

University of Louisville

ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository

College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors Theses

College of Arts & Sciences

5-2019

Racial microaggressions cohort differences.

Shayla R. Thompson
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/honors>



Part of the [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thompson, Shayla R., "Racial microaggressions cohort differences." (2019). *College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors Theses*. Paper 197.
Retrieved from <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/honors/197>

This Senior Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts & Sciences at ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Arts & Sciences Senior Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. This title appears here courtesy of the author, who has retained all other copyrights. For more information, please contact thinkir@louisville.edu.

Racial Microaggressions Cohort Differences

By

Shayla R. Thompson

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Graduation *summa cum laude*
and
for Graduation with Honors from the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

University of Louisville

May 11, 2019

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and anger rumination among younger and older cohorts who belong to a racial or ethnic group other than White or European-American. The purpose of this study was to compare these relationships between older and younger cohorts. The hypotheses were that age will moderate the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and that age will moderate the relationship between racial microaggressions and anger rumination. A survey method was used to test the two hypotheses. Participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk and were compensated \$1 for their participation. The participants were divided into a younger group and older group to test the effect of age on the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress. A test for difference between independent correlations was used to determine if the correlations of the younger and older groups significantly differed from each other, and a t-test was used to measure the relationship between age and experiences of racial microaggressions. The correlations of the younger and older groups did not significantly differ from each other; thus, the results did not confirm either of the hypotheses. Future research should examine how the effect of age on racial microaggressions and psychological distress varies across different racial and ethnic groups.

Racial Microaggressions Cohort Differences

Racial discrimination is described as the “behavioral component of racism” which is defined as “the beliefs, attitudes, institutional arrangements, and acts that tend to denigrate individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics or ethnic group affiliation” (Yetman, 1985; Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999, p. 805). The elimination of Jim Crow laws and progress toward racial equality due to the civil rights movement has affected the manifestation of racial discrimination toward racial and ethnic minority groups. There has been a transformation from more overt types of racial discrimination to more subtle types of racial discrimination as a result of this progress toward racial equality. Overt types of racial discrimination such as racial slurs are not as socially acceptable as they were prior to the civil rights movement; thus, subtle types of racial discrimination such as racial microaggressions have become more commonplace. Racial microaggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273). Racial microaggressions are considered to be a more modern, subtle type of racial discrimination in contrast to the covert racial discrimination that was more prevalent prior to the civil rights movement in the United States.

This study examined the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress among older and younger cohorts. I explored the cohort differences between older and younger African Americans and other racial and ethnic minority groups to discover whether age is a moderating factor in the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress along with anger rumination. This study of examining cohort differences

has important implications of differentiating the cohort specific effects of psychological distress and anger rumination relevant to clinical and nonclinical treatment of these respective cohorts.

Consequences of Discrimination

Studies have shown that the prevalence of racial discrimination has an impact on the psychological wellbeing of racial minorities. Racial discrimination has been found to be a predictor of generalized anxiety disorder and nonclinical paranoia for African Americans (Soto, Dawson-Andoh, & BeLue, 2011; Combs, et al., 2006). Among younger racial minority adults, racial discrimination has been significantly associated with attenuated positive psychotic symptoms (Anglin, Lighty, Greenspoon, & Ellman, 2014). Detrimental coping responses to perceived racial discrimination are another consequence of discrimination for African Americans. A study by Gibbons et al. (2007) found that perceived racial discrimination is associated with willingness to use drugs due to anger and hostility. The negative effects associated with perceived racial discrimination can serve as an unhealthy gateway to risky behaviors such as illicit drug use in an attempt to cope with this discrimination. Simons, Chen, Stewart, and Brody (2003) found a link between racial discrimination and delinquency among African American children. Studies have also found an association between perceived discrimination and internal and external expressions of anger among older adults (Lee & Bierman, 2016). Previous literature has shown that racial discrimination has a negative effect on the psychological wellbeing of both younger and older cohorts alike; thus, being a victim of racial discrimination has serious implications for health outcomes.

