

Gendered Racism and Expectations of Pregnancy Distress

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INTRODUCTION

Gendered racism involves unique discrimination experiences based on the intersection of gender and race (Essed, 1991). Past research finds that gendered racism experiences are more common among Black and Latinx women than white women, and that gendered racism is associated with greater pregnancy distress among women who were currently pregnant or had at least one child (Rosenthal & Lobel, 2018). Past research has shown an association between negative expectations of pregnancy and giving birth with negative outcomes reported for women in childbirth (Ayers & Pickering, 2005). The purpose of this exploratory study was to test if we would find similar associations between gendered racism and expectations of pregnancy distress in the future among women who had never had children.

METHOD

Participants: Participants included 862 women who identified as White, Black, Latina, or Multiracial including Black and/or Latina, and they did not have any children. Participants were aged 18 or older.

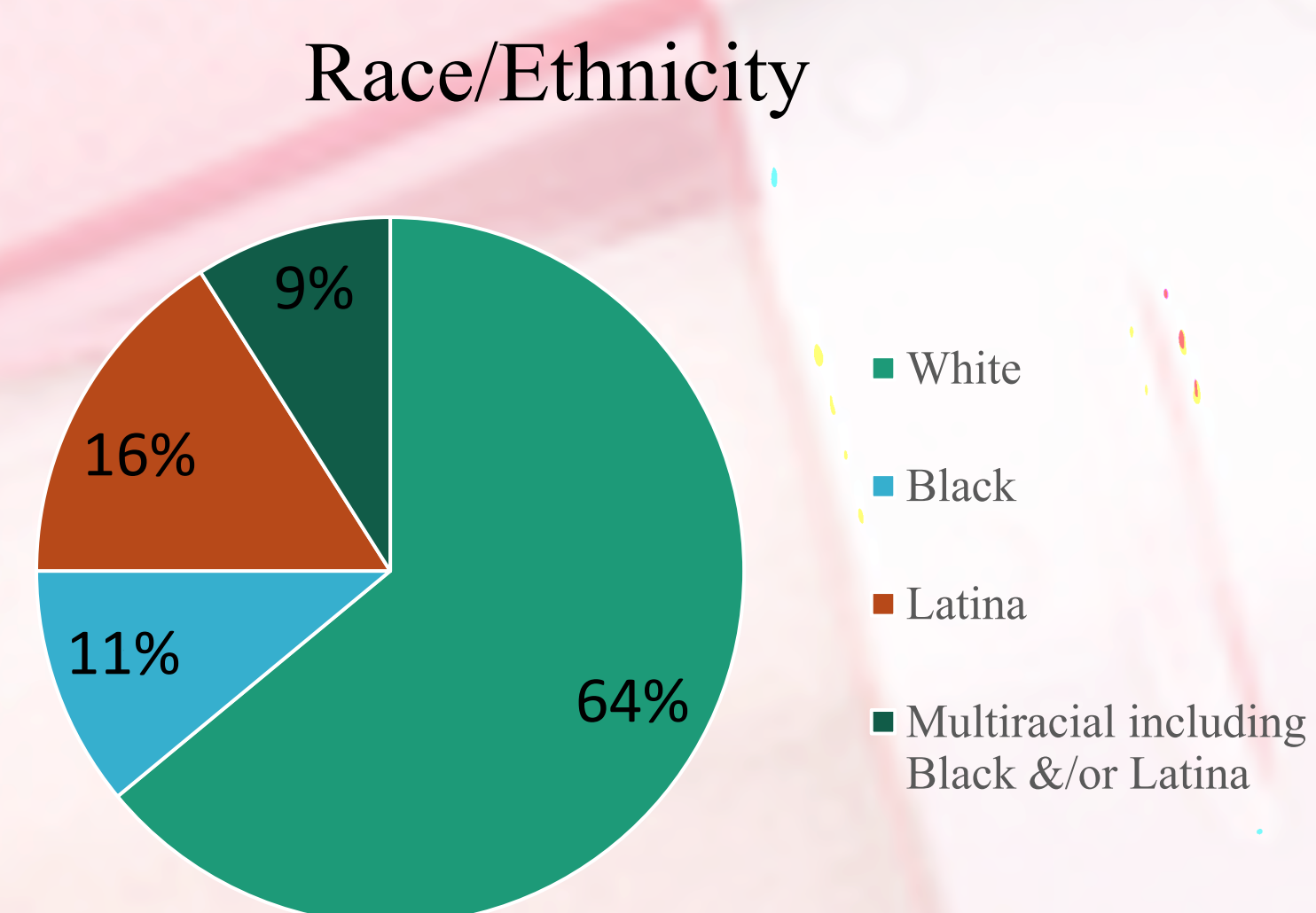


Figure 1. Participant characteristics.

Procedure: Through a correlational, non-experimental online survey posted on social media sites, women aged 18 and older from the United States were recruited.

Proofpilot was also used.

Measures:

- Everyday Discrimination Scale (Lewis et al. 2006; Williams et al. 1997) 10-item ($\alpha = .87$)
- General Gendered Racism (Rosenthal & Lobel 2018) 18-item ($\alpha = .94$)
- Pregnancy-Specific Gendered Racism (Rosenthal & Lobel 2018) 12-item ($\alpha = .94$)
- Revised Prenatal Distress Questionnaire (Auerbach et al. 2017; Lobel et al. 2008; Yali and Lobel 1999) 17 item ($\alpha = .90$)
- Birth Control Conspiracy Beliefs adapted from 10-item measure (Rosenthal & Lobel 2018; Thorburn & Bogart 2005). ($\alpha = .80$)

RESULTS

Figure 2. Regression Table.

	Anticipated Pregnancy Specific Gendered Racism			Anticipated Pregnancy Specific Distress		
	β	t	p	β	t	p
Black	.14	5.50	<.001	-.04	-1.13	.258
Latina	.07	2.49	.013	-.23	-.23	.818
Multiracial	.08	3.47	.001	-.05	1.68	.093
Age	-.09	-3.07	.002	-.13	-3.25	.001
Born in the U.S.	.02	.70	.485	-.01	-.38	.706
English as first language	-.04	-1.50	.135	-.01	-.24	.812
Social Class	.02	.77	.439	-.09	-2.57	.010
Associate's degree or more	-.02	-.83	.407	.03	.76	.449
Feelings about being pregnant	.02	.64	.522	.28	7.79	<.001
Want to have children	-.01	-.30	.765	.15	3.86	<.001
General everyday discrimination	-.002	-.06	.951	.05	1.30	.195
Birth-control related mistrust	.04	1.38	.169	.04	1.29	.198
General gendered racism	.64	23.46	<.001	.14	3.86	<.001

Figure 3. Bootstrap Mediation Analysis.

