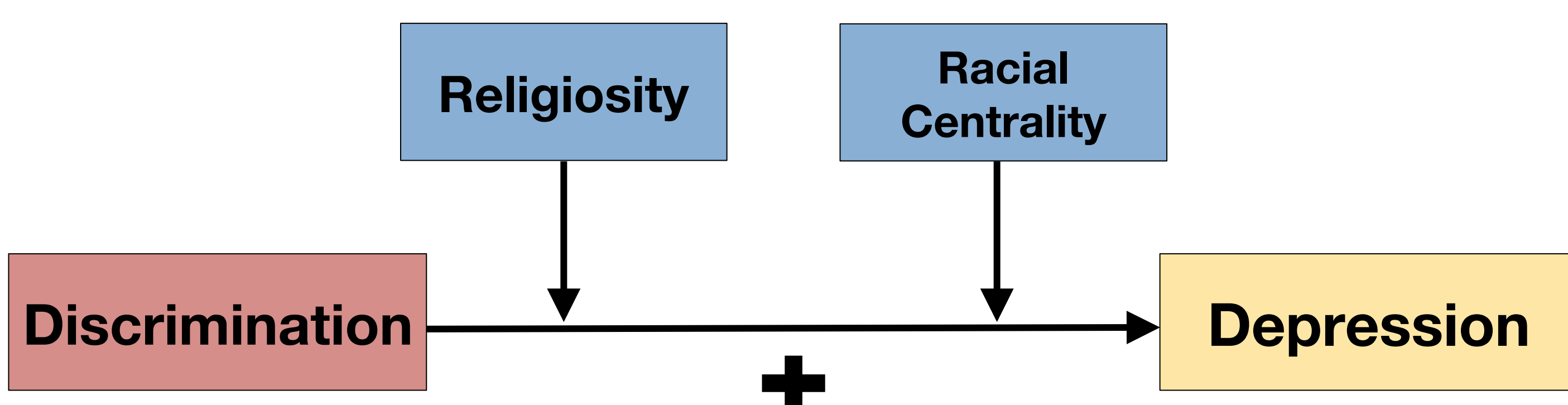


Introduction

- Emerging adulthood, which occurs between ages 18 and 25, is a distinct period that involves identity development and exploration.¹
- This time can be especially challenging for African Americans who are establishing their identities while simultaneously experiencing discrimination and rejecting negative race-based stereotypes.¹
- Prior research has suggested that experiences of discrimination may lead to depressive symptoms in this population.²
- Fortunately, this group is also developing racial-ethnic protective factors, which may mitigate the impact of discrimination on well-being.³
- We examined whether **racial centrality** and **religiosity** protect against the adverse effects of discrimination on well-being (i.e., depressive symptoms) in a sample of African American emerging adults.

Hypotheses



Hypothesis 1: Religiosity will weaken the negative association between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms.

Hypothesis 2: Racial centrality will weaken the association between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms.

Methods

Participants

• 195 African American college students (mean age = 21.35, SD = 5.62; 66.5% female).

Measures

• **Perceived Discrimination** was assessed using Perceived Ethnic Discrimination Questionnaire (Brief PEDQ-CV).⁴ Score range = 17-85

• **Depressive Symptoms** was measured using the depression subscale of the Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-21)⁵ Score range = 0-42

• **Racial Centrality**, the importance of one's race to the self-concept, was measured using the centrality subscale of the Multidimensional Inventory of Black Identity (MIBI).² Score range = 8-56

Methods (Cont'd)

- Religiosity** was measured with the following item: "Religiosity refers to holding beliefs and engaging in practices and rituals (e.g., attending places of worship, reading holy texts, praying) in order to be close to God and relate to others in responsibly ways (e.g., compassion, love). How religious would you say you are?" (1 = "not at all" to 5 = "very").

Procedure

- Participants were recruited from a predominately White university using a departmental subject pool, flyers, and participants' networks.

Analysis Plan

- We used the PROCESS macro in SPSS 24 to test the proposed moderation models.⁶

Results

Table 1. Descriptives and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	21.35	5.62		--	-.05	.00	.05	-.09	-.05
2. Gender					--	.09	.13	.15*	.11
3. Discrimination	34.03	11.67	.90			--	-.05	.09	.25**
4. Religiosity	3.25	1.20					--	.12	.26**
5. Racial Centrality	42.59	13.70	.75					--	.00
6. Depression	11.46	4.67	.92						--

Note: * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$.

