
Can Parent Microprotections Buffer Against Adolescents' Experiences of Racial Discrimination?

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BACKGROUND

- 97% of African American adolescents reported at least one discriminatory experience during a two-week period (Seaton & Douglass, 2014)
- Early adolescence is a unique phase to examine processes and outcomes related to discrimination
 - Changes in social context, identity development, and advanced cognitive capacity

BACKGROUND

- Racial discrimination = “differential treatment on the basis of race” (Blank, Dabady, & Citro, 2004, p. 4)
- Personal race-based discrimination occurs in face-to-face settings and is directed explicitly at an individual
- Group race-based discrimination is racial discrimination that is targeted at the group of which one is a member

BACKGROUND

- Schools are important settings in which adolescents not only develop their identities but also experience race-based incidents
- Racial incidents at school are linked to declines in self-concept, grades, and increased psychological distress (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003)
- Exhibited by peers as well as adult school personnel but most research has focused on personal experiences of discrimination

BACKGROUND

- Racial socialization includes parental practices that communicate messages about race or ethnicity to children
 - Multidimensional construct including **cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust**
- Microprotections refer to the small daily caring, supportive, and loving behaviors parents engage in to counteract negative racial incidents

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Guided by ecological and transactional perspectives
 - Emphasizes the importance of social context and one's perception of their environment
- Risk-protective model of resilience
 - Discrimination is a risk factor that increases likelihood of maladjustment
 - Parent microprotections (parental warmth, preparation for bias, and cultural socialization are protective factors

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Is **personal** discrimination at school associated with adolescents' depressive symptoms? Do parent microprotections buffer against the negative effects of personal discrimination?
- Is **group-based** discrimination at school associated with adolescents' depressive symptoms? Do parent microprotections buffer against the negative effects of personal discrimination?

METHODS

■ Participants:

- Urban, African American middle school students in 6th, 7th, 8th grade ($N = 129$) and parents (90% mothers)
- 58% female students
- Parents' average level of education indicated some college or vocational training ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 1.12$)
- Family structure: Two-parent households (43%), Single-parent households (57%), Grandparents (2%)

■ Procedure:

- Students completed surveys administered at and parents completed a paper-pencil survey, internet-based, or phone survey depending on their preference

METHODS

			Sample item	Alpha
Personal Discrimination	Hughes & Dodge's, 1997 ; Landrine & Klonoff's ,1996)	8 items	“How often have kids at school called you names because you are African American/Black?”	.90
Group Discrimination	Johnston and Delgado, 2004	8 items	“You have heard your teachers at school making jokes or saying bad things about African Americans”	.84
Parent-Adolescent Warmth	Schwarz, Barton-Henry, & Pruzinsky, 1985	8 items	My mother/father is able to make me feel better when I am upset	.91
Cultural Socialization	Hughes & Chen, 1997	5 items	“I’ve done things to celebrate Black History with my child”	.82
Preparation for Bias	Smetana, 1998	6 items	“I’ve talked to my child about racism”	.85
Depressive Symptoms	Murdock, 1999	8 items	“I am sad all the time”	.81

ANALYTIC STRATEGY

- Multiple regression analyses:
- Personal Discrimination → Depressive Symptoms
- Group Discrimination → Depressive Symptoms
- Parent Microprotections ↑

