

Moderators for race-based couple discrimination and problem-solving for Black-White couples:
The role of ethnic identity and self-esteem

by

Sunny Patel

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Major Professor
Joyce Baptist

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Abstract

Interracial marriages continue to lack support in the U.S. society despite the rise in the number of persons entering such unions. Understanding how Black-White couples cope with race-based couple discrimination within their relationships can help therapists build couple resilience.

Informed by the minority stress model, this study examined the relationship between race-based couple discrimination and problem-solving in 178 Black-White marriages. The study further examined how protective factors --ethnic identity and self-esteem -- may buffer the effects of discrimination on problem-solving. Results indicated that interracial couples experience discrimination. As expected, an initial overall regression analysis found couple discrimination negatively linked to problem-solving. However, closer examination across race and gender revealed that couple discrimination was negatively associated with problem-solving for Black wives and White husbands. This relationship was moderated by ethnic identity for Black wives and self-esteem for White wives. Although Black husbands in this study reported the highest levels of couple discrimination and use of problem-solving, results did not indicate a significant relationship between the two. Implications for clinical work and future research are discussed.

Table of Contents

List of Figures	v
List of Tables	vi
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
Chapter 2 - Minority Stress Model and Discrimination of Blacks	4
Chapter 3 - Method	12
Chapter 4 – Results	18
Chapter 5 – Discussion	25
Chapter 6 – Reference.....	47

List of Figures

Figure 1: Simple Slope of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Self-Esteem for All Groups.....	44
Figure 2: Simple Slopes of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD Above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Ethnic Identity Among White Wives.....	45
Figure 3: Simple Slopes of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD Above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Self-Esteem Among Black Wives.....	46

List of Tables

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants.....	34
Table 2a: Summary of Intercorrelations for Black-White Couples.....	35
Table 2b: Summary of Intercorrelations for Wives.....	36
Table 2c: Summary of Intercorrelations for Husbands.....	37
Table 3: Summaries of ANOVAs Comparing Group Differences of Couple Discrimination, Problem-Solving, Ethnic Identity, And Self-Esteem.....	38
Table 4: Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem Solving (n = 356).....	39
Table 5a: Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem Solving for White Wives (n = 85).....	40
Table 5b: Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem Solving for Black Wives (n = 93).	41
Table 5c: Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem Solving for White Husbands (n = 85).	42
Table 5d: Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem Solving for Black Husbands (n = 93).	43

Chapter 1 - Introduction

There has been an increase in Black interracial marriages in the United States (U.S.) since miscegenation laws, that forbade mixed race unions, were overturned in 1967. The number of Black men marrying White spouses more than doubled from 1980 to 2000, and increased by 52.6 percent (268,000 to 409,000) from 2000 to 2017 (Black Demographics, 2020; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2014). A similar trend was true for Black women marrying White men from 1980 to 2000, after which the rates increased by 81 percent (95,000 to 172,000) from 2000 to 2017 (Black Marriage in America, 2020).

Although this increase may reflect a growing acceptance of Black-White marriages, Skinner and Hudac's (2017) study refutes this idea. The authors found that prejudice towards interracial romance is associated with repulsion, whereby images of interracial couples evoked a stronger revulsive response neurologically compared to images of same-race couples via the insula, a brain region that is regularly involved in disgust perception and experience (Uddin, Nomi, Hebert-Seropain, Ghaziri, & Boucher, 2017). Further, compared to same-race couples, interracial couples have a higher chance of mistreatment. These findings led the authors to conclude that discrimination against interracial couples still exists in the U.S., despite an increased level of reported acceptance of interracial relationships.

Such discrimination can compound the inherent stress derived from the couples' cultural difference that in turn may contribute to high divorce rates (Wang, 2012). Of all interracial marriages, Black-White marriages are most likely to end in divorce compared to White-White marriages (Zhang, Hook, & Murry, 2009). Using data from 23,139 couples from the Survey of Income and Program Participation, relative to White-White marriages, Black-White marriages

were more likely to end in divorce (1.62 more times for Black husband-White wife marriages and 1.44 more times for White husband-Black wife marriages).

The impact of added stress from discrimination for being in a Black-White marriage has garnered minimal attention in the literature. It is possible that stress from discrimination would activate problem-solving skills in order to protect the relationship, but it is also possible that such stress will inhibit the couples' ability to flourish. Poor problem-solving skills is strongly related to low levels of relationship satisfaction for couples (Dominguez, 2017; Sullivan, Pasch, Johnson, & Bradbury, 2010). Hence, enhancing problem-solving skills can benefit relationships.

Protective factors that may serve as a buffer for discrimination include a positive ethnic identity and high self-esteem. Previous studies have found that for Black partners, a positive racial identity is associated with more relationship maintenance, feelings of marital certainty, and conveyance of affection in their relationship (Leslie & Letiecq, 2004). Higher levels of self-esteem is linked to higher degrees of happiness in couples (Erol & Orth, 2016). The association between self-esteem and happiness, however, was true only when both partners had similar levels of self-esteem.

The link between race-based couple discrimination and problem-solving in Black-White marriages is unclear. Further, how protective factors, such as ethnic identity and self-esteem, can potentially change this relationship has not been examined. Understanding how race-based couple discrimination affects relationship processes and what factors can buffer the consequences of discrimination, can help therapists in their work with Black-White couples. Specifically, therapists would be able to better help couples build resilience against the detrimental effects of discrimination these couples face.

This study examined the relationship between race-based couple discrimination and problem-solving in Black-White marriages, as well as examine the role of self-esteem and ethnic identity on this relationship. The following chapter will discuss the minority stress model, used to conceptualize the study, and current relevant literature.

Definition

Race-based discrimination refers to treating someone unfavorably because the person belongs to a certain race, or due to personal characteristics associated with a particular race, such as hair texture, skin color, or certain facial features (U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions, 2019). Race-based couple discrimination refers to treating someone unfavorably because the person is married to (or in a relationship with) a person of a certain race or color.

Ethnic identity is a “dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity, or sense of self, as a member of an ethnic group” (Phinney, 2001, p. 4821). Ethnic identity changes over time develop mentally from early identifications to a personal search (usually during adolescence), as well as in response to one’s context. A confident sense of one’s ethnicity includes a positive outlook of one’s group belonging that is influenced by within group attitudes, as well as broader societal and historical context.

Self-esteem is the cumulative perception of one’s positive qualities and accomplishments. Self-esteem includes both self-belief and emotional states like victory, pride, disappointment, and shame that can influence academic achievement, happiness, marital satisfaction and relationships (Erol & Orth, 2016; Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006; Orth & Robins, 2014).Self-esteem may refer to one’s attributes or general sense of self and has also been referred to as self-regard, self-worth, self-integrity, and self-respect (Babu, 2019).

Chapter 2 - Minority Stress Model and Discrimination of Blacks

The minority stress model (Meyer, 1995) describes the relationship between minority and dominant values, and the resultant conflict and psychological stress experienced by members of the minority group when these values do not align. According to the model, in addition to general stressors, minority groups experience minority stress processes, including discrimination, racism, heterosexism, stigma, expectations of rejection, and internalized homophobia that together have implications for mental health outcomes (Meyer, 1995, 2003). Researchers have used the minority stress model to understand the relationship between social stressors and mental health in sexual and racial minority groups (Meyer, 1995, 2003; Gamarel, Reisner, Laurenceau, Nemoto, & Operario, 2014; Otis, Rostosky, Riggle, & Hamrin, 2006). For instance, gay men experience higher levels of distress and mental health concerns, and lower relationship satisfaction. Additionally, in a study of Black, Asian American and Latino/a college students, Black students were found to experience the highest levels of minority stress (Wei, Ku, & Lia, 2011).

Minority stress occurs when marginalized groups must navigate and/or assimilate to the dominant group's cultural values and expectations (Wei M., Ku, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Liao, 2008; Wei, Ku, & Lia, 2011; Meyer, 1995). This stress does not manifest in the same way for every group because each group experiences stress differently. The most understood causes of minority stress are experiences of interpersonal prejudice and discrimination.

