

Examining How Self-Compassion Mediates the Relationship between Minority Stress and Health

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WHY DO WE CARE?

- Minority stress predicts worse mental and physical health in sexual minorities (LGB+ people)
- Effective coping mechanisms to minimize the effects of minority stress are needed

BACKGROUND

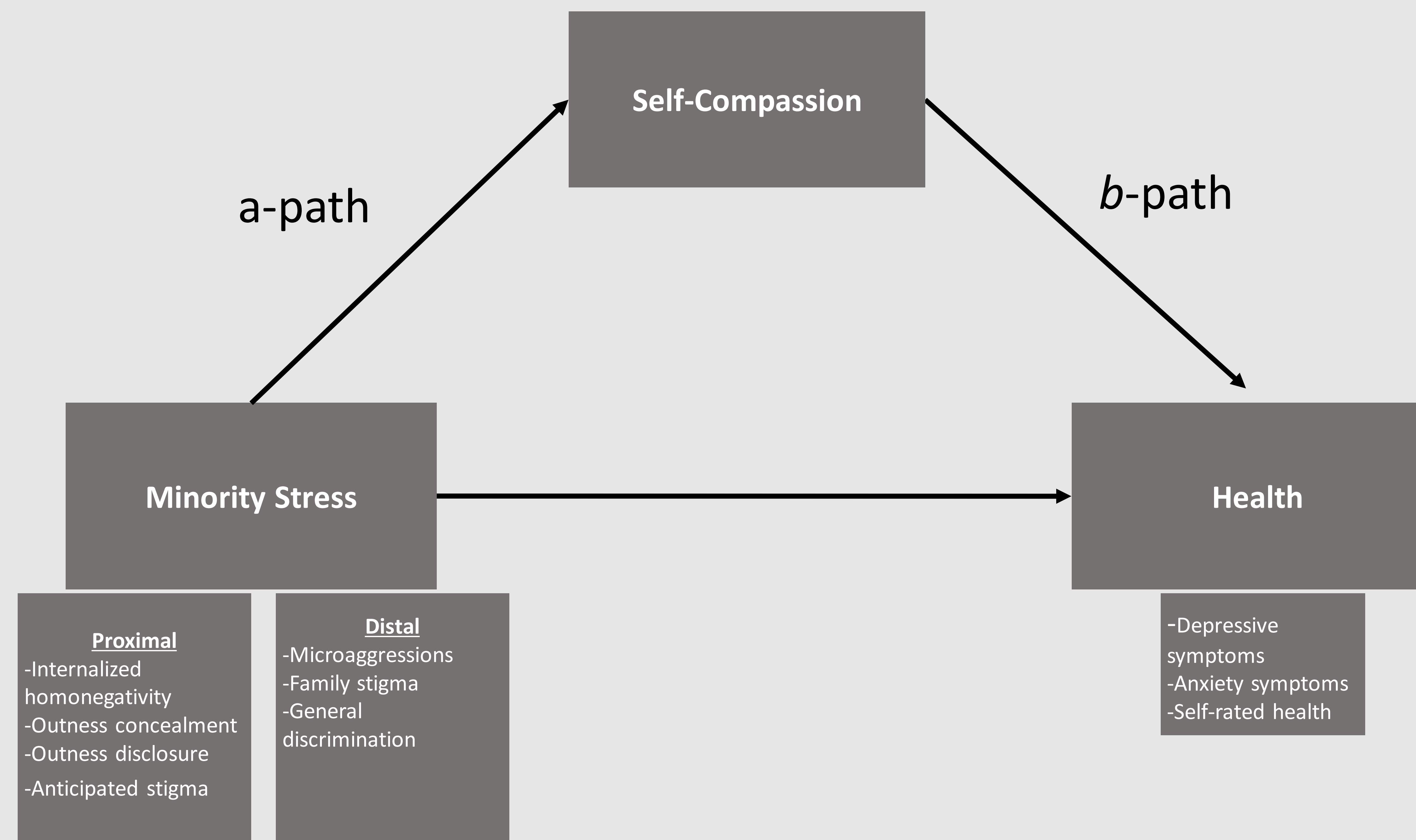
- Minority stress** include stressors that are triggered by experiences that are unique to minority group members (Meyer & Frost, 2013)
 - Proximal stressors** are intrapersonal, such as internalized homonegativity, outness concealment, outness disclosure, and anticipated stigma
 - Distal stressors** are interpersonal, such as experiencing discrimination or microaggressions
- Self-compassion** is the ability to hold one's feelings of suffering with a sense of warmth, connection, and concern (Neff, 2003) and is a potential intervention to cope with minority stress
- A recent meta-analysis** (Helminen et al., 2022) analyzed 19 studies examining how self-compassion minimizes the deleterious link between minority stress and health
 - Seven of these studies supported that self-compassion mediated the relationship between minority stress and well-being
 - However, only two compared proximal *and* distal stressors on multiple aspects of well-being

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which types of minority stress are most strongly linked to self-compassion?
- For which stressors does self-compassion mediate the link between minority stress and health?

RESULTS

- Outness concealment ($r = -.31$), anticipated stigma ($r = -.31$), and microaggressions ($r = -.32$) were modestly associated with self-compassion, and outness disclosure ($r = .17$), family stigma ($r = -.18$), and general discrimination ($r = -.29$) had weaker associations with self-compassion, $p < .05$
- Self-compassion was strongly associated with depressive symptoms ($r = -.56$), anxiety symptoms ($r = -.39$), and self-rated health ($r = .47$), $p < .05$



Type of Stressor	Depressive symptoms	Anxiety symptoms	Self-rated health
Internalized homonegativity	Full mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation
Outness concealment	Full mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation
Outness disclosure	Partial mediation	Full mediation	Partial mediation
Anticipated stigma	Partial mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation
Microaggressions	Partial mediation	Full mediation	Full mediation
Family stigma	Partial mediation	Full mediation	Partial mediation
General discrimination	Partial mediation	Full mediation	Partial mediation

PROCEDURE

- Participants completed a Qualtrics survey that they received via text or email
- Survey included demographic questions, personal history, minority stressors, and self-compassion

MEASURES

- We measured the variables using validated questionnaires, such as the short form of the self-compassion scale (Raes et al., 2011)
- The internal reliability across questionnaires was high (α range = .81-.93), except for anxiety ($\alpha = .68$)

SAMPLE

- $N = 355$ (34 had missing data)
- Sex: 53% Female, 47% Male
- Gender: 5% Non-cisgender
- Sexual orientation:
 - 32% Lesbian
 - 38% Gay male
 - 14% Bisexual
 - 16% Another orientation
- Race: 87% White
- 54% from zip code "400000"s (i.e., OH, MI)

ANALYTIC PLAN

- First, we examined correlations between the variables on the *a*- and *b*-paths
- Second, we ran mediation models using PROCESS (Model 4). We added yearly income, educational status, age, and biological sex as covariates
- Mediation is a regression-based analysis that explains the effect of an intervening variable (i.e., self-compassion) on the link between an antecedent and outcome
 - Full mediation is when the mediator negates the relationship between the antecedent and the outcome
 - Partial mediation is when this relationship is attenuated