Testing Intolerance of Uncertainty and Emotion Regulation Models of Worry in White and Black Americans
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Theoretical Background

- Several theoretical models have been proposed to conceptualize worry, including the Intolerance of Uncertainty and Emotion Dysregulation models.
- The Intolerance of Uncertainty Model (IUM; Dugas et al., 1995) characterizes worry as a response to difficulties withstanding uncertainty, negative problem orientation, cognitive avoidance, and problematic beliefs about worry (Dugas et al., 1995).
- In the Emotion Dysregulation Model (EDM), individuals experience increased emotional intensity, poor emotional understanding, resulting in attempts at experiential avoidance and worry (Mennin et al., 2002).
- Although both models have been empirically supported, study samples to date have included overwhelmingly White Americans.
- Some work suggests that the presentation of worry varies across different races, particularly between Black and White Americans (Chapman Kertz, & Woodruff-Borden, 2009; Scott et al., 2002).
- Theoretical models inform treatment interventions. Consequently, treatments may be less effective for certain groups if the models do not apply.

Hypotheses

- The goal of the current study was to explore both models of worry as a function of race.
- We hypothesized that the models of worry would explain a significant portion of variance in both Black and White Americans.

Participants

- 249 predominantly female (n = 130) college students (48% Black and 52% White Americans) from a large midwestern university.
- The mean age of the total sample was 19.3 years.
- Participants completed several self-report measures that were part of a larger study.

Model I: Intolerance of Uncertainty Model (IUM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intolerance of Uncertainty</th>
<th>β of Black American Sample</th>
<th>β of White American Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Avoidance</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Problem Orientation</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Beliefs About Worry</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Beliefs About Worry</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For interpretation purposes all variables are presented. *p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

Model II: Emotion Dysregulation Model (EDM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonacceptance of Emotional Responses</th>
<th>β of Black American Sample</th>
<th>β of White American Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties Engaging in Goal-Directed Behavior</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Emotional Awareness</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Access to Emotion Regulation Strategies</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For interpretation purposes all variables are presented. *p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

Results

- A stepwise regression was performed with the IUM and EDM model components as predictors of worry. The models were tested separately for Black and White American participants.
- The IUM was significant for the Black American sample, R² = .16, F(5, 112) = 5.46, p < .01, and the White American sample, R² = .58, F(5, 123) = 35.88, p < .001. See Model I for individual predictors.
- The overall EDM was significant for the Black American sample, R² = .09, F(6, 112) = 2.86, p = .01, and the White American sample, R² = .37 F(6, 123) = 13.69, p < .001. See Model II for individual predictors.
- The overall amount of variance explained for the IUM and EDM in the White American sample was 58% and 37%, respectively. However, the overall amount of variance explained by the IUM and EDM in the Black American sample was much lower than the White American sample, 16% and 9%, respectively.

Discussion

- These findings suggest that two well-established models predicted worry for both Black and White American samples; however, there were differences between groups on the overall variance explained by each model as well as the significant predictors.
- Since these models inform treatment interventions, treatments might be less effective for Black Americans.
- Future research is needed to examine the applicability of conceptual models of worry for other racial groups, and to determine if revisions to current models are necessary.