Studies have shown that anger is a common response displayed by victims of racial discrimination (Brondolo et al., 2008; Broudy et al., 2007). Pittman (2011) found that the usage of anger to cope with racial discrimination was associated with decreased well-being and

increased psychological distress in a sample of African Americans. Other studies have shown that older adults display less anger than younger adults which could have important implications for the role of age in the relationship between anger and racial discrimination (Mirowsky & Ross, 2003; Schieman, 1999). Rumination is defined as the tendency to “brood about negative experiences and feelings” (Anestis, Anestis, Selby, & Joiner, 2009, p. 292). One study has shown that ruminative thoughts are associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression (Segerstrom et al., 2000). Furthermore, Miranda, Polanco-Roman, Tsypes, and Valderrama (2013) found that rumination mediates the relationship between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms among racial minorities. Anger rumination can have negative consequences for the well-being of victims of racial discrimination due to the association between anger rumination and psychological distress. The negative effects of rumination for racial microaggressions could be higher due to the subtle nature of microaggressions that could cause victims to spend more time ruminating about whether the incident was an act of discrimination.

Racial Microaggressions and the Changing Form of Discrimination

The term racial microaggressions was introduced by Chester Pierce in 1970 to describe “subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are ‘put downs’” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 272). Racial microaggressions are more difficult to identify as acts of racial discrimination due to the subtleness of the act unlike overt acts of racial discrimination. Sue et al. (2007) identified three forms of microaggressions: microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations. Microassaults are acts that are meant to harm the victim through “name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions,” while microinsults are acts that degrade someone’s racial identity (2007, p. 274). In contrast to overt racial discrimination such as Jim Crow laws, racial microaggressions can be unknowingly perpetrated by well-meaning

friends and family members which can make it more difficult for victims to process and cope with the effects of these microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007). This is exemplified by microinvalidations which are acts that make light of the experiences of racial minorities such as a white person telling a black person that they are colorblind (Sue et al., 2007). The subtle nature and often personal relationship that perpetrators of racial microaggressions have with the victim can be emotionally taxing as victims are faced with the uncertainty of identifying the act as discriminatory.

Previous research on racial microaggressions has identified relationships between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and other adverse health effects. Hollingsworth et al. (2016) found that certain types of racial microaggressions are associated with the perception of being a burden to others, which is associated with significant levels of suicidal ideation among African Americans ages 15 to 24. Racial microaggressions have also been linked to symptoms of depression and poorer self-esteem which can also be associated with suicidal ideation (O’Keefe, Wingate, Cole, Hollingworth, & Tucker, 2015; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff, & Striken, 2014). A study conducted by Nadal, Griffin, Wong, Davidoff, and Davis (2017) showed that racial microaggressions are correlated with poorer health conditions and poorer social functioning among participants. The effects of racial microaggressions on racial minorities can include adverse effects in the domains of physical health and mental health.

Age Differences of Racial Discrimination

Older cohorts, particularly African Americans ages 60 and older, grew up during the Jim Crow era and experienced the transformation of the civil rights movement that eliminated discriminatory laws and practices in favor of implementing values of equality. Younger cohorts have contrastingly grown up in a more racially tolerant society that has resulted in more

exposure to racial microaggressions rather than overt forms of racial discrimination that are reminiscent of the Jim Crow era. Schuman and colleagues (1997) found that overt forms of racial discrimination have declined over the past several decades in favor of more subtle acts of racial discrimination. Studies have shown that perceived racial discrimination decreases with age which suggests that there could be differences in the perception of racial discrimination for older and younger cohorts (Yip, Gee, & Takeuchi, 2008). A study conducted by Giyeon and colleagues (Giveon, et al., 2016) found that there is a stronger association between perceived racial discrimination and psychiatric disorders for older black adults living in the western region of the United States compared to older black adults living in the southern region of the United States. The impact of geographic region on the relationship between racial discrimination and psychiatric disorder reflects the effect of frequent exposure to racial discrimination on a person's psychological wellbeing. The tendency of racial discrimination to be attributed as a cultural norm in the southern United States could explain the weaker impact of perceived racial discrimination for black older adults who live in the south.

