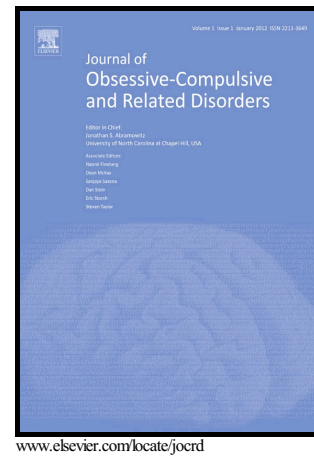


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Race, Disgust Sensitivity, and Contamination

Disgust sensitivity mediates the effects of race on contamination aversion

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Abstract

African Americans report greater contamination aversion than European Americans. Few studies have attempted to identify potential causes for this elevated contamination aversion, though existing research and theory suggests this may be partly due to concomitant heightened disgust sensitivity. The present study examined the relations between race, disgust sensitivity, and contamination aversion among African and European Americans. A convenience sample of four-hundred and twenty-nine participants completed the Disgust Scale – Revised (DS-R) and the Padua Inventory – Revised (PI-R). African Americans endorsed greater disgust sensitivity (DS-R total) – particularly on the core and contamination subscales of the DS-R – and scored higher on the contamination subscale of the PI-R (but not on other subscales) than European Americans. Mediation analyses revealed a significant total effect of race on contamination aversion and a significant indirect effect of race on contamination aversion through disgust sensitivity; the direct effect of race on contamination aversion remained significant even after controlling for race. These findings suggest that elevated contamination aversions among African Americans may be

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