Discrimination is dependent upon how it is expressed and experienced, as well as the context in which it occurs (Karlsen, James, & Nazroo, 2002). There are two forms of discrimination, interpersonal and institutional. Interpersonal discrimination refers to discriminatory interactions that can be directly observed (Karlesn et al., 2002). Examples

include, nonverbal communication such as distancing, stereotypical remarks about the person, verbal attacks or threats, and physical violence. Institutional discrimination occurs when policies or practices within an organization targets specific groups. This form of discrimination tends to be invisible compared to interpersonal discrimination (Karlesn, & Nazroo, 2002). Forms of institutional discrimination may manifest as limited job opportunities and medical assistance, racial profiling, prejudicial governmental laws, housing markets that favors one group over another, and shared beliefs about the superiority of one group over another.

Discrimination can have significant health implications for Black persons (Horowitz, Brown, & Cox, 2019). Studies have found that Black couples that experience discrimination in their day-to-day lives experience high levels of distress (Hummer, 1996; Lavner et al., 2018; Williams & Collins, 1995). Both acute and chronic stressors have been associated with death, chronic health problems, and wide arrange of mental health condition including psychological distress (Lincoln & Chae, 2010; Lee R. M., 2005). Broudy and colleagues (2006) found that perception of race-based discrimination was positively associated with higher levels of sadness, anger, and anxiety throughout the day. Additionally, Black individuals could predict future social interactions with the general public as harassing and exclusionary. Studies suggest that race-based discrimination, in conjunction with unfair treatment experienced outside of the home, may negatively affect the quality of the marriage as well as the mental health of Black people (Lincoln & Chae, 2010).

Discrimination and Gender

The literature differentiates the type of discrimination experienced by Black men and women. Most research studying discrimination notes Blacks men are targets of racism and White women are targets of sexism (Sesko & Biernat, 2010). Beale (2008) proposed the theory of

“double jeopardy” whereby Black women are worse off than Black men and White women because they are victims to both racism and sexism (Sesko & Biernat, 2010). For example, Black women are considered to be more “masculine” (independent, strong) and less “feminine” (emotional, passive) as compared to White women. This was viewed as non-prototypical suggesting that Black women exemplifies neither “women” or “Black”. Sesko and Biernat (2010) suggested that the “invisibility” of Black women is another sign of non-prototypicality. Sesko and Biernat (2010)’s study discovered that participants tasked in differentiating race and gender from photos and statements, were least able to identify Black women compared to Black men, White women, and White men. Further, Sidanius and Veniegas (2000) noted that Blacks are seen as lazy and uneducated in comparison to Whites. Also, Black men pay higher prices for vehicles, and are more prone to be beaten by the police while in custody. Black men across the globe are the most likely to be found guilty and to be sentenced to longer prison terms when convicted of capital offences and are more likely to be executed (Sesko & Biernat, 2010).

Couple Discrimination

The negative views of Black men and women may have a key role in why Black-White marriages are looked upon with such scorn. In a study on Black-White couples, participants described their discriminatory experiences as, “scowls, stares, rubbernecking, being ignored, being called a ‘sell out’ or ‘the white man’s woman’” (Killian, 2012, p.128). To avoid unsettling reactions, and out of fear for their families’ safety, some Black-White couples choose to hide their relationship by walking across the street from one another in public spaces, providing the illusion of not knowing one another. Such distress was not only experienced by Black-White couples, but practically all combinations of interracial relationships (Bratter & Eschbach, 2006). The authors further found that race-based discrimination was positively related

to greater levels of depression and relationship strain. Additionally, if one partner had experienced discrimination, it was likely the other had as well (Wofford, Defever, & Chopik, 2019).

Experiences of race-based discrimination may structure one's economic and life circumstances via discriminatory employment and educational practices that in turn limit resources needed for a higher quality of life and relationships (Lincoln & Chae, 2010). For example, according to Clavel, Cutrona and Russel (2017), undue stress can lead to poorer quality of interactions and erosion of relationship satisfaction. Conflict may result over who is at fault due to the partner blaming the victim for bringing stressors on themselves (Fincham, 2001). Further, external stresses can negatively affect relationships in the form of decreased emotional regulation and increased negative relationship behaviors (Wofford et al., 2019). Hence, external stresses can alter couples' coping and problem-solving abilities.

Discrimination and Problem-solving

Research related to the effects of discrimination on problem-solving is scarce. Problem-solving, or also called problem-focused coping strategies, is defined as efforts to change things about the environment or of the self, whether by changing the situation or meanings behind the incident, and/or recognizing personal strengths or resources (Joseph & Kuo, 2009; Lazarus, 2000; Lyon, 2000). Laver and colleagues (2018) found that Black men who experienced higher levels of discrimination expressed higher levels of psychological aggression towards their partners and relationship instability, while Black women reported engaging more in physical aggression towards their partners. The use of aggression reflects poor problem-solving skills.

In a study of 190 Black Canadians, the context of discrimination experienced influenced the type of coping strategies employed (Joseph & Kup, 2009). More specifically, problem-

solving coping was most often used to manage institutional and cultural discrimination, and least often to manage interpersonal discrimination. The authors noted that the collective threat of cultural discrimination that poses threat to the group may prompt direct action, In contrast, interpersonal discrimination that may be too overwhelming is downplayed and not directly dealt with. Together, these studies suggest that interpersonal race-based discrimination is negatively linked to the use of problem-solving skills. There is a lack of information on how problem-solving skills differ for partners in Black-White unions. Because of the potential implications of different levels of problem-solving skills for relationships, this difference will be examined in this study.

Protective Factors

Two personal domains that have the potential to buffer the negative consequences of couple discrimination on relationships are ethnic identity and self-esteem. These personal domains may be influenced by one's upbringing and life experiences. Previous studies have found a link between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Blacks who had positive exposure to their heritage and culture, were found to have higher self-esteem which acted as a direct buffer to perceived discrimination (Rowley, 2007).

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity, which refers to the pride of and connection with one's ethnic heritage, begins to develop at a young age and can grow or diminish as one matures into adulthood (Phinney, 2001). The growth of ethnic identity largely depends on continued exposure and affinity to one's ethnic heritage. A strong ethnic identity can benefit relationships and serve as a buffer to stresses. Trail and colleagues (2010) studied the effects of ethnic identity and discrimination on marital quality among Latino newlywed couples. They found that when

husbands with weak ethnic identity experienced discrimination, their wives reported lower ratings of marriage quality. The opposite was true when husbands reported having strong ethnic identities. Lower ethnic identity among husbands appears to increase the use of verbal aggression with wives when husbands experience discrimination that threatens their masculinity (Trail et al., 2010). It appears that ethnic identity can change the relationship between discrimination and conflict management or problem-solving within relationships. Similarly, ethnic identity was found to moderate how perceived discrimination predicted hopelessness among Native American adolescents (Jaramillo, Mello, & Worrell, 2015). Here, lower ethnic identity strengthened the positive relationship between discrimination and hopelessness.

Interestingly, Lee's (2003) study on Asian Americans found that ethnic identity did not moderate or mediate the effects of discrimination on psychological well-being. Their study concluded that for Asian American, ethnic identity did not serve as a protective factor unlike for other minority racial groups. The role of ethnic identity as a buffer for Black-White relationships is unclear because it could be an important feature for one partner but not the other.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem, the cumulative perception of one's positive qualities and accomplishments, has been shown to play an important role in moderating the effects of discrimination. In the study of 125 Black adolescents, Tynes and colleagues (2012), found ethnic identity and self-esteem moderated the negative effects of online racial discrimination on anxiety. Persons with high self-esteem were likely to have influence or power over their surroundings and use proactive coping strategies like participating in constructive activities (e.g., looking for facts or information to better address the issue) to mitigate or manage stress (Rector & Roger, 1996). Depending on the one's self-esteem, a person could either view stressful events constructively

and use the experience to growth, or view the event negatively as a threat. Then the degree of threat can trigger psychological or physiological responses that can in turn lead to illness if prolonged (Rector & Roger, 1997). Persons with higher self-esteem are expected to be better at detaching and reframing stressful events compared to persons with lower self-esteem that are more likely to succumb to the weight of stress.