Although perceived racial discrimination decreases with age, multiple studies have found an association between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms among African American older adults (Shankhar & Hinds, 2017; Nadimpalli, James, Yu, Cothran, & Barnes, 2015). Shankar and Hinds (2017) found that perceived discrimination is associated with poor physical health and cognitive functioning among older adults. Regarding race, African American older adults report higher amounts of perceived discrimination than their White and Hispanic counterparts, yet African American older adults have a weaker association between mental health outcomes and perceived discrimination (Ayalon & Gum, 2010). One explanation for this weaker association is that older African Americans have gradually become accustomed to

discrimination which could desensitize them to the potentially harmful effects of discrimination. Similar to age, previous literature suggests that race can serve as a protective factor against the relationship between discrimination and psychological distress (Ayalon & Gum, 2010).

Past literature on racial microaggressions has primarily focused on younger cohorts rather than older cohorts which has created a research gap about the effects of microaggressions on older adults. There has been previous research about the effect of racial discrimination on psychological distress across the lifespan. Wheaton et al. (2018) found that older African American men reported lower levels of discrimination overall in comparison to younger African American men. Everyday discrimination, which focuses on micro acts of discrimination such as interpersonal conversations with people, was associated with depressive symptoms among young, middle, and older African American men. Major discrimination, which focuses on macro acts of discrimination such as discrimination within the criminal justice system, has been associated with depressive symptoms among older men (Wheaton et al., 2018). Other studies have also found an association between racial discrimination and psychological distress across the lifespan (Nguyen et al., 2018; Powell et al., 2016). This study sought to fill the literature gap of the cohort comparison between younger and older cohorts in relation to racial microaggressions and psychological distress. The hypotheses for this study were that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress and that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and anger rumination.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of 307 total participants who were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants who completed the survey received a \$1 Amazon credit as a form of compensation. Twenty-six Caucasian participants and 2 participants who identified their ethnic identity as other were excluded from the analysis because they did not meet the ethnic identity criteria, and 38 participants were excluded from the analysis because they did not identify their ethnicity. Therefore, 241 participants out of the original sample were included in the analysis. The sample consisted of 44% African-American or Black participants, 23% Hispanic or Latino participants, 16% Asian, Asian-American, or Oriental participants, 8% of participants who identified as mixed from different ethnic groups, 6% Native American, Indian American, or Eskimo participants, and 3% of Middle Eastern, East Indian, or Pakistani participants as seen in Figure 1. The participants were 58.5% male, 40.2% female, 0.40% transgender, and 0.80% who identified as other (see Figure 2). Participants who were 18-59 years old were assigned to the younger group and participants who were 60 years old or older were assigned to the older group to analyze cohort differences.

Materials and Procedures

This study used a survey design to measure racial microaggressions, psychological distress, and anger rumination. The independent variable was the occurrence of racial microaggressions, and the dependent variables were psychological distress and anger rumination. Participants who consented to participate in the study were required to report their age, ethnic group, their parent's ethnic group, their approximate annual income, gender, sexual orientation, and country of birth. The participants were directed to self-report their experiences of racial microaggressions, psychological distress, and anger rumination through the use of multiple measurement scales. The Racial Microaggressions Scale was used to measure reports of racial

microaggressions, and the General Ethnic Discrimination Scale was used to measure covert forms of discrimination as a distinction from racial microaggressions. The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale, the Beck Depression Inventory II, the Clinical Anger Scale, and the Anger Rumination scale was used to measure the dependent variables of psychological distress and anger rumination.

