**Violent Crime and Youth Resilience**

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**Introduction**

- Neighborhood violent crime (homicide, aggravated assault, and robbery) predicts to lower future expectations, more aggressive beliefs, and worse psychosocial outcomes (Merrin et al., 2014; Thompson et al., 2012; Salzinger et al., 2002).
- **Framework.** Ecological systems theory (Salzinger et al., 2002).
- **Constructs.** Resilience: Developing healthily in spite of adverse environmental conditions (Wu et al., 2013).
- Neighborhood cohesion: How connected one feels to their neighborhood. It is associated with positive affect and fewer neighborhood stressors (Robinette et al., 2013).
- Males are more likely to witness violence, but females have more pronounced post-traumatic and depressive symptoms (Foster et al., 2004).
- This study investigates the impact of violent crime on youth development and the moderating role of neighborhood cohesion and gender from 2015 (wave 1) to 2017 (wave 3).

**Hypotheses**

- Based on past literature, it is predicted that exposure to violent community crime will be positively associated with more aggressive beliefs (Hypothesis 1).
- Rates of community violence will be negatively associated with optimistic future expectations (Hypothesis 2).

**Figure 1.** Hypothesized relationship between variables of interest.

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**Methods**

**Sample**

- Data from 145 African American and Latinx youth mentors residing in low-income, high crime neighborhoods in the west and south sides of Chicago were used in this study.
- The ages of the mentors ranged from 14 to 19 years old.
- All demographic information (age, gender, grade, zip code) was obtained from self-report questionnaires.
- Data on neighborhood crime was collected from a federal database on urban crime and demographic variables based on participant zip codes.

**Measures**

- Aggression was assessed using the 12-item Beliefs About Aggression and Alternatives Scale (Farrell, Meyer, & White, 2001).
- This scale measures an individual's beliefs about the appropriateness of using aggression in hypothetical situations (i.e., “I believe it’s okay to hit someone when they’ve made me angry”).
- Neighborhood cohesion was assessed using a 22-item Neighborhood Youth Inventory measuring connectedness to one’s neighborhood environment by means of friendship, social support, safety, and activities.
- Future expectations were measured using a 7-item questionnaire that assessed youth perceptions of future outcomes.

**Analytic Plan**

- All variables were analyzed through a hierarchical linear regression model. The moderating variables were measured via the PROCESS v2.16 module for SPSS.

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**Significant and Trending Moderations**

**Outcome (Wave 3)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs about Aggression</th>
<th>Independent, Moderator Variable</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>p'</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder 15, NYI friendships (poorer perceptions)</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-2.18</td>
<td>0.031**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
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<td>Murder 16, NYI friendships (poorer perceptions)</td>
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**References**