Research have further noted that persons with high self-esteem are more reassuring towards their partners (Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche, 2002) and optimistic (Murray, Holmes, MacDonald, Ellsworth, 1998) during times of conflict. Thus, it would be reasonable to expect self-esteem to moderate how experiences of discrimination influences problem-solving. Persons with higher self-esteem may be less affected by acts of discrimination that in turn has less need for problem-solving. However, persons with low self-esteem may internalize acts of discrimination, rather than find a solution for the problem. However, discrimination targeted at the couple may activate both partners' problem-solving regardless of their level of self-esteem. There is a need to examine the role of self-esteem as a buffer to race-based couple discrimination.

Purpose of this Study

In order to understanding how race-based couple discrimination affects relationship processes, and what factors can buffer the negative consequence of discrimination, this study will examine the following research questions:

RQ1: How does race-based couple discrimination, self-esteem and ethnic identity differ across groups (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

RQ2: How does problem-solving differ between Black wife/White husband and Black husband/White wife groups and across race and gender (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

RQ3: How is race-based couple discrimination linked to problem-solving in Black-White marriages, and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity?

H1: Race-based couple discrimination is negatively linked to problem-solving.

H2: Higher ethnic identity and self-esteem will positively moderate the effects of race-based couple discrimination on problem-solving, such that when ethnic identity and self-esteem are high, more couples will engage in more problem-solving.

It is important to take into account that some Whites do not believe that they have a race at all (Jackson & Heckman, 2002) hence are likely to be colorblind and conditioned to disregard their privilege even if they are aware of racism towards persons of color (McIntosh, 2003). Because of the possible diversity in experiences of discrimination across race, it is further expected that how race-based couple discrimination is linked to problem-solving would differ across race and gender.

H3: It is expected that because Black persons are generally more aware of their identity, and White persons have high self-esteem, race and gender will influence how couple discrimination is linked to problem-solving and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity.

Chapter 3 - Method

Sample and Procedures

This study used a secondary dataset from a May 2016 study on Black-White marriages collected by Kansas State University. The data were collected through the services of Qualtrics Panel for a fee. Qualtrics sent a survey developed by the investigators to members on their panel that met the study criteria: (a) couples in a heterosexual Black-White marriage and (b) aged between 18 and 40 years old. Couples that agreed to volunteer their participation and completed all the questions in the survey received an undisclosed payment from Qualtrics. An age restriction was implemented to account for recent changes in public perception of interracial marriages (Pew Research Center, 2017). The age limit was imposed to minimize variability in institutionalized racism experiences. The age of 40 was selected as the cut off because more U.S. citizens approved interracial marriages (48%) than disapproved (42%) in 1991, when 40-year-olds were 15 years old and were entering romantic relationships (Carroll, 2017). The reverse was true in 1983 where 50% of residents disapproved interracial marriages and 43% approved. A survey conducted online included scales that assessed demographics, ethnic identity, values and beliefs, structures of relationships and results. Only couples whose partners were born in the U.S. were included in the study. The decision to factor in country of origin was informed by research speculating country of birth associated significantly with couple satisfaction (Bryant et al., 2008).

The final sample (Table 1) included in this study is 178 couples, consisting of 93 Black husbands-White wives and 85 White husbands-Black wives. The mean length of marriage was 8.82 years ($SD = 4.16$ years) for Black wives-White husbands and 9.02 years ($SD = 4.86$) for White wives-Black husbands. A higher percentage of White participants (55.67%) completed at

least a Bachelor's degree compared to Black participants (38.15%). A higher percentage of Black wives-White husbands (82.8%) compared to White wives-Black husbands (66.5%) disclosed an annual household income of \$50,000 or more.

Measures

Perceived Couple Discrimination. The Everyday Discrimination Scale (Williams, Yan, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) modified by Trail, Goff, Bradbury and Karney (2012) for their study on perceived couple discrimination was used to measure perceived couple discrimination. The modified scale consisted of six of the original nine items. Participants were asked, "How often have you and your partner experienced the following types of discrimination because you are a Black-White couple?: 1) treated as inferior, 2) people acting fearful of you, 3) treated with less respect than others, 4) people treating you as if you have been dishonest, 5) insulted or received name-calling, and 6) threatened or harassed" using a scale from 1 (Never) to 4 (Often). A mean summary score was constructed, with higher scores indicating higher frequency of perceived discrimination. Cronbach's alphas of the adapted scale in this study was .90 (White partners) and .92 (Black partners).

Problem-solving. The 17-item Interactional Problem-solving Inventory (IPSI) measured couples' ability to work together to solve problems (Lange et al., 1991). Items such as "Before deciding upon a solution for a particular problem, we first view the matter from different angles," and "After we have discussed a particular problem, I often feel that my point of view has not been properly acknowledged" were scaled from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Relevant items were reversed coded before the mean score was constructed. A mean summary score was constructed, with higher scores indicating effectively problem-solving skills. Cronbach's alphas for this study were .85 (White partners) and .91 (Black partners).

Ethnic identity. The degree to which participants identified with their ethnic heritage was measured using six items from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised scale (MEIM-R; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The scale was tested for structural, factorial and construct validity, and was found to measure two related constructs of ethnic identity: exploration and commitment. Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed to a series of statements regarding their ethnic identity. Sample statements included, “I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.” Participants responded using a Likert scale of 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). A mean summary score was constructed, with higher scores indicating stronger ethnic identity. The scale has been widely used to measure and compare ethnic/racial identity across multiple groups (Brown et al., 2014). Cronbach’s alpha of this six-item scale was .81 (Phinney & Ong, 2007) and .91 (Black partners) and .86 (White partners) in this study.

Self-Esteem. The 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979) was used to measure self-esteem. Sample items included “I feel that I have a number of good qualities,” and “I take a positive attitude toward myself.” Participants were asked to evaluate each item on a 4-point scale from 0 (strongly agree) to 3 (strongly disagree). Items were coded such that higher scores indicated higher levels of self-esteem. Mean scores were computed for analysis. Cronbach’s alphas for this study were .85 (White partners) and .91 (Black partners).

Control Variables

The following variables were included as control variables to account for any possible confounding effect on problem-solving: age, marital length, income, exposure to diversity, and individual discrimination.

Perceived Individual Discrimination. The same Everyday Discrimination Scale (EDS, Williams & Mohammed, 2009) above was adopted for this study. The scale asked participants

the frequency of experiencing six types of discrimination: “How often have you experienced the following examples of discrimination based *on your race and/or ethnicity?*: 1) being treated as inferior, 2) people acting fearful of you, 3) being treated with less respect than others, 4) people treating you as if you have been dishonest, 5) being insulted or received name-calling, and 6) being threatened or harassed” (Trail, Goff, Bradbury, & Karney, 2012). Participants responded using a Likert scale of 1 (Never) to 4 (Often). A mean summary ranging from 1 to 4 was constructed, with higher scores indicating higher frequency of experiencing discrimination. The scale demonstrated strong convergent validity with distress, anger and hostility scales (coefficients of .17 to .19, $p < .001$; Gonzales et al., 2016). Cronbach’s alpha for this study were .94 for Black partners and .93 for White partners.

Exposure to diversity. Three elements adapted from Phinney, Ferguson, and Tate (1997) were used to measure the exposure to racial diversity. Participants used a four-point Likert scale from 1 (Nearly everybody was from my ethnic or racial group) to 4 (Mostly everyone was from different ethnic or racial group) for rating the extent of exposure to people from different races and ethnicities as they grew up in one’s society, schools and friendship networks. An average summary score of 1 to 4 was established, with higher scores suggesting increased exposure during childhood to racial and ethnic diversity. Cronbach’s alpha for this study were .90 for Black partners and .89 for White partners.

Data Analysis

The data were first examined for normality. Skewness for the dependent and all predictor variables was between -2 and +1 and kurtosis values between -1 and +3, indicating that the data were normally distributed. Preliminary analysis included descriptive statistics and bivariate

correlations of study variables using SPSS V.25. This analysis provides an overall understanding of the present sample and variables of interest.

