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African American Women in the Workplace: Relationships Between Job Conditions, Racial Bias at Work, and Perceived Job Quality[1]

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Although studies have described work processes among employed African American women, few have examined the influence of these processes on job outcomes. This study examined relationships between African American women's exposure to a range of occupational stressors, including two types of racial bias—institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice—and their evaluations of job quality. Findings indicated that institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice were more important predictors of job quality among these women than were other occupational stressors such as low task variety and decision authority, heavy workloads, and poor supervision. Racial bias in the workplace was most likely to be reported by workers in predominantly white work settings. In addition, Black women who worked in service, semiskilled, and unskilled occupations reported significantly more institutional discrimination, but not more interpersonal prejudice, than did women in professional, managerial, and technical occupations or those in sales and clerical occupations.

KEY WORDS: African American women; institutional discrimination; interpersonal prejudice; job quality; racial bias.

There were over 7 million African American women in the civilian labor force as of March 1993. This number comprises 5% of all workers, 12% of all female workers, and 50% of all African American workers. Among African American women age 16 and over, 57.4% work for pay or are look-

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ing for work (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1994). Over 66% of married African American women are employed outside of the home, including 76% of those with children under age 18 (Families and work Institute, 1995; U.S. Bureau of Census, 1989). The number of African American women in the civilian labor force increased by almost 26% between 1985 and 1995. The latest projections indicate that 9 million African American women will be labor force participants by the year 2005 (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1996).

Despite evidence that work constitutes a major life domain among African American women, researchers know relatively little about the work experiences of this group (Cox & Nkomo, 1990). Much of the literature aims to explain racial differences in structural features of women's employment such as labor force participation rates, earnings, and occupational mobility (see Wallace, 1980, for an overview). Although these studies serve many purposes, they tell us little about perceived job quality or about factors that influence it. Other ethnographic and historical studies describing the role of work in African American women's lives provide textural detail about sources of work satisfaction and strain (Martin, 1994; Richie, 1992). However, empirical knowledge about how conditions at work influence job experiences among African American women is limited. For example, studies of job conditions such as high psychological workload, low task variety, and low decision-making authority—well established occupational stressors—are primarily based on samples of male Caucasian workers. Although recent studies have examined such job characteristics among female (e.g., Haynes, LaCroix, & Lippin, 1987; Karasek, Gardell, & Lindell, 1987; Landsbergis, 1988) and African American workers (e.g., Albright, Winkleby, Ragland, & Fischer, 1992; Moch, 1990; Orpen, 1992) to our knowledge, none of these studies has distinguished African American female workers from other female or African American male workers. Work experiences (and factors that influence it) may be distinct among African American women as compared to their White female and African American male counterparts, due to African American women's dual status as both women and minorities. Thus, researchers cannot necessarily generalize findings from the literature on the work experiences of these other demographic subgroups to African American women.

The occupational disadvantage of women relative to men has been well established by social scientists. Compared to employed men, employed women are more likely to work in support positions and in jobs that are below their level of training (Vetter, 1981). The jobs that women hold tend to be intrinsically less rewarding, offer less opportunity for control and skill utilization, and are less secure than those held by men (Mortimer & Sorenson, 1984). Recent studies of women in traditionally female jobs, including clerical workers (Aronnson, Dallner, & Aborg, 1994; Carayon, 1992),

nurses (Baba & Jamal, 1991), women assembly line workers (Clegg, Wall, & Kemp, 1987), and sewing machine operators (Brisson, Vezina, & Vinet, 1992) suggest that these sorts of job conditions are associated with poorer physical and mental health outcomes and with job dissatisfaction among women as they are among men. Women's earnings are also lower than men's earnings. Although the wage differential among African American men and women is less than that among European American men and women, African American women nevertheless earn only 89% of African American men's median weekly earnings, despite their greater representation in higher status occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1994).

In addition to occupational disadvantage based on gender, African American women encounter occupational disadvantages based on their race. The unemployment rate among African American women is almost twice that among White women (12 vs. 5.7% in 1993) and they are twice as likely as White women to be concentrated in blue-collar and service positions (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1994). Even within job categories, African American women seem to be the targets of subtle occupational bias. McGuire and Reskin (1993) found that African American women received fewer rewards for their credentials in terms of job authority and earnings potential than did African American men, White women, or White men. In Marshall and Barnett's (1991) study of African American and White female licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and social workers, African American LPNs reported less challenging jobs, poorer supervision, and fewer rewards from their jobs than did comparable White women.