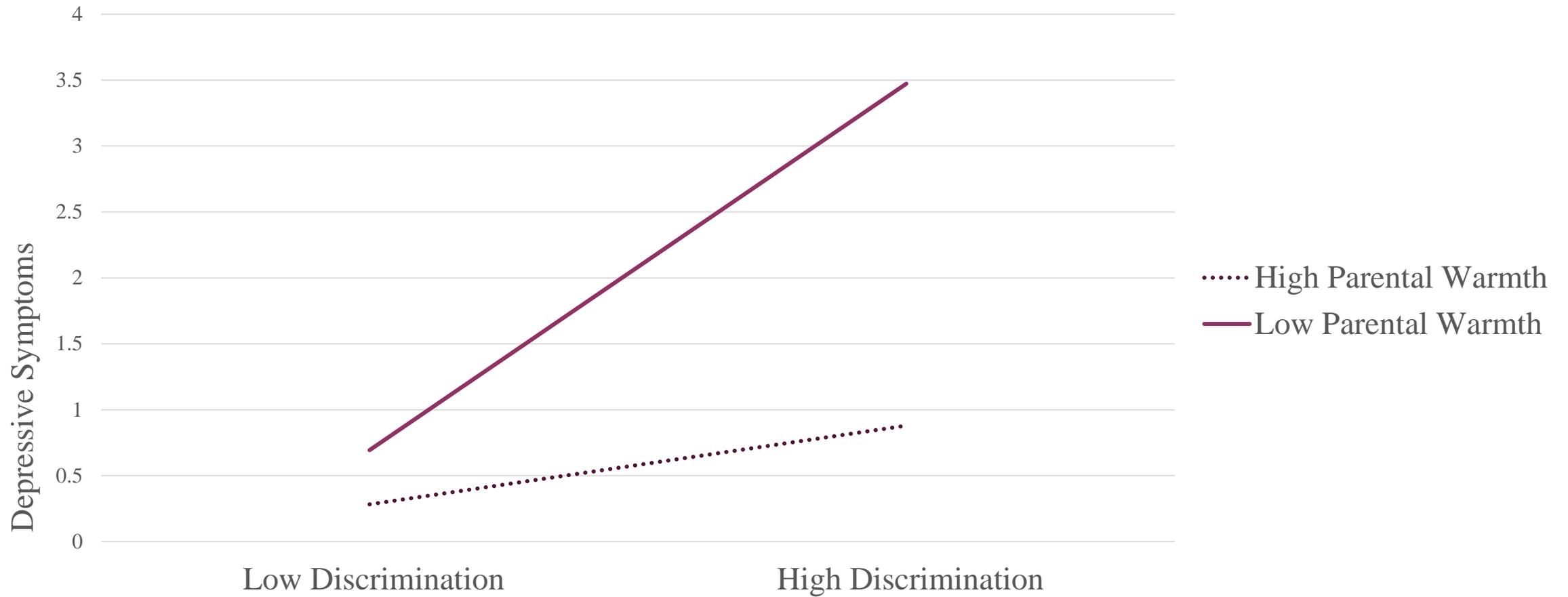
RESULTS: Personal Discrimination on Depressive Symptoms

	B	SE <i>b</i>	<i>b</i>
Grade	.01	.29	.00
Gender	.77	.45	.09
Discrimination	.15	.04	.30***
Parental Warmth	-1.61	.53	-.26**
Cultural Socialization	.08	.04	.21*
Prep for Bias	-.08	.04	-.17*
Discrim X Warmth	-.21	.09	-.21*
Discrim X CulSoc	.02	.01	.21*
Discrim X PrepBias	-.02	.01	-.27**
<i>R</i> ²	.33	<i>F</i>	5.90

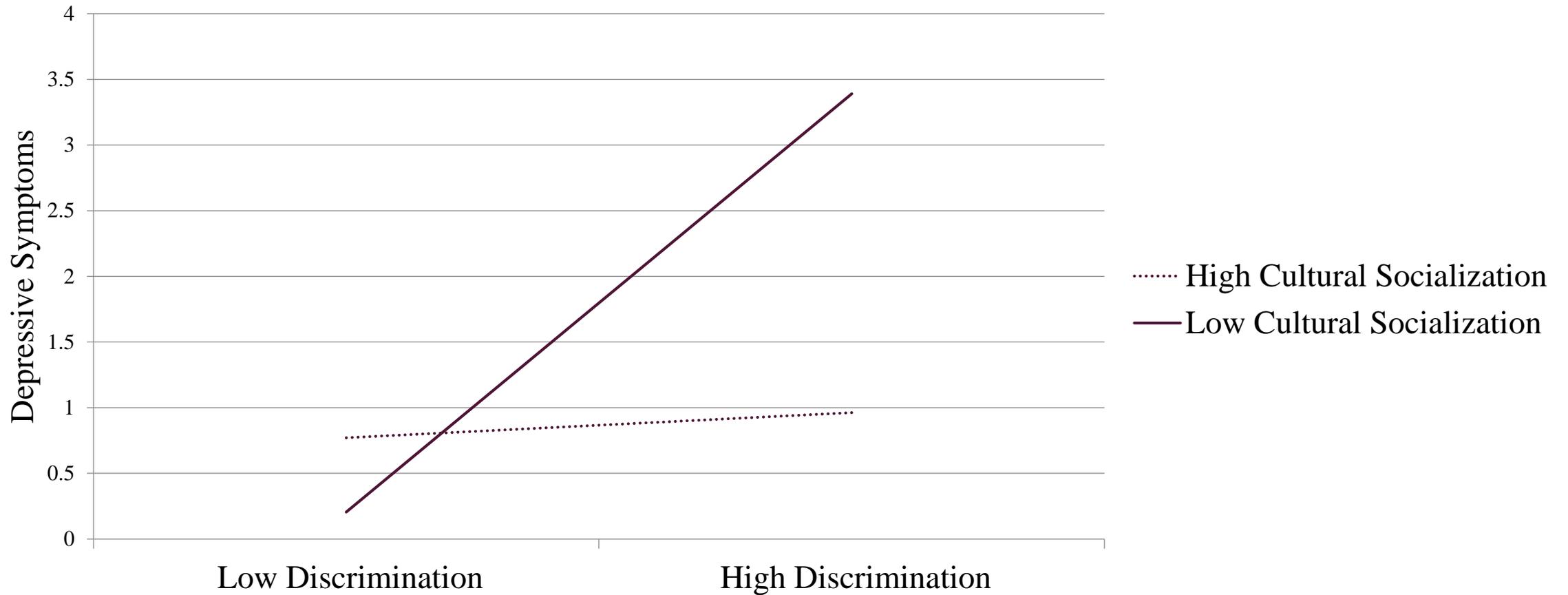
RESULTS: Group Discrimination on Depressive Symptoms

