

Introduction

- Mexican women experience greater depressive and anxious symptoms than white women and Latino men (LeCuyer-Maus, 2003; Jurkowski et. al, 2010).
- Depressed mothers may express less positive affect, and positive affect is associated with positive child coping and greater resilience (LeCuyer-Maus, 2003; Jaser et. al, 2011).
- They may also exhibit greater negative affect with their children and greater negative affect is associated with maladaptive child coping (LeCuyer-Maus, 2003).
- Primary control coping includes problem-solving, emotion expression and regulation.
- Secondary control coping includes cognitive restructuring, positive thinking and acceptance.
- Disengagement coping includes avoidance, denial and wishful thinking.
- This current study is examining how maternal depression and anxiety impact child coping, and if this association is mediated by observed maternal positive and negative affect.

Results

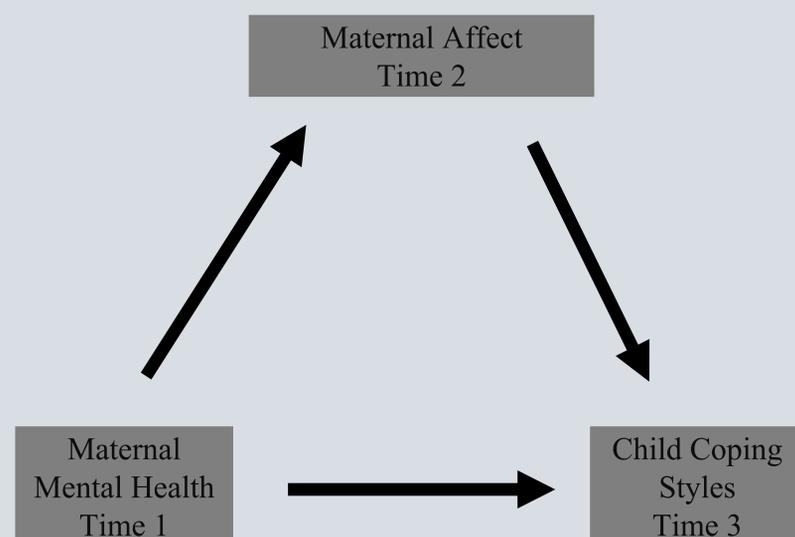
Direct effects:

- Longitudinal regression analyses suggested that Time 1 (baseline) maternal depression and anxiety did not predict maternal positive or negative affect at Time 2 (6 months).
- Maternal positive and negative affect at Time 2 (6 months) did not predict any child coping strategies at Time 3 (1 year).
- Time 1 baseline maternal depression ($\beta = 0.0012$, $SE = 0.0006$, $t = 2.09$, $p = 0.040$) and anxiety ($\beta = 0.0019$, $SE = 0.0006$, $t = 3.40$, $p = 0.001$) predicted disengagement coping one year later at Time 3, controlling for Time 1 child coping skills.
- Time 1 baseline maternal anxiety also marginally predicted child primary coping one year later at Time 3 ($\beta = -0.0017$, $SE = 0.0009$, $t = -1.84$, $p = 0.068$).

Mediation analyses

- Mediation analyses did not show that Time 2 maternal positive nor negative affect mediated the impact of baseline maternal depression and anxiety on child coping at Time 3.

Mediation Model



Methods

Participants

- 103 mothers ($M_{age} = 37.09$ years old) and their children ($M_{age} = 8.42$ years old)
- 90% of mothers were born in Mexico and 97% of children were born in the United States

Procedure

- Data collection took place over 3 home visits, spaced 6 months apart

Measures

- Time 1 Maternal Mental Health: Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983).
- Time 2 Maternal Affect: assessed observationally by Family Macro Interaction Coding System (FIMS; Holmbeck et.al, 2007).
- Time 3 Child Coping: Responses to Stress Questionnaires (RSQ; Connor-Smith et. al, 2000).

Discussion

- Consistent with past literature, maternal mental health had a direct effect on children's coping strategies, so that greater maternal depression and anxiety were associated with increased child disengagement coping, which has been associated with less perceived control and internalizing symptoms (Dijkstra & Homan, 2016)
- Results did not support the posited mediation model
- Affect was observed and coded through brief video recorded interactions that may not have captured the warmth of mothers in daily life
- This current study is limited by geographic location and ethnicity as all mothers resided in the Midwest, were from low-income backgrounds, and the majority identified as Mexican.
- Future research should consider other data collection methods, such as clinical interviews and self-reported child coping strategies.
- This study underscores the need to provide culturally considerate interventions to support immigrant mothers' mental health and instill effective coping strategies in their children

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Acknowledgements

This research is supported by Children Adapting to Stress and Adversity (CASA) Lab and funded by the Foundation for Child Development.

