Study Aim

The goal of the present study was to examine associations among maternal experiences of discrimination, maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms, and mothers' responses to their children's negative emotions.

I hypothesized that mothers' experiences with discrimination would be associated with higher levels of mothers' depressive and anxiety symptoms and more maternal minimizing and punitive responses to children's negative emotions. I also expected depressive and anxiety symptoms to be associated with increased minimizing and punitive responses to children's negative emotions.

Method (cont.)

Measures

Mothers' Discrimination Experiences: The Index of Race-Related Stress- Brief Version (IRR-S; Utsey, 1999).
Maternal Psychiatric Symptoms: Depression—The Center for Epidemiologic Studies- Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977); and Anxiety—The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STA; Spielberger, 1966).
Parent Emotion Socialization: The Coping with Children's Negative Emotions survey (CCNES; Fabes et al., 2002).

Discussion

• Black mothers' experiences of discrimination did not directly impact amount of parental punishing or minimizing responses.
• Black women who experienced discrimination reported having increased depressive and anxiety symptoms.
• Maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms were both found to increase parental minimizing and punitive responses toward their young children.

Limitations: In order to have a more representative study with generalizable results, a larger sample size is needed; All the measures were self-reports from a single reporter, and, finally, in using a cross sectional design, all the results are correlational.

Future research should consider a longitudinal analysis design to test the causal effects between discrimination, maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms, and parenting responses in Black mothers and their children. Specifically, research should assess the mediating effects of depressive and anxiety symptoms on the relationship between mothers' discrimination experiences and maternal minimizing and punitive responses.

In addition, the moderating role of social buffers and racial socialization on the relationship between discrimination and mental health should be examined in future work.

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References