

The background features several concentric circles in a light orange color. A dashed line of the same color starts from the left side, curves around the text, and ends on the right side. A solid orange triangle points downwards on the left side, positioned to the left of the main title.

The Effects of Discrimination on Black Mothers' Internalizing Symptoms and Parenting Behavior

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Background

Experiences of discrimination have been shown to have a negative emotional and psychological impact on people and can affect various aspects of individual's lives (Vines et al., 2017; Dugan et al., 2017; Goldman et al., 2006).

For Black women, discrimination has led to an increase in depressive and anxiety symptoms (Pieterse et al., 2012; Leerkes et al., 2017).

Both maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms have been correlated with increase negative parenting practices (e.g. over-reactivity, yelling at their children) (Anderson et al., 2015; Bécares et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2015; Cooklin et al., 2013).



Background Continued

Discrimination is indirectly positively correlated to negative parenting practices through a direct positive association with depression (Anderson et al., 2015; Garcia Coll et al., 1996).

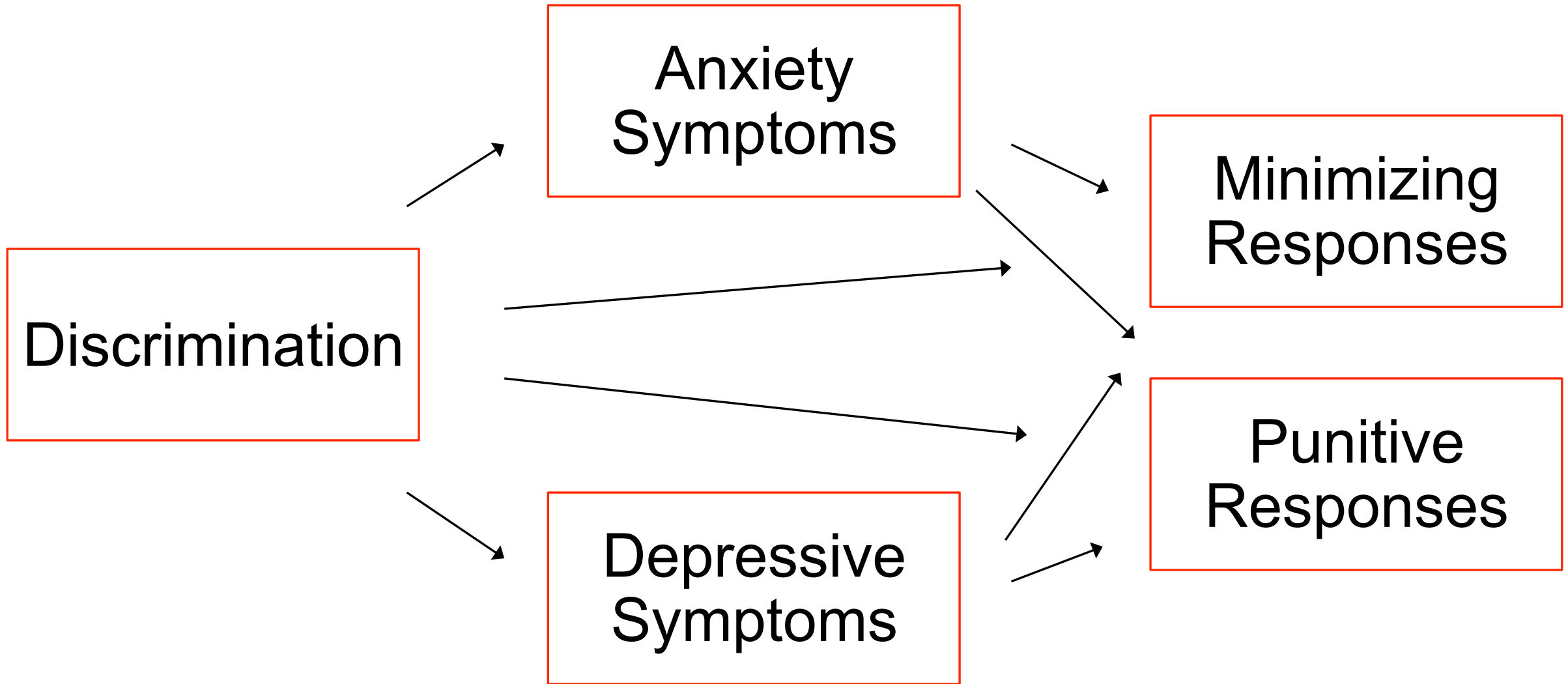
There is limited research regarding the connection between mothers' experiences of discrimination and children's socioemotional development. However, Bécares et al. (2015) found that mothers' experiences of racial discrimination indirectly predicted children's socioemotional development via an increase in punitive parenting and a decrease in maternal mental health.