Also, it is well documented that African American women (and men) encounter prejudicial racial attitudes and other noxious stimuli during everyday workplace interactions with Whites. For example, in a study of a predominantly African American sample of nurses aides in three Arkansas nursing homes, Mercer, Heacock, and Beck (1993) found that 77% of the nurses aides reported a high level of discriminatory language and behavior on the part of both management and patients. Feagin and Sikes (1994), in a study of African American white-collar workers, found that African Americans experience exclusion from informal social networks, exaggerated performance expectations, assumptions of incompetence on the part of White coworkers, supervisors, and clients, and other subtle forms of racial bias. Similar findings have been reported in a qualitative study of African American female managers and professionals (Bell, 1990) as well as in other studies and journalistic accounts (Davis & Watson, 1982).

Laboratory studies support self-report data on the existence of covert workplace racial bias against African Americans (Pettigrew & Martin, 1987). For instance, when asked to explain successes or failures of African American

and White target employees, White raters attribute positive actions among African Americans to situational factors, whereas they attribute negative actions among this group to dispositional factors. In simulated interview situations, White subjects have also been found to engage in less eye contact and less verbal exchange with African American as compared to White interviewees, and to be less friendly in their interactions with them (Pettigrew & Martin, 1987).

In sum, little is known about African American women's work experiences even though they continue to be the most occupationally disadvantaged of any group. Like other women, they encounter bias and discrimination based on their gender. Like African American men, they encounter bias and discrimination based on their race. However, researchers have rarely examined comprehensively how the occupational conditions that African American women encounter affect them. To understand more fully the context of African American women's work lives, it is important to assess systematically the ways in which occupational conditions influence the quality of their job experiences.

THE PRESENT STUDY

This study examined one component of African American women's occupational experiences—their exposure to racial bias in the workplace, using data from a larger cross-sectional study of work and family processes among dual-earner African American men and women with school-aged children (ages 4–14) living in Chicago. The focus on racial bias was guided by its potential importance for job outcomes and experiences together with the relative paucity of quantitative data about its distinct dimensions. The focus on African American women was guided primarily by the theme of this special issue: Certainly, racial bias may be similarly important to African American men's occupational experiences.

In accordance with conceptualizations of racism offered by other theorists, (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Essed, 1990; Lykes, 1983; Rodriguez, 1987; Wilson, 1973) two distinct dimensions of workplace racial bias were examined as they influence job quality: institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice. Institutional discrimination was conceived as organizational policies and procedures that unfairly restrict the opportunities of African Americans or that perpetuate advantages or privileges for the majority group (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986). Interpersonal prejudice was conceived as negative beliefs, attitudes, and feelings towards African Americans, and actions and behaviors that are based on them.

The major hypothesis of the study was that exposure to racial bias at work would be an especially important predictor of job quality among these women. The deleterious consequences of racism and discrimination have been well-described by social scientists (e.g., Billingsley, 1968; Hill, 1971) and are widely acknowledged in the popular literature (e.g., Cose, 1993; Steele, 1993). Moreover, studies have found significant associations between exposure to discrimination and physiological indicators such as increased heart rate and corrugator activity as well as elevated blood pressure (James, Lovato, & Khoo, 1994; Sutherland & Harrell, 1986), highlighting its adverse effects on well-being. Thus, the study examined the effects of institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice on perceived job quality after controlling for structural features of work (e.g., representation of other women and minorities in the workplace; job category; earnings) and other occupational stressors (e.g., low task variety, low decision-making latitude, heavy psychological workload, and poor supervision) that may also influence job quality.

If exposure to racial bias in the workplace diminishes job quality, it is also important to identify characteristics of work settings that impede or promote such bias. Thus, a secondary aim of the present study was to investigate structural features of work that may be associated with institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice. It was expected that African American women who worked in predominantly White work environments would report more institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice than would those who worked in integrated or predominantly African American work environments. Pettigrew and Martin's (1987) review of the social–psychological literature suggests that African Americans are especially likely to encounter preconceived stereotypes and extreme expectations when there are few or no other African Americans in the work setting because they are more novel and more visible within the organization under such circumstances. Seltzer and Thompson (1985) reported that African Americans who worked in organizations that were more than 60% White were almost twice as likely to report discrimination against African Americans in hiring and promotions than were African Americans who worked in organizations that were less than 60% White. These studies, however, have not focused exclusively on African American women.

