Self-Esteem the Mediator: Caribbean Black and African American Adolescents’ Initiation of Sex

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Meditating Effect of Self-esteem

- Self-esteem is an insignificant predictor of Black adolescents’ decision to initiate sex (Goodson et al 2006; Mandara, Murray & Bangie, 2003; Yarcheski, Mahon & Yarcheski, 2003).

Purpose of the Study

• To determine whether normal levels of self-esteem mediates the relationship between family support and initiation of sex for US-born Caribbean Black compared to African American adolescents.
Research Design and Methodology
Original Study

• National Survey of American Life – Adolescents (NSAL-A)

• Stratified and clustered sample design

• NSAL-A weights

• Later post-stratified to approximate the national population distributions for gender and age for black youth (Sweetman et al., 2009).

• Interviews, in homes, using a computer-assisted instrument and 18% were conducted either in part or fully by telephone.
  – Interviews averaged 1 hour 50 minutes
Current Study: NSAL-A

- Cross-sectional study design
- Secondary analysis
- NSAL-A weights for the African American and Caribbean Black samples
- Interview time varies
Measures

• Dependent variable
  – Initiation of sex

• Independent variable
  – Perceived family support

• Mediator variable
  – Self-esteem: Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale

• Control variables
  – Age and gender
Statistical Analysis

- Descriptive statistics

- Bivariate analyses
  - Chi-square tests

- Logistic regression analyses

- Mediation analyses
  - Baron and Kenny (1986)
  - Sobel test (1982).
Results
Adolescent Demographics

Caribbean Blacks  
\( n = 360 \)

- Age  
  - Mean: 15.22; SE = .06

- Gender  
  - Female: 55.22%  
  - Male: 44.78%

African Americans  
\( n = 810 \)

- Age  
  - Mean: 14.96; SE = .07

- Gender  
  - Female: 49.61%  
  - Male: 50.39%
Levels of Self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Caribbean Blacks</th>
<th>African Americans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>13.22</td>
<td>15.06</td>
<td>13.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>86.78</td>
<td>84.94</td>
<td>86.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Sample

Caribbean Blacks

African Americans
# Self-esteem and Initiation of Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-esteem</th>
<th>Initiation of Sex</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes (%)</td>
<td>No (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Sample</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>34.41</td>
<td>64.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>48.24</td>
<td>51.76</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caribbean Blacks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>40.47</td>
<td>59.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>51.42</td>
<td>48.58</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>African Americans</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>35.05</td>
<td>64.95</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>47.98</td>
<td>52.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant difference (p < .05)

Adolescents’ Odds of Initiation of Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Crude Analysis</th>
<th>Adjusted Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>ORs (95% CI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Adolescents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Self-esteem</td>
<td>35.41%</td>
<td>.59 (.39 - .89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-esteem</td>
<td>48.24%</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US-born Caribbean Black Adolescents</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Self-esteem</td>
<td>40.47%</td>
<td>.64 (.17 - 2.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-esteem</td>
<td>51.42%</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Adolescents</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Self-esteem</td>
<td>35.05%</td>
<td>.59 (.37 - .92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Self-esteem</td>
<td>47.98%</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 1: Crude analysis
Model 2: Adjusted analysis (adjusted for age and gender)
Figure 1. African American Adolescents’ standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between perceived family support and initiation of sex as mediated by self-esteem. The standardized regression coefficients perceived family support between initiation of sex controlling for self-esteem.
Figure 2. Caribbean Black Adolescents’ standardized regression coefficients for the relationship between perceived family support and initiation of sex as mediated by self-esteem. The standardized regression coefficients perceived family support between initiation of sex controlling for self-esteem.
## Mediation Significance: Sobel Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adolescent Sample</th>
<th>Mediation Paths</th>
<th>Sobel Test Statistics</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean Black</td>
<td>PFS $\rightarrow$ SE $\rightarrow$ IoS</td>
<td>-.17, $p = .87$</td>
<td>Hypothesis rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.62, $p = .11$</td>
<td>Hypothesis rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Perceived Family Support (PFS), Self-Esteem (SE), Initiation of Sex (IoS).  **$p \leq .01$,  *$p \leq .05$**
Meaning of the Results

• Possible influences of Black heterogeneity and cultural differences

• Heritage and tridimensional acculturalization

• Global level of self-esteem
Implications

• Culturally tailored for positive youth development interventions

• Better cultural responsiveness
Summary
Questions

THANK YOU!

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