Hypotheses and Study Aim

- The goal of this study was to examine associations among maternal experiences of discrimination, depressive and anxiety symptoms, and parenting strategies.
- I hypothesized:
 - (1) Discrimination would be associated with **increased** maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms.
 - (2) Discrimination would be associated with **increased** maternal minimizing and punitive responses to children's negative emotions.
 - (3) Depressive symptoms would be associated with **increased** minimizing and punitive responses to children's negative emotions.
 - (4) Anxiety symptoms would be associated with **increased** minimizing and punitive responses to children's negative emotions.

Conceptual Model



Method

Data Source

This was a secondary data analysis using data from the School Transitions and Academic Readiness Project with a subsample of 86 Black caregivers. Respondents were Black mothers with either Black (92%) or Multi-Racial (8%) children. 46% of the children, aged 4-6 years, were male.

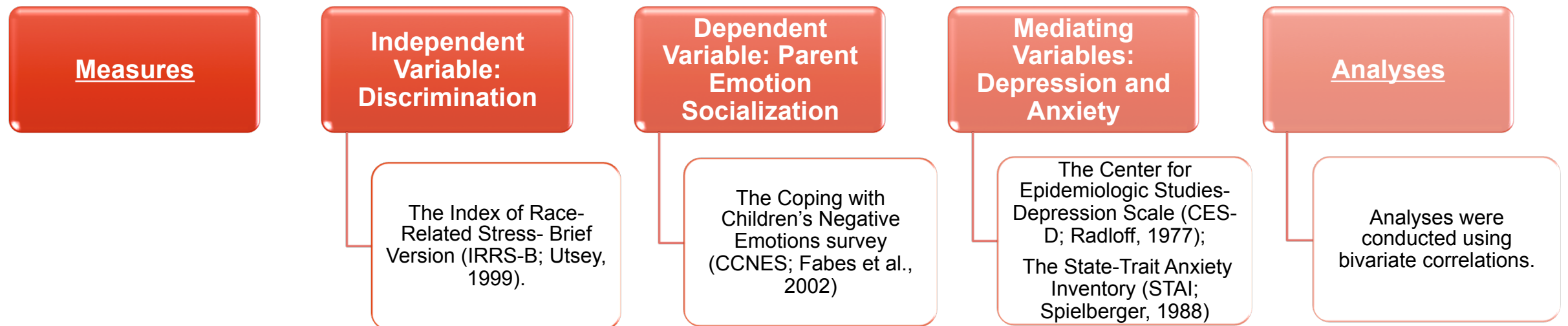
Participants

Mean Maternal Age: 32.58 (SD = 7.23, range: 19-52 years)

Maternal Education: 6.4% had some high school experience, 10.3% had a high school degree/GED, 47.4% completed 2 or less years of college, 35.9% obtained a 4-year degree and more

Marital Status: 70.5% were single, divorced, or widowed, and 29.5% were married

Mean Income: \$32, 611 (range: \$2,400 to \$120,000)