It was also expected that higher status African American women would report more racial bias in the workplace than would lower status African American women. In addition to the greater likelihood that higher status women work in predominantly White work settings, barriers to upward career mobility appear to be more pronounced among professionals and managers than among service workers, skilled laborers, and unskilled laborers. Bowman (1991), distinguishing between upper primary sector jobs

(e.g., managerial/administrative and professional/technical), lower primary sector jobs (e.g., craft, clerical, and sales) and secondary sector jobs (e.g., unskilled, operative, and service), reported that workers in the two primary sector labor markets perceived higher levels of discrimination at their jobs. In Seltzer and Thompson's (1985) study, 60% of African American professionals reported that they had been discriminated against, whereas 25% of African American workers in blue-collar and service occupations reported such discrimination.

Before turning to the study, it is important to note that our main purpose was to focus on how different sorts of stressors operate within a sample of African American women; not to compare the occupational experiences of African American men and women. We believe that such a focus is not only legitimate in its own right, but the data were inappropriate for comparative purposes. As in most samples, the men and women in this sample worked in different sorts of occupations. Women (47%) were concentrated in lower primary sector occupations (e.g., clerks, secretaries, receptionists) whereas men (62%) were concentrated in secondary sector occupations (e.g., janitors, dock workers, welders, truck drivers). Given the small sample, we had little statistical power to compare men and women within the same occupational category: Comparisons across occupational categories would have been equally tenuous. We do, however, occasionally refer to exploratory comparisons where illustrative.

METHODS

Trained African American interviewers conducted $1^1/_2$-hour structured in-home interviews with a nonrepresentative sample of African American respondents. The interview protocol covered a range of work and family processes including job experiences, work–family role difficulty, marital behaviors, parenting values, and racial socialization practices. Because a primary objective of the larger study was to examine theoretical issues related to racial socialization, participation in the study was limited to African Americans in married-couple families with at least one child between the ages of 4 and 14 years.

Snowball sampling strategies were used to recruit respondents, a procedure in which respondents identified other African American families who met the criteria for participation. Within each eligible household that was contacted, interviewers chose to interview the mother or father by selecting the parent with the most recent birthday, resulting in interviews with 79 women and 78 men. Snowball sampling results in unknown sample biases but was the most feasible strategy given the specificity and low inci-

dence of the population we were trying to reach. Although this precludes the generalization of findings beyond this study, it enabled us to begin to examine more completely work processes that influence occupational, family, and parenting experiences among African Americans.

Despite the purposive sampling, we also employed strategies to obtain a socioeconomically diverse sample. The sample was seeded using 18 respondents in 12 different community areas in Chicago that had high concentrations of African Americans and of married-couple households with children. The final sample of 157 respondents included men and women living in 30 different community areas in which median family incomes ranged from $5,909 to $62,715 per year: In 40% of these community areas, the median family income was above $30,000 per year.

Sample

The 79 African American women in the sample were all full-time employed married women with at least one child between the ages of 4 and 14 years. The majority (90%) lived in neighborhoods that were "all" or "mostly" African American, according to their own reports. Women's ages ranged from 21 to 53 years, with a mean of 37. Median personal income among these women was $10,000 to $24,999 per year: Median family income was higher—between $40,000 and $54,000 per year. On average, women had been working in their present jobs for 7.5 years. Twenty-four percent of women were in service, semiskilled, or unskilled occupations, 47% were in clerical or sales occupations, and 29% were in professional or managerial occupations. About 14% worked among "no" or "few" other women; 23% worked among "no" or "few" other African Americans. Ninety-five percent of women had graduated from high school and another 22% had completed 4 years of college.

Measures

Demographic and Structural Work Variables. A variety of demographic and structural work variables were controlled in the analyses. Demographic variables included *age*, measured in years on a continuous scale, and *educational attainment*, an ordinal-level variable ranging from 1 = less than 8th grade to 9 = graduate or professional education beyond college. Structural work variables included *earnings*, measured in increments of $15,000 (e.g., $10–24,999); *proportion of same-sex workers in the work place* (1 = none or few; 0 = some, most, or all); *proportion of same-race workers in the workplace* (1 = none or few; 0 = some, most, or all); and *labor market*

category, a set of two dummy variables coded to represent upper primary sector occupations (e.g., professional, managerial, and technical jobs), lower primary sector occupations (e.g., clerical and sales jobs), and secondary sector occupations (service, machine trades, processing, structural, and bench work occupations). Respondents' labor market category were designated using their responses to open-ended occupation and industry questions which were then coded using three-digit codes from the U.S. Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles. In all analyses, secondary sector workers served as the reference group.