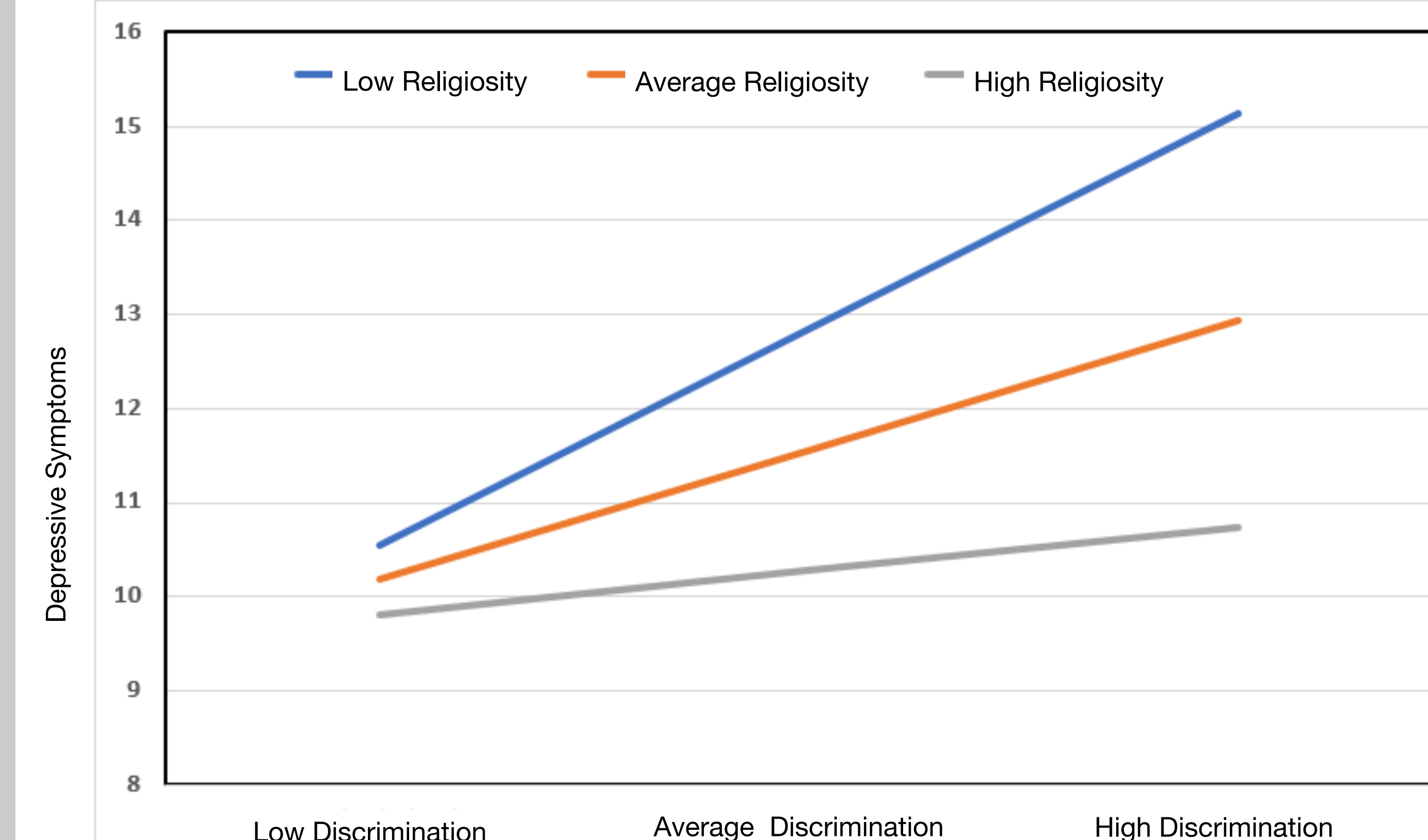
Gender was significantly positively correlated with racial centrality. Religiosity and discrimination were significantly positively correlated.

Table 2. Regression of Racial Centrality and Religiosity on Depression

Variable	Estimate	SE	p
Age	-.08	.06	.21
Gender	1.57	.77	.04
Discrimination	.11	.03	<.001
Religiosity	-1.18	.30	<.001
Racial Centrality	-.02	.02	.35
Discrimination X Religiosity	-.07	.02	.002
Discrimination X Racial Centrality	.00	.00	.14

The discrimination-religiosity interaction was significant, suggesting moderating effects. The discrimination-racial centrality interaction was not significant.

Results Cont.



Simple slopes were significant at low ($b = .20$, 95% C.I. [.12, .28]) and average ($b = .00$, 95% C.I. [.06, .18]) religiosity but not high religiosity ($b = .04$, 95% C.I. [-.04, .11]). Thus, for participants with low to average religiosity, increased discrimination was associated with more depressive symptoms.

Discussion

- Perceived discrimination was associated with depressive symptoms in African American emerging adults, and religiosity buffered the association between discrimination and depressive symptoms.
- Racial centrality was not a buffer. Considering the prominent role of religion in African American life (e.g., the Black Church), a more contextualized approach that examines the interactive effects of religiosity and racial centrality on well-being might have added utility.
- Universities can help promote the well-being of religious African American students who experience discrimination by supporting religious spaces and activities.

References and Acknowledgements

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