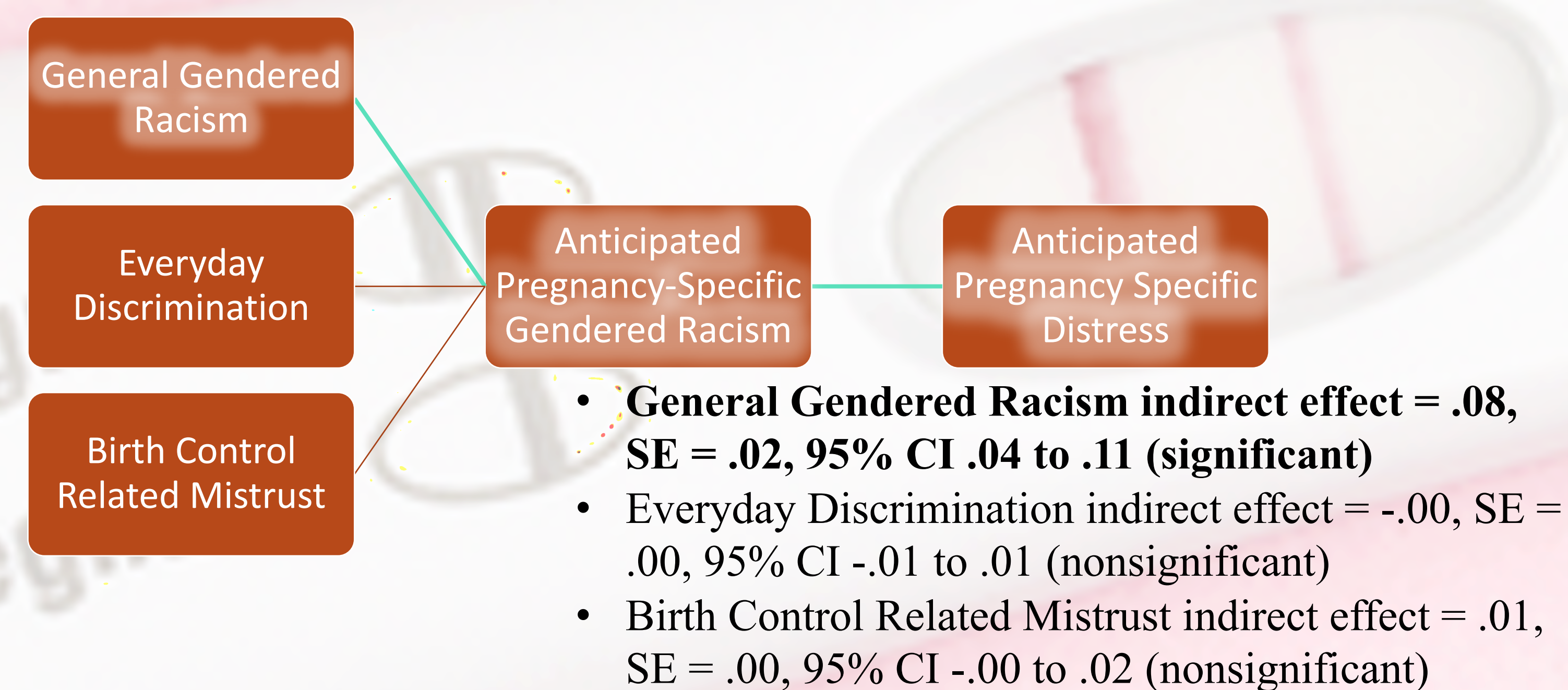