Job Conditions. Items assessing job conditions were derived primarily from Karasek's (1985) Job Content Instrument, which consists of statements that describe the external demands and objective conditions of workers' jobs. Previous research suggests that subscales tap features of the job itself rather than characteristics of the individual job holder (House & Smith, 1985). Subscales are correlated with job descriptions contained in the U. S. Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles (House & Smith, 1985) and with the prevalence of coronary heart disease in the United States and Sweden (Karasek, Baker, Marxer, Alhbom, & Theorell, 1981; Karasek, Theorell, Schwartz, & Alfredson, 1982). In the present study, measures of *skill discretion* (6 items; e.g., My job requires that I learn new things; My job allows me to make lots of decisions on my own; $\alpha = .79$) and *psychological workload* (7 items; e.g., I have deadlines that are difficult to meet; My job requires working very hard; $\alpha = .67$) were retained based on principal axes factor analyses of items from the Job Content Survey. A measure of supervisor support was also included (9 items; e.g., My supervisor recognizes when I do a good job; $\alpha = .94$). For all subscales, items were rated on a 4-point scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 4 (*strongly disagree*).

Workplace Racial Bias. Items measuring two dimensions of racial bias in the workplace were developed for this study. Item content was derived from focus group interviews with African American workers in professional/managerial and service occupations (Hughes & Dumont, 1993). Principal axes factor analysis confirmed a priori expectations that items assessed two distinct dimensions of workplace racial bias. Items loading above .6 on one factor and below .45 on the other were retained. The *institutional discrimination* subscale assessed the extent to which system level transactions, such as the distribution of salaries, benefits, job assignments, and opportunities for promotion, are unfavorably biased against African American workers (5 items; e.g., At my job, Blacks tend to get the least desirable job assignments; $\alpha = .88$). This measure of institutional discrimination was significantly correlated with a single item assessing discrimination in workers present jobs ($r = .40$) but not with a similar item assessing discrimination in any previous jobs, suggesting that the measure does not simply assess

a predisposition towards perceiving discrimination. The *interpersonal prejudice* subscale assessed the extent to which respondents encounter workplace racial bias in daily interpersonal transactions. Items covered issues such as overhearing racial jokes and slurs, assumptions of incompetence, and encounters with stereotypes and prejudice (8 items; e.g., At my job, people have stereotypes about blacks that affect how they judge me; $\alpha = .91$). This subscale was not associated with either single item assessing discrimination in past or current jobs. The institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice subscales were significantly correlated, but were retained as distinct subscales in the analyses because of theoretical interest in their unique effects.

Perceived Job Quality. A measure of *global job satisfaction* was used as an indicator of job quality. Global job satisfaction is an important indicator of general attitudes towards work and predicts important work variables such as absenteeism, productivity, and intention to leave the job. It was assessed using a two-item index previously used in the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey (Quinn & Staines, 1977). Respondents were asked to indicate their own feelings about their jobs as a whole as well as their feelings about a son or a daughter obtaining the same sort of job as a regular or permanent job. The two items are rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (*delighted*) to 7 (*terrible*).

RESULTS

Descriptive Results

Table I provides means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for major study variables. Women reported relatively high levels of job satisfaction: On average, they were "mostly satisfied" to " pleased" with their present jobs. They also reported moderate levels of institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice, reporting less of the former, however, than of the latter. As the zero-order correlation coefficients indicate, women's location in the labor market was an important correlate of their background characteristics and of their perceptions of their jobs. Women in upper primary sector jobs were older and had more years of education than did other women. Women in lower primary sector jobs had fewer years of formal education than did other women. Although women in upper primary sector jobs had higher earnings than other women, there were no differences across job category in the proportion of other women or African Americans in the workplace. In turn, women in upper primary jobs reported significantly more decision latitude and

Table I. Means and Zero-Order Correlations for Major Study Variables[a]

