the regression for this group, reveals effects of economic deprivation (B = .161), gender inequality (B=-.096), social disorganization (B=. 147), and mean age (B=-.159). From the model, it can be assumed that more economic deprivation, and social disorganization in neighborhood, the risk of violent victimization for Black women increases. Also younger neighborhoods and those with less gender inequality also lead to increased risk of violent victimization

       Black male victimization can be explained by economic deprivation, social disorganization and gender inequality. Mean age of the neighborhood was not associated with increased violent victimization rate for this group. Looking at the regression output, economic deprivation (B= .127) and social disorganization (B=. 153) had weak effects. Gender inequality also has a weak relationship, but the effect is negative.

The only significant predictors for white female violent victimization rate in a neighborhood were gender inequality and social disorganization, but the relationships are the opposite of what was found for rates of Black victimization. With more gender income inequality in an area, we would assume increased victimization rates for white women in a neighborhood; however, the increased social disorganization leads to a decrease in victimization rates among this group. Also, an increase in gender income inequality leads to increased victimization rates in a neighborhood for this group. For white men, the only significant predictor was gender income inequality, which leads to increased victimization among this group. R^2 values for the models reveal that the independent variables do not explain violent victimization rates for the groups well, however Black group victimization rates were better explained by these variables than White group violent victimization rates.

Discussion

This study's focus of inquiry was to examine Black female victimization in comparison with Black men, White women, and White men. I first explored how types of victimization would differ between men and women in Detroit, and hypothesized that men would be more likely to experience assault and murder and women more likely to be victims of sexual assault. I also hypothesized that structural disadvantage will have differential effects on the four groups, with Blacks experiencing greater rates of victimization in areas characterized by more disadvantage. Finally, I hypothesized victimization rates for women would be higher in areas that have high gender income inequality.

Using a crosstabulation, I found that Black women and Black men had higher percentages of violent victimization in neighborhoods in Detroit than White men and women. It

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should be noted that Black individuals comprise 82.1% of the sample populations, which could result in the findings. However previous literature does contend that Blacks are more likely to be victims of violent crimes than White individuals, due to concentrations in more disadvantaged areas. Further, Black men and women had close to similar assault percentages, whereas the gap between the races as well as between White women and White men were larger.

Overwhelmingly, Black males were victims of murder when compared to the other groups in bivariate analysis, however the percentage of Black women that were victims of murder was greater than White females and White males. Similar patterns are found with robbery. As far as sexual assault victims, females outnumbered males, with White women experiencing a slightly higher percentage than Black women. The findings from the crosstab demonstrate that Black individuals are victims of all crimes at higher percentages than White individuals in these neighborhoods, demonstrating partial support for the first hypothesis. However the higher number of Black individuals in Detroit could have affected the ability to state that Black individuals have higher percentages with the types of violent crime presented, than White individuals. These patterns fall in line with previous research, and also the composition of Detroit as a highly segregated city could account for the patterns that were revealed.

Also supported was the hypothesis that Black men and women would have higher victimization rates in areas with greater disadvantage. In the multivariate model, it was found that Black female violent victimization rates increased in areas of higher economic deprivation and social disorganization. Also, younger neighborhoods and those with less gender income inequality also lead to increased risk of violent victimization. The findings suggest that for Black

women concentrated disadvantage has an effect on victimization risk, which is in line with previous research on Black individuals.

From the multivariate model of Black male violent victimization rate, it can be assumed that neighborhoods with higher levels of economic deprivation and social disorganization lead to increased risk of victimization for Black men. Increased gender income inequality is an area decreases risk of violent victimization for this group. Economic deprivation in the neighborhood was not a significant predictor for White male or White female victims, however social disorganization was negatively associated with their victimization rates. More socially disorganized areas led to decreased victimization rates for this group. The finding could be due to the lack of White individuals in the sample as compared to Black individuals. However it could also be that the less integrated these individuals feel in an area, the less likely they may be to carry out activities that could lead to victimization in line with routine activities theories.

Combining race and sex to explore the intersection of how multiple positionalities affect victimization seem to suggest that Black female violent victimization is not that different from Black male violent victimization and it's association with concentrated disadvantage. Both groups live in similarly disadvantaged areas, and the findings suggest that certain levels of deprivation may affect all groups. Future studies may do well to use mixed methods to capture Black women's victimization experiences that may differ from Black men.

Gender income inequality was significant in each model, however it had a different correlation for Blacks and Whites. It appears as though the more equality between men and women in regards to pay decreases violent victimization risk in neighborhood areas for Black individuals. This falls in line with feminist literature that states more income equality leads to diminished violence against women. However for White individuals, equality in regards to

gender leads to increased victimization risk among these groups. This finding is contrary to the hypothesis as well as previous literature and may suggest that the limited number of White individuals in Detroit adversely affected correlation between variables. Future analysis should be conducted in multiple areas to observe how inequality of pay between groups may affect violent victimization rates.

As stated throughout, it is important to note that the findings of this study be interpreted with caution, because the data are limited in several important ways. First, the data are provided by police or taken from police records. The data are very rich, having a multitude of information, but it only captured reported incidents. Multiracial feminism is concerned with the voices of marginalized individuals, and the data does not represent that entire voice. The low number of sexual assaults in the data evidences this, because feminist research tells us there are far more unreported cases of sexual assault. Second, this data comes exclusively from Detroit. While able to provide a good sample of Black individuals to study, due to the racial segregation of Detroit I could likely be overestimating the differences between groups.

Conclusion

In all, this study set out to use quantitative analysis to assess intersectionality while exploring violent victimization between Black women, Black men, White women, and White men. Multiracial feminism is concerned with focusing the discussion of various issues, with marginalized groups at the center. The current study places Black women at the center of exploration in an attempt to see what factors may contribute to their victimization aside form other groups. From the findings it appears as though Black women experience similar patterns to Black men in regards to violent victimization. The patterns that emerged demonstrated that concentrated disadvantage has similar impacts for Black individuals.

However, the findings suggest quantitative methods alone, may not be the best at capturing the intersections of race and class that exist according to literature. However they can help inform intersectionality and serve as a launching point for further exploration with qualitative methods. Furthermore the above study displays how intersectional research should involve questions that explore comparisons of privileged and oppressed groups, to get a picture of how oppression is affecting marginalized groups, like Black women.

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