The Racial Microaggressions Scale is a 32-item questionnaire that measures the incidence of racial microaggressions. The items are formatted in a Likert scale that range from “Never” to “Often/frequently.” Specific examples of questions from this scale include “Because of my race, other people assume that I am a foreigner” and “People act like they are scared of me because of my race.” Torres-Harding, Andrade, and Romero Diaz (2012) reported that the Racial Microaggressions Scale was a valid and reliable scale to measure the incidence of racial microaggressions among people belonging to racial minority groups. The data collected from this scale was used to measure the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress.

The General Ethnic Discrimination Scale is an 18-item questionnaire that measures perceived ethnic discrimination among any participants of any ethnic group. The items are formatted in a Likert scale that ranges from “Never” to “Almost all the time.” Examples of questions from items in the measure include “How often have you been treated unfairly by your employers, bosses, and supervisors because of your race/ethnic group?” and “How often have you been treated unfairly by strangers because of your race/ethnic group?” For each item, participants are asked 3 follow up questions that include “How often in the past year?”, “How often in your entire life”, and “How stressful was this for you” on a scale ranging from “Not at all stressful” to “Extremely stressful.” Landrine, Klonoff, Fernandez, and Roesch (2006) found

that the General Ethnic Discrimination Scale had high levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .94-.95$) and test-retest reliability ($r = .95-.96$). The data collected from this scale was used to measure the relationship between perceived overt racial discrimination and psychological distress due to the importance of discerning racial microaggressions from overt racial discrimination.

The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale is a 20-item questionnaire developed to measure the occurrence of social interaction fears. The items are arranged in a Likert scale format that range from “Not at all characteristic of me” to “Extremely characteristic or true of me.” Examples of items include “I have difficulty making eye contact with others” and “When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable.” Mattick and Clarke (1998) found that the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale has high levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$) and test-retest reliability ($r = .91$) along with the capability to differentiate between clinical groups. The data collected from this scale was used to measure the outcome of psychological distress in relation to the occurrence of racial microaggressions.

The Beck Depression Inventory II is a 21-item scale that is used to measure symptoms of depression on a scale from 0 to 3 for each item. The scale measures the sum of scores of each item for an overall scale that ranges from 0 to 63. Examples of items from the scale include “I have lost confidence of myself” and “I am less interested in other people or things than before.” A study conducted by Grothe et al. (2005) that measured the validation of the Beck Depression Inventory among of sample of low-income African American outpatients found high levels of internal consistency and reliability. The data from this questionnaire was used to measure the outcome variable of psychological distress in the relationship with racial microaggressions.

The Clinical Anger Scale is a 21-item questionnaire that measures the psychological symptoms of clinical anger. The items are arranged in a Likert scale that range from low to high levels of anger. A few examples of items from the Clinical Anger Scale include “I am becoming so angry that I don’t want to be around others” and “I am angry to the extent that it interferes with my making good decisions.” Snell, Gum, Shuck, Mosley, and Hite (1995) found adequate levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$) and test-retest reliability for the Clinical Anger Scale. The results from this scale were used to measure the outcome variable of psychological distress in relation to the occurrence of racial microaggressions.

The Anger Rumination Scale is a 19-item questionnaire that measures the “tendency to focus attention on angry moods, recall past anger experiences, and think about the causes and consequences of anger episodes” (Sukhodolsky, Golub, & Cromwell, 2001, p. 689). The items are arranged in a Likert scale format that ranges from 1 “Almost never” to 4 “Almost always.” A few examples item statements include “I ruminate about my past anger experiences” and “Memories of being aggravated pop up into my mind before I fall asleep.” Sukhodolsky et al. (2001) found that the Anger Rumination Scale has sufficient levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .93$) and a test-retest reliability of one month. ($r = .77$). The data from this scale was used to measure the response of psychologically distressing anger in relation to the occurrence of racial microaggressions.