	B	SE β	β
Grade	.05	.31	.02
Gender	.69	.50	.12
Discrimination	.12	.05	.23**
Parental Warmth	-1.59	.59	-.25**
Cultural Socialization	.07	.48	.18 [†]
Prep for Bias	-.14	.04	-.13
Discrim X Warmth	-.14	.11	-.12
Discrim X CulSoc	.01	.01	.13
Discrim X PrepBias	-.01	.01	-.11
R^2	.21	F	3.22**

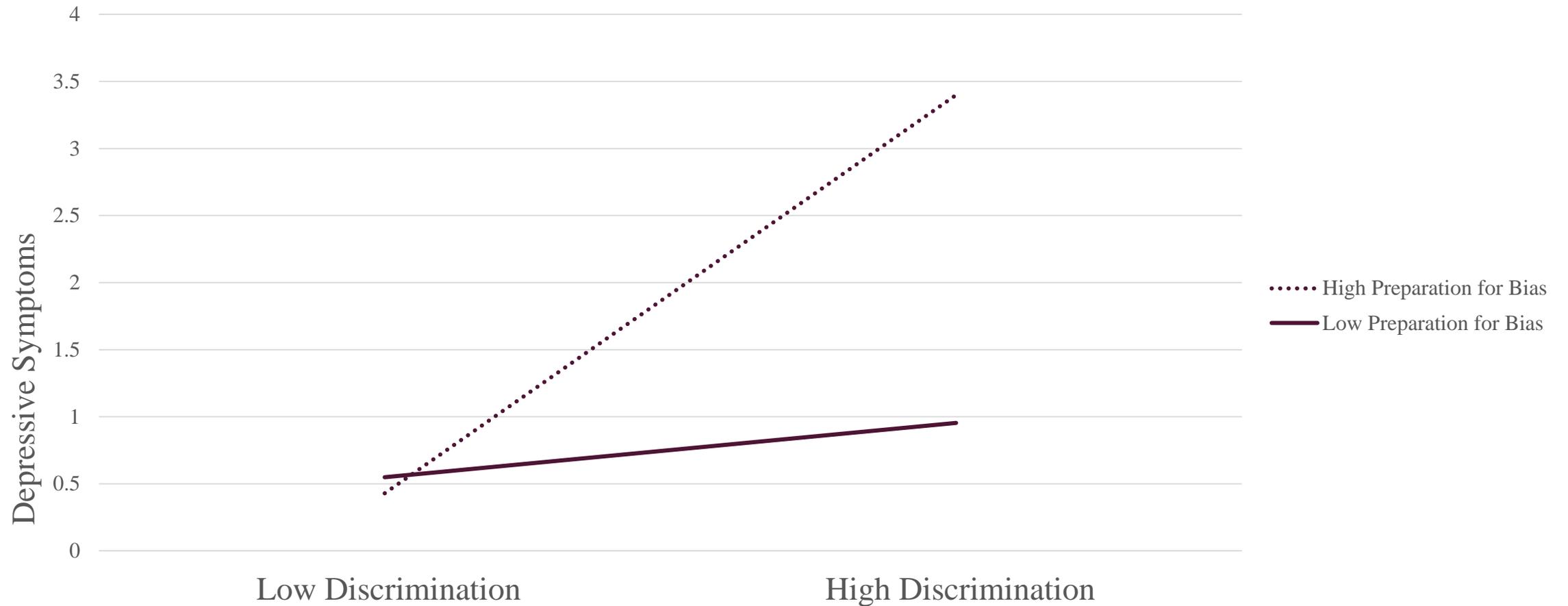
PARENTAL WARMTH



CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION



PREPARATION FOR BIAS



DISCUSSION

- Personal and group experiences with discrimination were related to more depressive symptoms
- Warmth and cultural socialization operated as protective factors for personal discrimination only
- Preparation for bias exacerbated the effect of personal discrimination on depressive symptoms

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Cross-sectional research design
 - Our future research will include a longitudinal design to examine the transactional nature of parent microprotections
 - Daily diary study to examine daily microaggressions and microprotections
- Parent-adolescent dyads were studied but utilized parent reports of microprotections
 - Our future research will incorporate youth and parent perspectives

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