The main analysis included ANOVAs to examine RQ1 and *t*-tests and ANOVAs to examine RQ2 below. Both these research questions examine difference across groups.

RQ1: How does race-based couple discrimination, self-esteem and ethnic identity differ across groups (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

RQ2: How does problem-solving differ between Black wife/White husband and Black husband/White wife groups and across race and gender (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

Hierarchical linear regression was used to test H1, H2 and H3, designed to answer RQ3. The dependent variable for all three hypotheses was problem-solving. The control variables were entered in block 1, the independent variables in block 2, and interacting variables in block 3.

The stepwise regression model was used to determine the control variables that would best fit the regression model. This method adds or deletes one independent prediction at a time. In a forward procedure, the first step is to choose the predictor that provides the best fit. The next best predictor that provides the best fit in conjunction with the first predictor is then added to the model and so forth. Alternatively, a backward procedure starts with a full set of predictors and then eliminates the predictor with the least effect in the model in a stepwise fashion. In the forward procedure, it becomes necessary to drop out some predictors from the model whose contribution reduces most significantly as each new predictor is added. As a result, the stepwise regression combines the techniques of the forward selection with backward eliminations. The enter regression model was used for predictor and moderating variables in Steps 2 and 3, respectively.

RQ3: How is race-based couple discrimination linked to problem-solving in Black-White marriages, and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity.

H1: Perceived race-based couple discrimination is negatively linked to problem-solving.

H2: Higher ethnic identity and self-esteem will positively moderate the effects of race-based couple discrimination on problem-solving, such that when ethnic identity and self-esteem are high, more couples will engage in more problem-solving.

H3: It is expected that because Black persons are generally more aware of their identity, and White persons have high self-esteem, race and gender will influence how couple discrimination is linked to problem-solving and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity.

Chapter 4 - Results

Bivariate Correlations

Correlation results indicated that couple discrimination was positively related to problem-solving for Black wives ($r = .26, p = .01$; Table 2b) and negatively related to problem-solving for Black husbands ($r = -.24, p = .02$; Table 2c). As discrimination against the couples' union increased, Black wives' use of problem-solving increased whereas Black husbands' use of problem-solving reduced. Couple discrimination was not significantly related to problem-solving for White husbands ($r = .09, p = ns$; Table 2c) and White wives ($r = -.07, p = ns$; Table 2b).

Ethnic identity was found to be positively related to couple discrimination for White wives-Black husbands ($r = .16, p = .03$; Table 2a) but not for Black wives-White husbands ($r = .09, p = ns$). White wife-Black husband couples with higher level of ethnic identity also experienced higher levels of couple discrimination and vice versa. Results further suggested ethnic identity is positively related to experiencing couple discrimination for wives (Black wives: $r = .26, p = .01$; White wives: $r = .23, p = .04$; Table 2b) but not husbands.

While self-esteem was not related to couple discrimination, it was related to problem-solving for White wives ($r = .46, p < .001$; Table 2b) and White husbands ($r = -.34, p = .003$; Table 2c) but not for their Black spouses. Higher self-esteem also meant engaging in more problem-solving for White wives and the reverse for White husbands. Ethnic identity was also related to problem-solving for Black wives ($r = .27, p = .01$; Table 2b) and White husbands ($r = .37, p = .001$; Table 2c). Having a stronger sense of one's ethnic identity was positively related to engaging in more problem-solving.

Homogeneity of Variance

Prior to examining whether group means (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband) differ, the assumption of homogeneity of variance needs to be met. Levene's test for homogeneity of variance indicated that there was a significant variance in self-esteem, $F(3, 334) = 8.32, p < .001$, ethnic identity, $F(3, 342) = 6.62, p < .001$, and problem-solving, $F(3, 333) = 8.34, p < .001$, but not couple discrimination, $F(3, 342) = .45, p = ns$. When the assumption of homogeneity of variance is not met, the Welch's adjusted F ratio is reported. Further, differences between all unique pairwise comparisons used the Games-Howell post-hoc test for unequal variances and sample size (i.e., self-esteem, ethnic identity and problem-solving) and Tukey post-hoc test for variances assumed equal (couple discrimination).

Main Analysis

RQ1: How does race-based couple discrimination, self-esteem and ethnic identity differ across groups (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

. ANOVA results indicated that race-based couple discrimination differed across groups, $F(3, 342) = 4.22, p = .006$. Hence, race and gender have a bearing on the extent of couple discrimination experienced by participants. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey test indicated that Black husbands ($M = 2.29, SD = .80$) experienced significantly more discrimination than White husbands ($M = 1.92, SD = .72$), $p = .008$ [CI = .07, .67] and their (White) wives ($M = 1.98, SD = .79$), $p = .04$ [CI = .01, .61]. No other significant differences were detected. These results suggest that Black husbands and wives ($M = 2.15, SD = .75$), experienced similar levels of couple discrimination, $p = ns$ [CI = -.16, .43]. However, Black wives' experience of couple discrimination did not significantly differ from that of White participants. These results indicate

that Black husbands experienced the highest levels of couple discrimination followed by Black wives, White wives and White husbands in this order.

Results further indicated no differences across groups for self-esteem, *Welch's* $F(3, 174.12) = 2.01, p = ns$. These results suggest that participants in this study had similar levels of self-esteem and that race and gender did not have a bearing on confidence in one's own worth.

Differences in ethnic identity was evident across groups, *Welch's* $F(3, 182.96) = 8.52, p < .001$. Post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell test indicated that Black husbands reported lower ethnic identity, ($M = 3.43, SD = 1.08$) compared to their (White) wives, ($M = 4.31, SD = 1.67$), $p = .001$ [CI = -1.45, -.31] and Black wives, ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.55$), $p < .001$ [CI = -1.32, -.30]. No other significant differences were detected. These results suggest that Black husbands and White husbands ($M = 3.91, SD = 1.55$) reported similar levels of ethnic identity, $p = ns$ [CI = -1.01, .05]. These results suggest that White wives reported having the highest levels of ethnic identity followed by Black wives, White husbands, and Black husbands in this order. Although White husband's ethnic identity was lower than that of wives in this study, the difference was not significant at the .05 level.

RQ2: How does problem-solving differ between Black wife/White husband and Black husband/White wife groups and across race and gender (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband)?

Independent-samples t-test results found no difference in problem-solving for between Black husband/White wife ($M = 3.71, SD = .85$) and White husband/Black wife ($M = 3.71, SD = .99$), $t(335) = -.03, p = ns$ [CI = -.20, .19].

However, ANOVAs (Table 3) indicated a significant difference in problem-solving across groups (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband), *Welch's* $F(3,$

173.89) = 22.02, $p < .001$. Post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell test indicated that Black husbands ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .92$) engaged in more problem-solving than White husbands, ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.01$), $p < .001$ [.29, 1.08] and Black wives ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .56$), $p < .001$ [CI = .48, 1.08]. Black husbands engaged in similar levels of problem-solving as their (White) wives ($M = 4.0$, $SD = .89$), $p = ns$ [CI = -.24, .48]. These results suggest that Black husbands used the most problem-solving skills followed by their (White) wives, White husbands and Black wives in this order. These results further suggest that the level of participants' problem-solving skills did not differ from that of their spouses.

RQ3: How is race-based couple discrimination linked to problem-solving in Black-White marriages, and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity?

Tests to see if the data met the assumption of collinearity indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern (All Tolerance levels exceeded .60 and all VIF was less than 2). Further, the Durbin-Watson value of 1.75 indicated that the data met the assumption of independent errors.

H1: Perceived race-based couple discrimination is negatively linked to problem-solving.

H1 was fully supported. Regression results are presented in Table 4. In Step 1, the following variables were entered into the stepwise regression model: age, marital length, income, exposure to diversity, individual discrimination and by race (Black husband, White wife, White wife, and Black husband). Only individual discrimination was positively associated with problem-solving ($B = .15$, $SE = .06$, $\beta = .14$, $p = .016$ [CI = .03, .28]). All other control variables were eliminated from the model. Individual discrimination accounted for 2% of problem-solving.