Results

The hypotheses for this study were that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress, and that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and anger rumination. The participants were split into a younger group and older group to test the effect of age on the relationship

between racial microaggressions and psychological distress. The younger group consisted of participants who were 18-59 years old ($N = 142$, $M = 31.08$, $SD = 7.38$), while the older group consisted of participants ages 60 and older ($N = 99$, $M = 64.36$, $SD = 4.36$). A descriptive analysis of the independent and dependent variables for the younger group and the older group is presented in Table 1.

To analyze the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress, I correlated the racial microaggressions variable with the dependent variables of depression, clinical anger, anger rumination, and social anxiety for the younger group and the older group separately. To test the hypotheses, I used a test for difference between independent correlations to determine whether the correlations significantly differed between the younger group and the older group. The difference between independent correlations for the dependent measures of general ethnic discrimination ($z = 0.44$), clinical anger ($z = 1.68$), depression ($z = 0.53$), anger rumination ($z = -1.91$), and social anxiety ($z = -1.76$) were not statistically significant as seen in Figure 3. The results show that neither of the two hypotheses were supported. I did not find support for the idea that age moderates the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress nor for the idea that age moderates the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and anger rumination.

The General Ethnic Discrimination Scale was included in the data set to differentiate overt forms of discrimination from racial microaggressions. There was a large correlation between ethnic discrimination and racial microaggressions in this sample: $r = .807$ ($p = 0.01$). To compare racial microaggressions and general ethnic discrimination, I used a test for the difference between independent correlations to measure the relationship between general ethnic discrimination and psychological distress and the relationship between general ethnic

discrimination and anger rumination for the younger and older groups. The independent variable was general ethnic discrimination, and the dependent variables were social anxiety, anger rumination, clinical anger, and depression. The test for difference between independent correlations was not statistically significant for the dependent measures of clinical anger ($z = 1.25$), and depression ($z = -0.32$). The test for difference between independent correlations was statistically significant for the dependent measures of anger rumination ($z = -2.18$) and social anxiety ($z = -2.03$). As shown in Figure 4, the older group had a significantly stronger correlation for the relationship between general ethnic discrimination and anger rumination and the relationship between general ethnic discrimination and social anxiety.

In order to test the relationship between age and experiences of racial microaggressions, I used an independent samples *t*-test to compare the mean racial microaggression scores and the mean general ethnic discrimination scores between the younger and older groups. There was a significant difference in the racial microaggressions scores for the younger group ($M = 72.63$, $SD = 23.13$) compared to the older group ($M = 80.95$, $SD = 20.92$) as seen in Table 1; thus, the older group had a significantly higher mean than the younger group; $t(227) = -2.783$, $p = 0.006$. There was not a significant age difference between the mean scores for general ethnic discrimination; $t(217) = -0.766$, $p = 0.444$. Independent samples *t*-tests were used to test the relationship between age and experiences of racial microaggressions for the different ethnic groups in the sample. Table 2 shows the means for these comparisons. The mean difference of racial microaggressions of the younger group ($M = 74.70$, $SD = 24.28$) and older group ($M = 83.96$, $SD = 18.30$) was significant for participants in the African-American/Black group as seen in Table 3; $t(100) = -2.123$, $p = 0.036$. There was not a significant difference between the mean racial microaggression scores for any of the other ethnic groups.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress among younger cohorts and older cohorts. The hypotheses were that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and psychological distress and that age would moderate the relationship between perceived racial microaggressions and anger rumination. Based on previous literature, it was expected that older adults would have a weaker relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and anger rumination in comparison to younger adults. Tests for difference between independent correlations were used to determine if there were age differences in the correlation between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and the correlation between racial microaggressions and anger rumination. The age groups did not significantly differ in the relationships between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and anger rumination; thus, the results did not support either of the hypotheses.