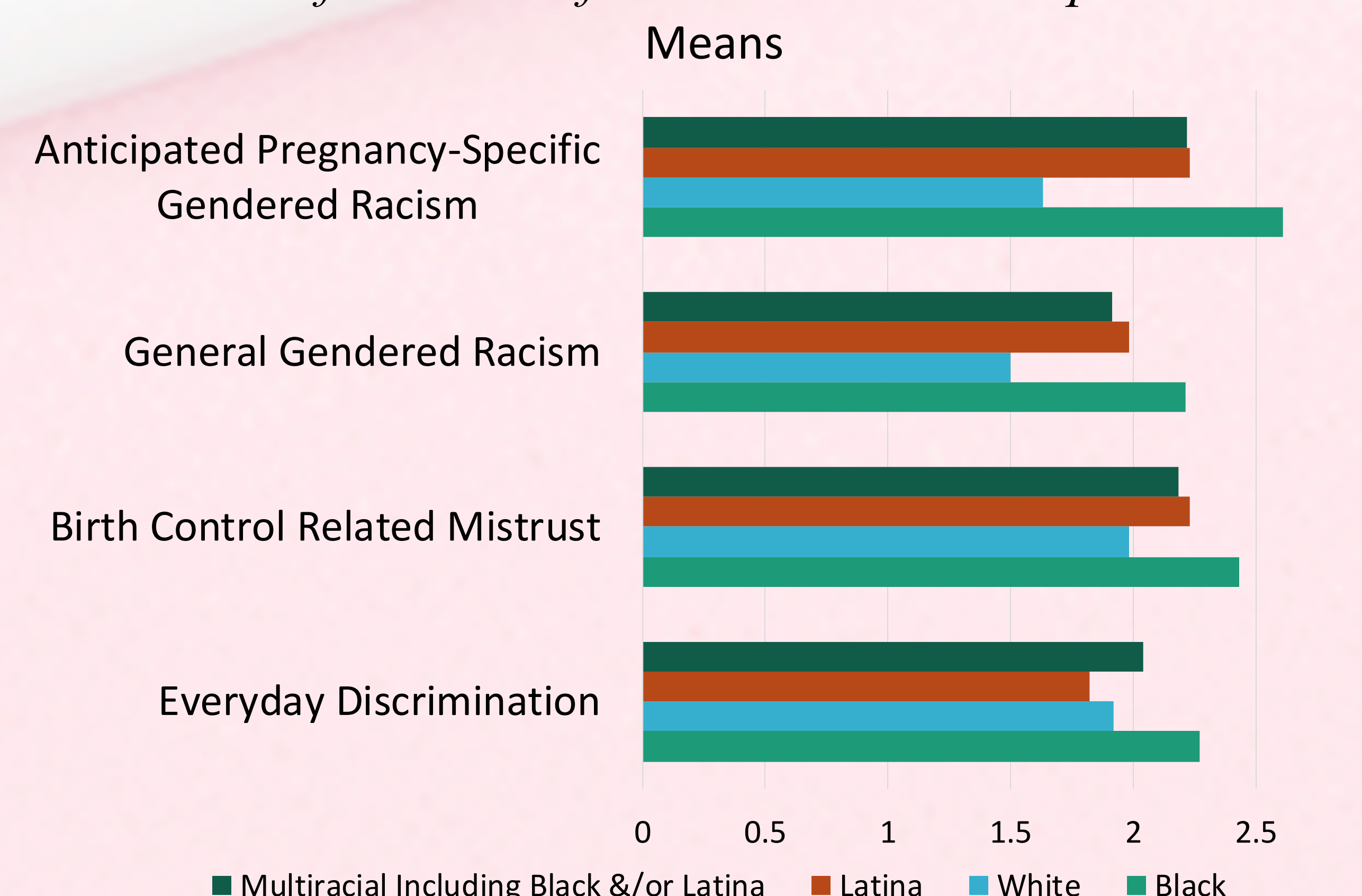