In Step 2, couple discrimination, self-esteem and ethnic identity were entered into the model. Of these predictor variables, only couple discrimination was associated with problem-solving ($B = -.19$, $SE = .09$, $\beta = -.16$, $p = .035$ [CI = -.36, -.01]). The predictor variables

explained an additional 2% of problem-solving. Unlike individual discrimination that is positively associated with problem-solving, couple discrimination was negatively associated with problem-solving.

H2: Higher ethnic identity and self-esteem will positively moderate the effects of race-based couple discrimination on problem-solving, such that when ethnic identity and self-esteem are high, couples will engage in more problem-solving.

H2 was not supported. Instead of being a positive moderator, self-esteem was found to be a negative moderator. In Step 3, the interaction terms of self-esteem with couple discrimination and ethnic identity with couple discrimination were entered into the model. Self-esteem a negative moderator at the .05 level ($B = .61, SE = .18, \beta = -.23, p = .001$ [CI = -.96, -.26]) and illustrated in Figure 1, while ethnic identity was a negative moderator at the .10 level ($B = -.08, SE = .04, \beta = -.12, p = .072$ [CI = -.17, .01]). Higher self-esteem reduced the use of problem-solving when more couple discrimination was experienced.

The addition of these moderator variables changed the relationship between ethnic identity and problem-solving from non-significant in Step 2 ($B = .05, SE = .04, \beta = .08, p = ns$ [CI = -.02, .12]) to significant in Step 3 ($B = .09, SE = .04, \beta = .15, p = .024$ [CI = .01, .17]). The moderator variables explained an additional 6% of problem-solving. This change was significant (F for change of $R^2 = 6.07, p = .003$).

H3: It is expected that because Black persons are generally more aware of their identity, and White persons have high self-esteem, race and gender will influence how couple discrimination is linked to problem-solving and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity.

H3 was supported. Race and gender influenced how couple discrimination is linked to problem-solving and moderated by self-esteem and ethnic identity. Results are presented in Tables 5a to 5d and described below.

White Wives

Results (Table 5a, Step 1) indicated that the control variable age was positively associated with problem-solving ($B = .09, SE = .03, \beta = .40, p = .003$). All other control variables were eliminated from the model. Age accounted for 14% of problem-solving (F change (1,58) = 9.65, $p = .003$). In Step 2, age was once again significantly related to problem-solving ($B = .07, SE = .03, \beta = .28, p = .02$). Although couple discrimination was not related to problem-solving ($B = -.04, SE = .13, \beta = -.03, p = ns$), self-esteem was positively associated with problem-solving ($B = .85, SE = .23, \beta = .45, p = .001$). Step 2 explained 32% of problem-solving (F change (3,55) = 4.60, $p = .006$). In Step 3, only self-esteem appear to be a significant moderator of couple discrimination and problem-solving for White wives ($B = -.83, SE = .24, \beta = -.45, p = .001$). As illustrated in Figure 2, White wives with high self-esteem engage in less problem-solving as they experience more couple discrimination. The reverse is true for those with lower self-esteem. The moderator variables explained an additional 7% of problem-solving (F change (2,53) = 6.44, $p = .003$).

Black Wives

The stepwise regression analysis eliminated all the control variables from the model. Results (Table 5b, Step 1) indicated that couple discrimination was not a significant predictor of problem-solving ($B = .14, SE = .08, \beta = .19, p = .09$). However, when the moderators (ethnic identity and self-esteem) were entered into the model (Step 2), couple discrimination was found to be significantly associated with problem-solving ($B = .20, SE = .09, \beta = .26, p = .03$). In

addition, ethnic identity was found to significantly moderate the relationship between couple discrimination and problem-solving for Black wives ($B = -.09$, $SE = .05$, $\beta = -.26$, $p = .05$). As illustrated in Figure 3, Black wives with strong ethnic identity engage in less problem-solving as they experience more couple discrimination. The reverse is true for those with weaker ethnic identity. Together, the predictor and moderating variables explained 14% of problem-solving (F change (2,78) = 2.17, $p = ns$).

White Husbands

Stepwise regression of the control variables resulted in two steps (Table 5c). In Step 1, exposure to diversity was positively associated with problem-solving ($B = .34$, $SE = .15$, $\beta = .29$, $p = .02$), accounting for 8% of problem-solving (F change (1,58) = 5.13, $p = .02$). In Step 2, exposure to diversity ($B = .46$, $SE = .15$, $\beta = .39$, $p = .03$) and individual discrimination ($B = -.46$, $SE = .18$, $\beta = -.33$, $p = .011$) were associated with problem-solving and together accounted for 18% of problem-solving (F change (1,57) = 6.90, $p = .01$).

In Step 3, individual discrimination ($B = -.63$, $SE = .17$, $\beta = -.45$, $p < .001$), ethnic identity ($B = .27$, $SE = .10$, $\beta = .42$, $p = .01$) and couple discrimination ($B = .51$, $SE = .18$, $\beta = .34$, $p = .01$) were associated with problem-solving. However, the relationship between exposure to diversity and problem-solving from steps 1 and 2 were no longer significant. These results suggest that ethnic identity and couple discrimination is positively related to problem-solving for White husbands. Step 3 explained 40% of variance in problem-solving (F change (3,54) = 6.45, $p < .001$). In Step 4, neither self-esteem or ethnic identity moderated the relationship between couple discrimination and problem-solving although the moderators explained an additional 8% of problem-solving (F change (2,52) = 4.16, $p = .02$).

Black Husbands

The stepwise regression analysis eliminated all the control variables from the model. Results (Table 5d, Step 1) indicated that couple discrimination was not related to problem-solving ($B = -.28, SE = .13, \beta = -.23, p = .ns$). In Step 2, neither ethnic identity nor self-esteem was found to be a significant moderator.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

How Black-White couples' relationship functioning is influenced by experiences of racial discrimination is an understudied topic. This study examines how race-based couple discrimination is associated with relationship problem-solving and the role of self-esteem and ethnic identity on this relationship. As expected, the results indicated that interracial couples experience discrimination by virtue of being married to someone from a different race. The minority stress model (Meyer, 1995, 2003) supports these results, whereby persons of minority status experience stressors such as racism, discrimination and stigma and expectations of rejection.

The results further suggest that couple discrimination is negatively linked to problem-solving and that self-esteem served as a negative moderator of this relationship for the participants in this study. As a buffer or protective agent, it was expected that higher self-esteem would increase the ability of couples to engage more in relationship processes such as problem-solving when stressed. These results indicated the reverse. Under high levels of stress, couples with high self-esteem tended to pull away from each other perhaps to deal with the stress on their own rather than burden their partners. Closer examination across groups not only revealed that the relationship between couple discrimination and problem-solving differed across race and

gender but the role of ethnic identity and self-esteem as moderators also differed across groups. These differences are described below.

Black Wives-White Husbands

Black wives and White husbands appear to use more problem-solving when they experienced more couple discrimination, suggesting that they may cope with discrimination by turning towards each other, hence depending on each other for support. These results support Clavel et al., (2017) who found an increase in social support in Black partners when faced with discrimination. These authors suggested that Black couples lean against each other due to the enormity of the external stress of discrimination. These results however, contradict previous studies that suggests a negative relationship between interpersonal discrimination and problem-solving strategies (Joseph & Kup, 2009) and a positive association between discrimination and instability (Lavner et al., 2018).

In addition to leaning against each other for support, Black wives and White husbands may engage in problem-solving strategies because of how White men are portrayed in society. White men by default, are assumed to hold a higher status in society that is synonymous with power and reverence (Feagin & O'brien, 2003). In order to uphold this assigned status, White husbands want to be seen as strong, capable, and problem solvers. This perceived role may heighten White husbands' attunement towards their Black wives, which facilitate problem-solving strategies.