Variable	*M*	*SD*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Age	37.01	7.00	.20	.24	−.15	−.11	.24[b]	−.06	−.17	−.01	−.18	.03	.01	.17
2. Education	5.66	1.66	—	.51[b]	−.27[b]	−.24[b]	.54[b]	−.37[b]	.06	.15	−.06	−.11	−.07	.10
3. Earnings	2.67	0.94		—	−.05	−.13	.38[b]	−.09	.27[b]	.20	−.09	−.01	.08	.26[b]
4. Female	0.14	0.35			—	.39[b]	−.02	.13	.03	.16	.06	−.10	−.01	.10
5. Black	0.23	0.42				—	−.08	.02	.06	−.06	−.06	.28[b]	.22	.02
6. Upper primary	0.29	0.46					—	−.56[b]	.21	.33[b]	−.15	−.06	−.05	.16
7. Lower primary	0.48	0.50						—	.01	−.38[b]	−.03	.26[b]	.18	−.19
8. Workload	2.58	0.59							—	.22[b]	−.16	.20	.15	−.06
9. Decision latitude	3.15	0.65								—	−.07	−.09	−.10	.19
10. Supervisor	2.24	0.81									—	−.35[b]	−.31[b]	.18
11. Discrimination	2.00	0.91										—	−.75[b]	−.35[b]
12. Prejudice	2.08	0.89											—	−.32[b]
13. Job quality	4.80	1.16												—

[a]1 = age; 2 = education (1 = less than 8th grade; 9 = postgraduate degree); 3 = earnings (1 = less than $10,000/yr; 9 = more than 99,999/yr); 4 = Female representation in the workplace (1 = none or few other females; 0 = all else); 5 = African American representation in the workplace (1 = none or few other African Americans; 0 = all else); 6 = Upper primary labor market category (1 = yes); 7 = Lower primary labor market category (1 = yes); 8 = psychological workload (1 = low; 4 = high); 9 = job decision making latitude (1 = low; 4 = high); 10 = supervisor sensitivity (1 = low; 4 = high); 11 = institutional discrimination (1 = low; 4 = high); 12 = interpersonal prejudice (1 = low; 4 = high); 13 = job satisfaction (1 = low; 7 = high).

[b]$p < .05$.

greater psychological workload than did women in other occupational categories; those in lower primary jobs reported less decision latitude than women in other occupational categories. In addition, women in lower primary jobs reported more institutional discrimination (but not more interpersonal prejudice) and lower job satisfaction than did other women. In analyses (not shown) of the full sample, there were no gender differences in the extent to which men and women reported these forms of workplace racial bias.

Effects of Workplace Racial Bias on Perceived Job Quality

We turn now to multivariate analyses examining the central research questions. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression procedures were used to examine the extent to which workplace racial bias was associated with perceived job quality among this sample of African American women. Using job satisfaction as the criterion, demographic variables were entered into the equation first, followed by structural work variables, psychosocial job conditions, and indicators of race-related job stress. Results of these analyses are presented in Table II. In the table, the coefficients for β, b, and SE_b represent relationships between variables at the final step when all variables have been entered into the equation. The ΔR^2 represents the proportion of variance explained by each set of variables at the step at which it is entered into the equation.

Table II shows that the set of structural work variables explained 9% of the variance in job satisfaction although this was not statistically significant. Within the set, the unstandardized regression coefficient for earnings was significant and positive, indicating that higher annual wages contributed to job quality among these women. Notably, the set of psychosocial job conditions entered at Step 2 did not contribute significantly to explained variance in job satisfaction. Moreover, none of the individual predictors within the set were significant at $p < .05$.

The two indicators of workplace racial bias were highly significant in predicting job satisfaction, accounting for an additional 11% in explained variance. The coefficient for interpersonal prejudice was statistically significant, indicating that interpersonal prejudice had negative effects on job satisfaction that were independent of the effects accounted for by the shared variance in interpersonal prejudice and institutional discrimination. However, institutional discrimination was not independently associated with job satisfaction.