Although there was not a significant difference between the younger group and older group, the mean scores for racial microaggressions and general ethnic discrimination were higher for the older group. This pattern is contrary to previous research findings that showed that reports of perceived racial discrimination decrease with age (Yip, Gee, & Takeuchi, 2008). Previous research has suggested that age is a protective factor against psychological distress and anger rumination for older adults when they are exposed to racial discrimination (Ayalon & Gum, 2010). A possible alternative hypothesis would be that previous exposure to racial discrimination moderates the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress and anger rumination. It is possible that older adults report higher rates of racial microaggressions and

general ethnic discrimination because they have had more opportunities to be exposed to racial discrimination due to their older age. Additional exposure to racial discrimination could increase older adults' sensitivity to discrimination which could allow them to be able to identify acts of discrimination more easily than younger adults due to experience. Repeated exposure to racial microaggressions could make older adults more susceptible to noticing and identifying these racial microaggressions particularly due to the subtle nature of this type of discrimination.

Different racial distributions in the younger and older sample is one possible explanation for the age differences, or lack of them. People who identified as African American or Black comprised of 44% of the sample. Furthermore, correlations of racial microaggressions with social anxiety and anger rumination differed significantly by race. Within the African American group, there was a significant age difference in the correlation between racial microaggressions and anger rumination ($z = 2.52$) and the correlation between racial microaggressions and social anxiety ($z = 2.08$), and that difference was in the opposite direction than hypothesized. The age difference between independent correlations was not significant for the other ethnic groups. One possible explanation is that the large sample of African-Americans disproportionately contributed to the higher measures of social anxiety and anger rumination among the older group. It is possible that the effect of age on the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress along with anger rumination differs among racial and ethnic groups.

The significant mean differences of racial microaggressions for African-Americans also could have disproportionately contributed to the significant mean difference of racial microaggressions for the younger and older group. One study found that African American older adults report higher amounts of perceived discrimination than White and Hispanic older adults; yet, the results also showed that African-American older adults have a weaker association

between mental health outcomes and perceived discrimination compared to White and Hispanic older adults which is consistent with the results from this present study (Ayalon & Gum, 2010). Stronger sources of social support such as church communities among African American older adults could serve as a buffer against the mental effects of racial discrimination. Hispanics and Latinos as an ethnic group are also more diverse and consist of multiple racial groups such as White Hispanics and Black Hispanics which could contribute to more variance in the relationship between racial discrimination and mental health outcomes.

The data collection method is one limitation for this study. Participants were recruited online from Amazon Mechanical Turk which made it impossible to confirm whether they met the qualifications to participate in the study. The \$1 compensation that subjects received for participating could have caused subjects to answer dishonestly to receive the compensation. The self-report measure and the subjectivity of the measure is another limitation because it is impossible to know whether the participants were answering the questions honestly or accurately. Due to the use of an online survey for this study, the sample was biased against people who do not have internet access and people who do not use Amazon Mechanical Turk to participate in research. This limits the representativeness of the sample and generalizability of the study because people with a lower income level and older adults could be less likely to have internet access.

In spite of these limitations, this study contributes to existing literature by examining how age affects psychological distress and anger rumination in relation to racial microaggressions. The inclusion of older adults in this study helps fill in the literature gap of understanding age differences in the experience of racial microaggressions. Future research should focus on how age and race intersect in the experience of discrimination and its emotional impacts. The effect of

age on racial microaggressions and psychological distress among different geographic regions in the United States is another research idea to be explored in the future. Rates of perceived discrimination among different ethnic and racial groups could vary by geographic regions because of factors such as dominant political views, culture, and racial demographics. Future research could utilize a test-retest strategy to ensure that self-report measures are consistent across time. Due to the sampling bias of online surveys, future research should compare traditional survey methods to online survey methods to determine if there is a difference in representativeness between the samples.