Results further suggest that the relationship between problem-solving and couple discrimination is negative for Black wives' that have high levels of ethnic identity. In other words, Black wives who have higher levels of ethnic pride and face discrimination, are less likely to seek out their partner to solve problems. While high ethnic identity is advantageous and

appears protective, in the couple context it may prevent the couple for engaging with each other and work together to cope with discrimination. These Black wives appear to process/deal with the stress from discrimination on their own without involving their spouses. This finding supports previous studies that found strong ethnic identity moderates the relationship between discrimination and relationship engagement (Leslie & Letiecq, 2004; Trail T. E., Goff, Bradbury, & Karney, 2010; Woo, Fan, Tran, & Takeuchi, 2019). However, this decrease in couple engagement can be a lost opportunity for couples to turn to each other for support.

Another reason why Black wives may not turn to their partner in times of high stress could be the idea of “strong black women” (SBW) and the intersectionality of race and gender. The SBW stereotype reflects Black’s racialized self-perception of being powerful and self-assured and overall gendered perception of women as loving and caring (Donovan, 2011). For many Black women, the SBW model acts as a cultural norm and psychological coping strategy (Abrams, Hill, & Maxwell, 2019; Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2009) that requires being resilient and self-reliant. Further, the internalization of (ethnic) power may offer some defense against the psychological and physical consequences of traumatic incidents, such as racist and sexist encounters (Donovan & West, 2015).

Society has naturally groomed Black women as strong and independent. Black families have long been disrupted by the exponential high rates of incarceration of Black men (Gramlich, 2019). As a result, Black women have to fight for themselves, act as mules for their families and labor intensely in order to survive (Steward, 2018). Black women’s tenacity could explain how they have come to understand their worth as tied to how much turmoil they can resolve and endure. Their ability to survive and thrive in the midst of distress has not gained the attention it deserves. Black women are hard-working, creative, and self-assured (Harris-Perry, 2011; West,

Donovan, & Daniel, 2016) and the more they identify as an SBW, the more self-sufficient and less needing of spousal support. The inherent need to live up to the SBW image may inadvertently compel Black women to be independent.

Black Husbands-White Wives

In contrast to the above, White wives and Black husbands' use of problem-solving is not linked to couple discrimination, although there appears to be a trend of turning away from their partners in times of such stress. For both Black husbands and White wives, discrimination is negatively related to problem-solving although not at a significant level. This finding is particularly surprising, as it not only contradicts current literature that found a significant negative impact of discrimination on relationship functioning (Laver et al., 2018), but because Black husbands reported the highest level of discrimination and problem-solving across the four groups examined. It is possible that because black men have to constantly combat discrimination, hence already having to problem solve, any added discrimination may result in feeling flooded and helpless, which leads to fleeing from rather than engaging with their partners.

Gottman (1999) describes two ways that recurring episodes of flooding can lead to relationship deterioration. First, when there is a preexisting condition of emotional distress when dealing with one's partner. Second, the physical sensation of flooding (i.e., increased heart rate, sweating etc.) can prevent problem-solving discussion from occurring. Both of these situations may contribute to how Black husbands manage high levels of discrimination. The preexisting condition being the constant need to combat discrimination and being flooded with more discrimination turns them away from engaging with their partners. Further, not only is there no significant relationship between discrimination and problem-solving for Black husbands, but neither self-esteem or ethnic identity interacts with discrimination in a significant way.

Similar to their spouses, couple discrimination is not directly related to problem-solving for White wives. Instead, self-esteem appear to be positively related to problem-solving, indicating that White wives with high self-esteem were more likely to engage in problem-solving with their partners. This finding supports previous studies where high self-esteem influences relationship joining, such as degree of happiness, partner supportiveness, and hopefulness for the marriage (e.g., Erol & Orth, 2016; Murray et al., 1998; Murray et al., 2002).

However, when faced with couple discrimination, White wives with high self-esteem are less likely to turn to their partner, hence further signifying that race and gender are important constructs to consider in relationship engagement. Because Black husbands do not turn to their partners when faced with discrimination, when their wives find themselves in a similar situation, it may be difficult for wives to rely on their husbands. Instead, these wives may absorb the stress from discrimination to prevent their husbands from having to take the brunt of it. This could result in turning away from their partner, which explains the decrease in problem-solving engagement. The ability to absorb the negative impact of discrimination rather than putting it on the husband, who is already experiencing a high level of discrimination, may contribute to relationship maintenance. Turning away in this case may act as a coping mechanism, although it can rob from the couple the opportunity to bond, which can be a downside for the relationship. The act of relieving the relationship from the burden of external stressors, beyond the control of couples, may actually allow couples to maintain and/or buffer their relationships.

Differences across Race and Gender

The results found significant differences across race and gender for couple discrimination, problem-solving, and ethnic identity, and no differences across groups for self-esteem. Not surprising, Black men experienced similar levels of couple discrimination as Black wives and more than that of White participants. These results support previous studies that indicate high discrimination experienced by Black individuals (Horowitz, et al, 2019). Results suggest that the level of problem-solving used within couples is similar to each other and that Black husbands-White wives used more problem-solving than White husbands-Black wives. Hence, couples appear to be engaged with each other when problem-solving.

Results further indicate that Black and White men had similar levels of ethnic identity that were lower than that of their wives. White wives may be more aware of their ethnic identity due to being married to a member of a minority group. Black men have been the target of racism and institutional discrimination for years. The stress from having to witness the racialized negative interactions their husbands face daily may have heightened wives' awareness of their racial identity and that of their husband's (Bryant, et al., 2010). White men in this study report having lower ethnic identity compared to White women, hence, may not be attuned to the stress from discrimination that their Black wives experience. This may explain why White men are not buffering the negative impact of discrimination as do White wives.

Clinical Implications

It is imperative that therapists do not perpetuate overt or covert discrimination when serving interracial couples. Therapists need to reflect on their personal biases and perceptions of interracial relationships. Being aware of biases or strong opinions about interracial relationships can help therapists avoid undue harm onto their clients. Therapists should utilize supervision and

consultation with their peers to process anxieties or uncertainties on how to address race and power differences with interracial couples. Taking the time to join with clients and discuss cultural differences and similarities shared with clients can foster trust that is crucial for a strong working alliance.

Fostering open communication and understanding about the struggles of being in an interracial relationship, and what it means to the couple, as well as to society-at-large is important. Therapists need to normalize the added social stressors related to being in an interracial Black-White relationship. Results suggests that couples respond to the needs of their partners. Hence, couples can benefit from being more in-tuned to their partners' stress indicators and develop effective responses to mitigate the added burden of (discriminatory) stress on their partner. Increased attunement would be especially true for Whites in Black-White relationships. Exploring what their Black partners would consider helpful responses when stress is detected would also be important.

The moderation results from this study indicate that White wives with high self-esteem and Black wives with strong ethnic identity absorb the stress from discrimination, that in appear to protect their relationships. Although building the self-esteem of White women and ethnic identity of Black women in Black-White relationships may help these relationships, taking a systemic approach is recommended in order to share the responsibility of managing stress from discrimination. Couples should explore the myriad ways to manage race-based discrimination -- on their own, with their partner or with other social support networks -- in order to help minimize the internalization of discrimination and to foster relationship strength. Couple behaviors that can promote relationship functioning and resilience should be identified (i.e., confiding in each other, seeking out the other, setting boundaries with external systems that are stress promoting,

identifying relationships allies in one's family/community) as with ways that allow the couple to effectively utilize these behaviors as needed.

It is further recommended that when working with Black women, the stress of having to live up to the "strong black women (SBW)" notion is acknowledged. Helping Black women gain control by changing the dialogue of SWB from being 'other imposed' to 'self-imposed' can allow them more flexibility and permission to turn to their partners more often.

Limitations and Future Research

Generalizations from the results of this study is limited by the small sample size of the respective (race/gender) groups, the cross-sectional nature of the study that prevents conclusions about causal relationships between discrimination and problem-solving. Longitudinal studies with larger sample sizes are needed to verify the results of this study especially the role of ethnic identity and self-esteem in buffering the influence of discrimination on problem-solving.

Additionally, there is a limitation for using individual constructs such as ethnic identity and self-esteem to understand and change couple processes. To fully understand couple processes, future studies could include observational data.