Table II. Multiple Regression of Job Satisfaction on Structural Work Variables, Psychosocial Job Conditions, and Dimensions of Racial Bias in the Workplace[a]

	ΔR^2	b	SE_b	β	F	df
Structural work variables	.09				1.36	5, 66
Earnings		.36	.16	.31[d]		
Other females[b]		.08	.43	.03		
Other African[b] Americans		.44	.35	.17		
Upper primary worker[c]		.06	.42	.02		
Lower primary worker		−.17	.38	.08		
Psychosocial job conditions	.06				1.51	3, 61
Skill discretion		.15	.22	.09		
Psychological workload		−.25	.25	−.13		
Supervisor support		.11	.17	.08		
Workplace racial bias	.11				4.69[d]	2, 59
Institutional discrimination		−.18	.23	−.15		
Interpersonal prejudice		−.43	.21	−.29[d]		
Constant		2.21				
Total R^2		.30				

[a]Equations control for respondents' age and education.
[b]1 = few or none, 0 = otherwise.
[c]1 = yes. Workers in secondary sector jobs are the reference group.
[d]$p < .05$.

Predictors of Race-Related Job Stress

A second aim of the present study was to examine structural work variables as predictors of racial biases in the workplace. Again, OLS regression equations were estimated using institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice as criterion variables and the four structural work variables (proportion of women, proportion of African Americans, job category, and earnings) as predictors. In all equations, age and education were entered as control variables at the first step. Results of these equations are shown in Table III.

Beginning with institutional discrimination, Table III indicates that structural work variables were significant in predicting this dimension of racial bias, explaining 24% of the variance after age and education had been partialled from the equation. African American women in lower primary sector jobs reported more institutional discrimination than did the reference group of women in secondary sector jobs, although workers in upper primary sector jobs did not. In addition, African American women who worked with proportionately fewer women were less likely to report institutional discrimination, whereas those working with proportionately

fewer African Americans were more likely to report institutional discrimination.

Structural work variables explained 12% of the variance in interpersonal prejudice: Here, the ΔR^2 only approached significance. There were no significant differences in interpersonal prejudice by job category once other structural features of work and demographic variables had been partialled. Again, however, women working with proportionately fewer other African Americans reported more interpersonal prejudice than did other women.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated how African American women's exposure to racial bias in the workplace influenced their perceived job quality. In turn, it investigated the extent to which structural features of work were associated with exposure to racial bias. The findings indicate that exposure to racial bias in the workplace is an important feature of these African American women's job experiences. A substantial number of them reported organizational sources of racial bias such as an inequitable distribution of salaries, benefits, job assignments, and opportunities for advancement as well as subtle forms of bias such as differential treatment in interpersonal interactions, stereotyping, and feelings of discomfort on the part of White coworkers and supervisors.

The hypothesis that dimensions of workplace racial bias would be especially important in predicting job quality was supported in this sample of dual-earner African American women. The shared variance in the two types of workplace racial bias—institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice—was highly significant in predicting decreased job satisfaction and was in fact more important than were structural features of work or other psychosocial job stressors. It is noteworthy that this relationship was not attenuated in numerous post hoc analyses (not shown) in which we also partialled a range of other variables that may be associated with both perceptions of workplace racial bias and perceived job dissatisfaction (e.g., negative affectivity, perceived work–family conflict, and undesirable work schedules). Thus, we interpret the finding as highlighting the insidious effects of prejudice and discrimination on job quality.

A noteworthy finding is that the measure of interpersonal prejudice explained unique variance in decreased job satisfaction over and above that explained by the shared variance in the two indicators of workplace racial bias. It may be that negative day-to-day transactions with others at work serve as a perpetual reminder to African American women that they are

Table III. Multiple Regression of Dimensions of Racial Bias at Work on Structural Work Variables[a]

	Institutional discrimination						Interpersonal prejudice					
	ΔR^2	*b*	SE_b	β	*F*	*df*	ΔR^2	*b*	SE_b	β	*F*	*df*
Structural work variables	.22				3.90[e]	5, 67	.12				1.86	5, 67
Earnings[b]		.04	.13	−.04				.14	.13	.15		
Other females[c]		−.85	.31	−.33[e]				−.43	.33	−.17		
Other African Americans[c]		.86	.25	.40				.62	.26	.30		
Upper primary worker[d]		.44	.32	.22				.16	.31	.08		
Lower primary worker		.67	.25	.37[e]				.40	.25	.23		
Total R^2	.24				2.99[e]	7, 67	.12				1.39	7, 67
Constant	3.3						3.3					

[a]Equations control for age and education.
[b]Earnings was measured on an interval level scale in increments of $15,000.
[c]1 = few or none; 0 = otherwise.
[d]1 = yes. Workers in secondary sector jobs are the reference group.
[e]$p < .05$.

operating in an environment in which they are not completely accepted. Negative attitudes and preconceptions that others hold towards them serve to isolate African Americans from the mainstream, and pose a continual challenge to prove themselves worthy of respect and fair treatment. Interpersonal prejudice is necessarily experienced on an individual level and may therefore be most proximal to women's global evaluations of job quality.