Figure 4. Means of Measures for Race/Ethnic Groups.



- $Wilk's\ Lambda = .74, F(12,2262) = 23.26, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .098.$
- **Everyday discrimination, $F(3,858) = 15.28, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .051$ (significant)**
- **Birth-control related mistrust, $F(3,858) = 30.68, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .097$ (significant)**
- **General gendered racism, $F(3,858) = 52.97, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .156$ (significant)**
- **Anticipated pregnancy-specific gendered racism, $F(3,858) = 65.55, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .186$ (significant)**

DISCUSSION

Strengths: All of the measures used demonstrated high internal reliability. A total of 862 participants were included in analyses, providing a large sample size and possibly more accurate means in accordance to the population.

Limitations:

- The study focused on women in the United States, future studies could focus on different countries.
- Even though the sample was rather large, the sub-sample for each racial/ethnic group were smaller causing the generalizability among the findings to be limited. Thus, the findings do not present enough insight into the effects of specific adversities these women may experience.
- The study was cross-sectional, therefore the direction of effects cannot be determined.

Practical Implications: Suggests that gendered racism may be an important factor of women's expectations of pregnancy distress and thus possibly contributing to women's reproductive health and adverse birth outcomes in the future. Possible interventions/programs could be created to lessen the stress Black and Latina women face due to their experiences of gendered racism.

Future Directions: Future studies should focus on pregnancy expectations, as they could be important in predicting future health outcomes for women. Studies could possibly focus on expectations beyond just pregnancy, and test possible associations between expectations and outcomes.