Further, the results of this all heterosexual sample may not reflect the relationship of same-sex and gender non-gender binary couples. It is expected that same-sex and gender fluid couples experience increased discrimination compared to heterosexual couples. A more diverse sample is needed in future research.

The problem-solving scale used in the study measured general problem-solving and was not specific to issues related to racial discrimination experienced by couples. It is possible that results would differ if specific problem-solving skills for discriminatory acts were assessed. Related is the need to explore how partners cope with discrimination when they turn away from

their partners. Increased understanding of the specific components of problem-solving could better leverage these skills to mitigate the detrimental effects of discrimination. Further, the lack of observational data prevents this study from fully understanding which relationship processes are occurring between partners and the roles that each partner plays. Self-report data and the current method of analyses is unable study couple process around these issues. Last, the results of this study warrant further exploration into the role of race and gender, self-esteem, ethnic identity and other personal attributes on the experiences of discrimination and relationship functioning.

Table 2a

Summary of Intercorrelations for Black-White Couples

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M (SD)</i>
1. Problem-Solving	–	-.02	.09	-.07	3.71 (.85)
2. Couple Discrimination	.02	–	.01	.16*	2.22 (.77)
3. Self-esteem	.04	.07	–	-.04	2.31 (.27)
4. Ethnic Identity	.14	.09	-.44**	–	3.84 (1.39)
<i>M (SD)</i>	3.71 (.99)	1.95 (.75)	2.25 (.46)	4.10 (1.62)	

Note. Black Wife-White Husband – below the diagonal and White wife-Black Husband – above the diagonal.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2b

Summary of Intercorrelations for Wives

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M (SD)</i>
1. Problem-Solving	–	.26*	-.01	.27**	3.22 (.56)
2. Couple Discrimination	-.07	–	.01	.26*	2.15 (.75)
3. Self-esteem	.46**	.01	–	.01	2.27 (.27)
4. Ethnic Identity	-.18	.23*	-.42**	–	4.23 (1.55)
<i>M (SD)</i>	3.99 (.88)	1.98 (.79)	2.26 (.46)	4.31 (1.67)	

Note. White wives – below the diagonal and Black wives – above the diagonal.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2c

Summary of Intercorrelations for Husbands

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M (SD)</i>
1. Problem-Solving	–	-.24*	.05	-.07	4.11 (.92)
2. Couple Discrimination	.09	–	-.01	.13	2.29 (.80)
3. Self-esteem	-.34**	.15	–	.01	2.36 (.27)
4. Ethnic Identity	.37**	-.08	-.48**	–	3.43 (1.08)
<i>M (SD)</i>	3.42 (1.01)	1.92 (.72)	2.25 (.47)	3.91 (1.55)	

Note. White husbands – below the diagonal and Black husband – above the diagonal.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Summaries of ANOVAs Comparing Group Differences of Couple Discrimination, Problem-Solving, Ethnic Identity, And Self-Esteem

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F^w</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Couple Discrimination:					
Black husbands	2.29	.89			
White husbands	1.92	.72	4.18	3	.01
Black wives	2.15	.75			
White wives	1.98	.79			
Problem-solving:					
Black husbands	4.11	.92			
White husbands	3.42	1.01	22.03	3	.00
Black wives	3.32	.56			
White wives	4.00	.90			
Ethnic identity					
Black husbands	3.43	1.08			
White husbands	3.91	1.55	8.52	3	.00
Black wives	4.23	1.55			
White wives	4.31	1.67			
Self-Esteem:					
Black husbands	2.36	.27			
White husbands	2.25	.47	2.01	3	.11
Black wives	2.27	.27			
White wives	2.27	.46			

BH = Black husbands; WH = White husbands; BW = Black wives; WW = White wives.

Welch's statistic used because homogeneity of variances assumption was violated.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed).

Table 4

Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem-Solving ($n = 356$).

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	95%CI
Control variables:										
Individual Discrimination	.15	.06	.14*	.24	.08	.22**	.23	.08	.21**	.08,.38
Ethnic Identity	-	-	-	.05	.04	.08	.09	.04	.15*	.01,.17
Self-esteem	-	-	-	.14	.16	.06	.18	.16	.07	-.13,.49
Couple Discrimination (CD)	-	-	-	-.19	.09	-.16*	-.18	.09	-.15*	-.35,-.01
Self-esteem x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.61	.18	-.23***	-.96,-.26
Ethnic identity x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.08	.05	-.12	-.17, .01
R^2		.02			.04				.08	
F for change in R^2		5.87*			1.96				6.07**	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 5a

Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem-Solving for White Wives ($n = 85$).

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			95%CI
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	
Control Variables:										
Age	.09	.03	.40**	.07	.03	.28*	.07	.03	.30**	.02, .12
Couple Discrimination (CD)	-	-	-	-.04	.13	-.03	-.15	.14	-.13	-.43, .14
Ethnic Identity	-	-	-	.05	.07	.10	.12	.07	.21	-.02, .25
Self-esteem	-	-	-	.85	.23	.45**	.82	.21	.43***	.39, 1.25
Self-esteem x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.83	.24	-.45**	-1.31, -.36
Ethnic Identity x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.08	.08	-.15	-.23, .07
R^2		.14			.32				.45	
F for change in R^2		9.65**			4.60**				6.44**	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 5b

Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem-Solving for Black Wives (n = 93).

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	95%CI
Ethnic Identity	.07	.04	.19	.09	.04	.26*	.01,.17
Self-esteem	-.10	.22	-.05	.01	.23	.01	-.44,.47
Couple Discrimination (CD)	.14	.08	.19	.20	.09	.26*	.02,.37
Self-esteem x CD	-	-	-	-.33	.38	-.11	-1.0,.34
Ethnic identity x CD	-	-	-	-.09	.05	-.24**	-.19,.00
R^2		.09				.14	
F for change in R^2		2.75*				2.17	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 5c

Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem-Solving for White Husbands ($n = 85$).

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3			Step 4			95%CI
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	
Control Variables:													
Exposure to diversity	.34	.15	.29*	.46	.15	.39*	.20	.15	.17	.15	.14	.13	-.14, .44
Individual Discrimination	-	-	-	-.46	.18	-.33*	-.63	.17	-.45***	-.60	.16	-.43***	-.92, -.28
Ethnic Identity	-	-	-	-	-	-	.27	.10	.42*	.44	.13	.68***	.19, .69
Self-esteem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.22	.30	-.10	-.36	.29	-.17	-.94, .22
Couple Discrimination (CD)	-	-	-	-	-	-	.51	.18	.34*	.50	.17	.34**	.16, .83
Self-esteem x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.63	.37	-.25	-.17, .11
Ethnic identity x CD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.16	.17	.20	-.17, .49
R^2		.08			.18			.40			.48		
<i>F for change in R^2</i>		5.31*			6.90			6.45***			4.16*		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 5d

Summary of Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Problem-Solving for Black Husbands (n = 93).

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	95%CI
Ethnic Identity	-.02	.10	-.02	.002	.12	.003	-.24, .25
Self-esteem	-.09	.41	-.03	.13	.47	.03	-.80, 1.06
Couple Discrimination (CD)	-.28	.13	-.23	-.24	.17	-.20	-.58, .10
Self-esteem x CD	-	-	-	-.51	.47	-.15	-1.44, .42
Ethnic Identity x CD	-	-	-	-.04	.13	-.05	-.30, .22
R^2		.06				.07	
<i>F for change in R^2</i>		1.51				.71	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 1

Simple Slope of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Self-Esteem for All Groups.