Although it was expected that race-related job stress would be a more important predictor of job quality than would other occupational stressors, the finding that none of the other occupational stressors examined in this study were associated with diminished job quality within this sample is more difficult to explain. We suggested earlier that because of their dual marginal status, factors that influence work processes and experiences among African American women may be unique. However, subsequent analyses indicate that African American women were not, in fact, more highly affected by workplace racial bias than were African American men (multiplicative interaction terms in analyses of the full sample were nonsignificant). It may be that equitable opportunities in pay, benefits, and promotions, as well as feelings of belongingness within the work setting are simply more important to African American's overall evaluations of their jobs than are other intrinsic sources of gratification. Other studies support this as a plausible explanation (Richardson, 1973; Tuch & Martin, 1991). For example, Richardson (1973) found that racial bias at work was a stronger predictor of psychological distress among African American workers than was the perception of low control, under-utilization of skills, and a heavy workload. However, it is also possible that this finding is due to other factors. For example, the small sample in the present study means that we had little power to detect small to moderate relationships between psychosocial job conditions and job quality. Studies that have found such relationships in other demographic groups have typically been based on much larger samples. As well, the absence of a relationship between psychosocial job conditions and job quality may be due to unknown sample biases or restricted range in these job variables, resulting in an underestimation of the effects of these psychosocial job conditions. Thus, this finding should be interpreted with caution but should be explored further in future research endeavors.

The second hypothesis that structural features of work such as the proportion of African Americans and women in the workplace, job category, and earnings would be important predictors of race-related job stress is partially supported. African American workers in workplaces with proportionately fewer African Americans reported more institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice than did African Americans who worked in integrated or predominantly African American settings. Thomas and Al-

derfer (1989) suggest that the presence of African Americans in the hierarchy of a department has a positive influence on the development of cross-race relationships, as it provides other workers with more experience and comfort in dealing with African Americans. In addition, Pettigrew and Martin (1987) argue that Whites demonstrate more extreme cognitive biases when evaluating minorities or women who are solos within a group. In our own focus group interviews with African American workers, those who were sole African Americans in their work group described issues such as assumptions of incompetence, extreme (high or low) expectations, and feelings of alienation from others in the setting. A comment from one participant provided some insight into this situation, as he said, "As a Black person, you always have to think. You cannot ever relax. You've always got to wonder whether this is a joke or a slight, and to me that's an extra burden. You can't ever let your guard down. You can't just be comfortable because you always got to worry about how you're perceived." These sorts of feelings may account for heightened race-related job stress among these African American women.

Like other exploratory studies, this study has a number of limitations and the findings should be taken as preliminary. Most important, although socioeconomically diverse, the sample was small and nonrepresentative. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized beyond this sample. In future work, we plan to replicate these analyses within a larger and more representative sample that includes comparison samples of African American men as well as other men and women from diverse ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the findings are based on self-report cross-sectional data, leaving open the possibility that common method variance or an unmeasured third variable may have inflated relationships identified in this study. Similarly, it is possible that job dissatisfaction preceded these women's perceptions of workplace racial bias rather than the reverse. Although the finding that negative affectivity did not attenuate these relationships reduces this concern to some extent, it is still possible that women who were dissatisfied at work perceived the work environment to be more racially hostile. Nevertheless, the finding that institutional discrimination and interpersonal prejudice were so strongly associated with diminished job quality in this sample of women does suggest that studies of work experience, in general, and occupational stressors in particular, may benefit from a closer examination of these sorts of phenomena.

The findings may also be seen as evidence that extensions of, and improvements in, government agencies and policies designed to protect all Americans from discrimination in the workplace are needed. Unfortunately, the current political and social *Zeitgeist* seems to be operating in the opposite direction. In recent years, the legitimacy of agencies charged

with protecting the rights of minority workers, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, have been continuously threatened and affirmative action policies have come under increasing scrutiny on a number of grounds, including presumed discrimination against White workers. The findings of this study suggest that policies and programs that address the prejudicial attitudes and negative stereotypes that strongly diminish the quality of work life among African Americans are sorely needed.

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