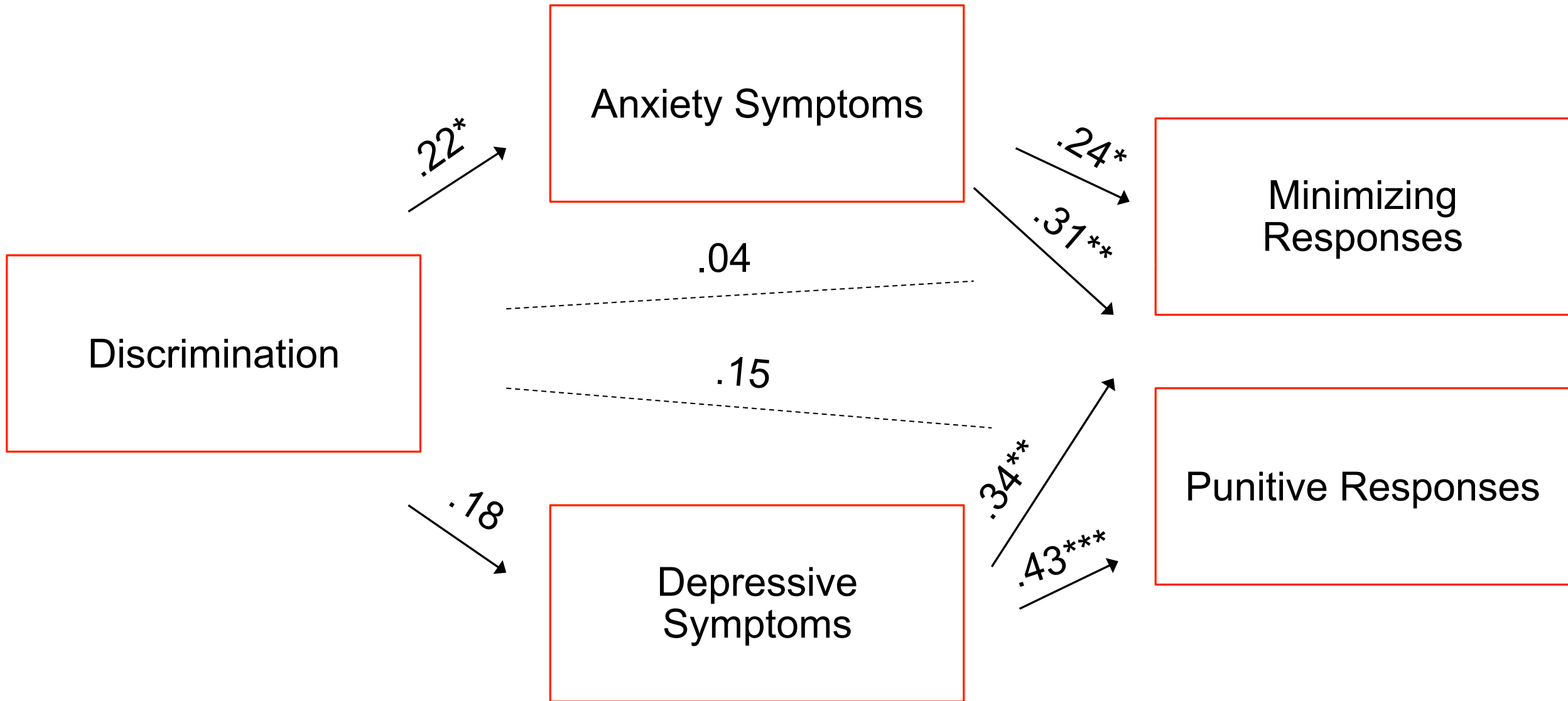
Bivariate correlations between all study variables

	1	2	3	4	5
M Global Racism IRRS 4yr	-				
M Depression <u>CESD</u> Total Mean Score 4yr	0.18	-			
M State Anxiety <u>STAI</u> Subscale Mean Score 4yr	.22*	.72**	-		
M <u>CCNES</u> - Punitive Reactions Subscale Mean Score 4yr	0.15	.43**	.31**	-	
M <u>CCNES</u> - Minimization Reactions Subscale Mean Score 4yr	0.04	.34**	.24*	.85**	-

Note. *p<.05. **p<.01. Values represent Pearson coefficients.

Results

Conceptual Model



Results Continued

- Results revealed a **trend association** between mothers' reported racial discrimination and their depressive symptoms, $r = .18$, $p < .10$, and a significant association with mothers' anxiety symptoms, $r = .22$, $p < .05$.
- There was **no significant correlation** between discrimination and parenting for either punishing or minimizing responses.
- There was a **significant positive correlation** between mothers' depressive symptoms and maternal punitive responses, $r = .43$, $p < .05$, and maternal minimizing responses, $r = .34$, $p < .05$.
- There was a **significant positive correlation** between mothers' anxiety symptoms and maternal punitive responses, $r = .31$, $p < .05$, and maternal minimizing responses, $r = .24$, $p < .05$.

Discussion



- Discrimination did not directly impact amount of punitive or minimizing responses to children's behavior.
- Black women who experienced discrimination reported having increased depressive and anxiety symptoms.
- Maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms were both found to increase both minimizing and punitive responses.
- A limitation of the study was using a cross sectional design which produced correlational results.

Future Considerations

- Future research should consider a longitudinal study design to test the causal effects between discrimination, depressive and anxiety symptoms, and parental responses in Black mothers and their children. Researchers should also combine parental responses and depressive and anxiety symptoms due to correlational significance.
- In addition, the moderating role of social buffers and racial socialization on the relationship between discrimination, mental health, and parental responses should be examined in future work.



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