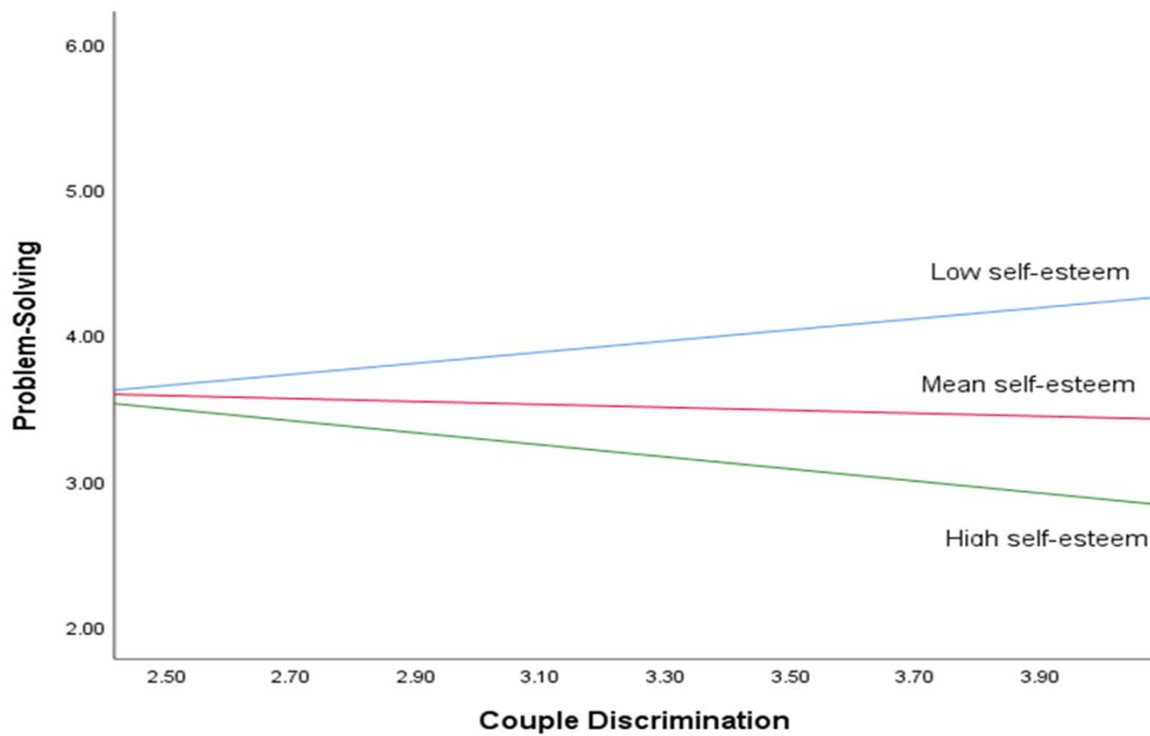


Figure 2

Simple Slopes of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD Above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Self-Esteem Among White Wives

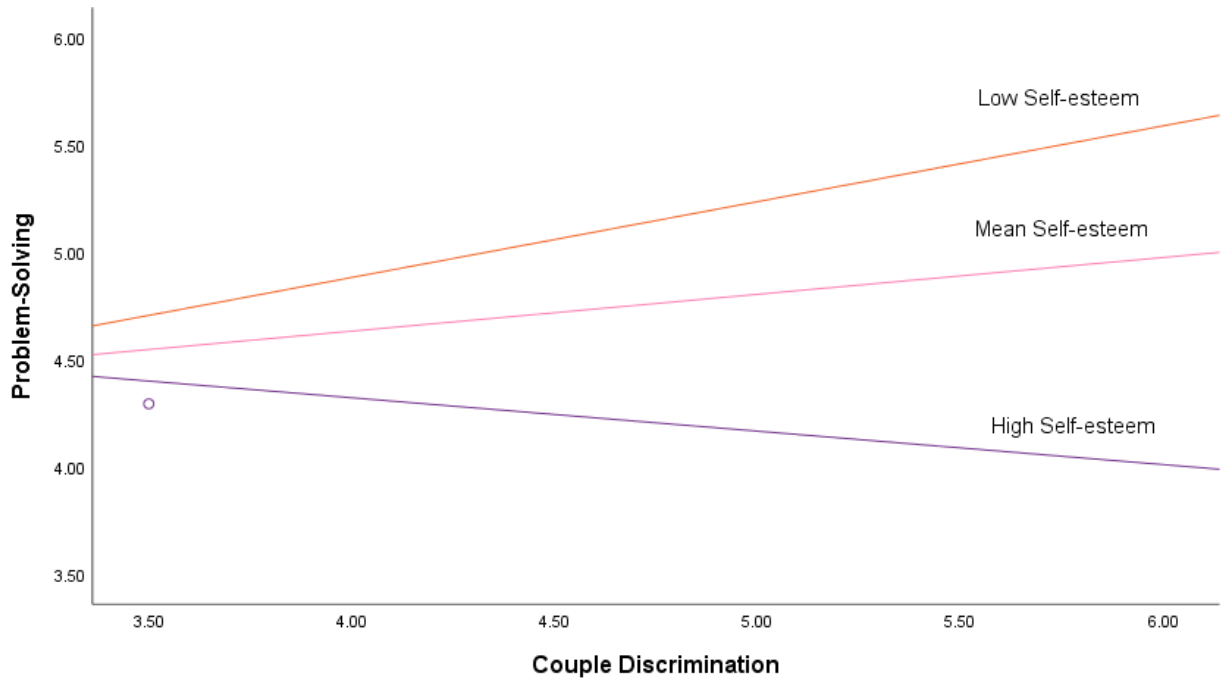
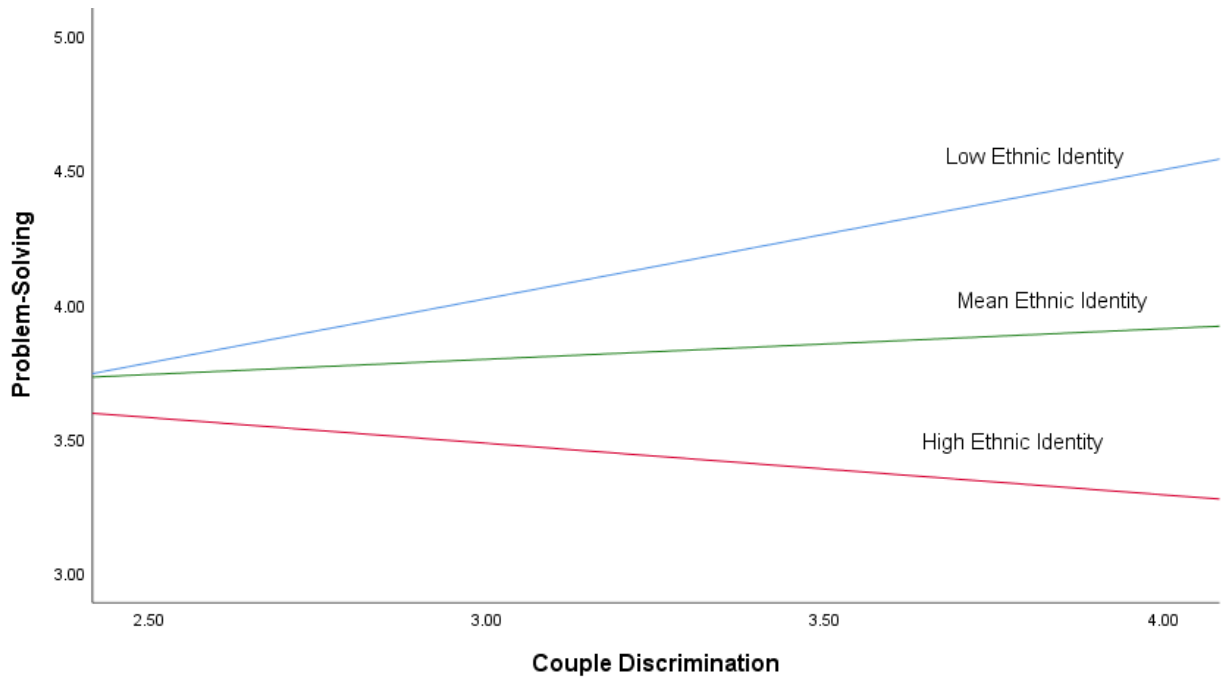


Figure 3

Simple Slopes of Couple Discrimination Predicting Problem-Solving for 1 SD Above (high) and Below (low) the Mean of Ethnic Identity Among Black Wives



Chapter 6 - References

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