I learned that younger and older cohorts report significantly different amounts of racial microaggressions. Although the effects of racial microaggressions for the younger and older groups did not significantly differ from each other, I learned that the effect of racial microaggressions on psychological distress and anger rumination varies in strength between older and younger cohorts. Furthermore, I have learned that the effect of age on perception of racial microaggressions and psychological distress can vary across different racial and ethnic groups. More research should be pursued about the influence of previous exposure to racial discrimination on the relationship between racial microaggressions and psychological distress among younger and older cohorts.

References

- Anestis, M., Anestis, J., Selby, E., & Joiner, T. (2009). Anger rumination across forms of aggression. *Personality and Individual Differences, 46*(2), 192-196.
doi:10.1016/j.paid.2008.09.026
- Anglin, D., Lighty, Q., Greenspoon, M., & Ellman, L. (2014). Racial discrimination is associated with distressing subthreshold positive psychotic symptoms among US urban ethnic minority young adults. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 49*(10), 1545-55.
doi:10.1007/s00127-014-0870-8
- Ayalon, L., & Gum, A. (2011). The relationships between major lifetime discrimination, everyday discrimination, and mental health in three racial and ethnic groups of older adults. *Aging & Mental Health, 15*(5), 587-94. doi:10.1080/13607863.2010.543664
- Brondolo, E., Brady, N., Thompson, S., Tobin, J., Cassells, A., Sweeney, M., MacFarlane, D., Contrada, R. (2008). Perceived racism and negative affect: Analyses of trait and state measures of affect in a community sample. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 27*(2), 150-173.
- Broudy, R., Brondolo, E., Coakley, V., Brady, N., Cassells, A., Tobin, J., & Sweeney, M. (2007). Perceived ethnic discrimination in relation to daily moods and negative social interactions. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 30*(1), 31-43. doi:10.1007/s10865-006-9081-4
- Clark, R., Anderson, N. B., Clark, V. R., & Williams, D. R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for african americans. A biopsychosocial model. *The American Psychologist, 54*, 805-816.
10.1037//0003-066X.54.10.805

Combs, D., Penn, D., Cassisi, J., Michael, C., Wood, T., Wanner, J., & Adams, S. (2006).

Perceived racism as a predictor of paranoia among african americans. *Journal of Black Psychology, 32*(1), 87-104. doi:10.1177/0095798405283175

Gibbons, F., Yeh, H., Gerrard, M., Cleveland, M., Cutrona, C., Simons, R., & Brody, G. (2007).

Early experience with racial discrimination and conduct disorder as predictors of subsequent drug use: A critical period hypothesis. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence: Supplement 1, 88*, 37. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2006.12.015

Kim, G., Parmelee, P., Bryant, A., Crowther, M., Park, S., Parton, J., & Chae, D. (2017).

Geographic region matters in the relation between perceived racial discrimination and psychiatric disorders among black older adults. *The Gerontologist, 57*(6), 1142-1147. doi:10.1093/geront/gnw129

Grothe, K., Dutton, G., Jones, G., Bodenlos, J., Ancona, M., & Brantley, P. (2005). Validation of the beck depression inventory-II in a low-income african american sample of medical outpatients. *Psychological Assessment, 17*(1), 110-114.

Hollingsworth, D., Cole, A., O'Keefe, V., Tucker, R., Story, C., & Wingate, L. (2017).

Experiencing racial microaggressions influences suicide ideation through perceived burdensomeness in african americans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 64*(1), 104-111. doi:10.1037/cou0000177

Landrine, H., Klonoff, E., Corral, I., Fernandez, S., & Roesch, S. (2006). Conceptualizing and

measuring ethnic discrimination in health research. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 29*(1), 79-94. doi:10.1007/s10865-005-9029-0

Lee, Y., & Bierman, A. (2016). A longitudinal assessment of perceived discrimination and maladaptive expressions of anger among older adults: Does subjective social power

- buffer the association? *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, *Gbw110*, 110. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbw110
- Mattick, R., & Clarke, J. (1998). Development and validation of measures of social phobia scrutiny fear and social interaction anxiety. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, *36*(4), 455-70.
- Meyer, T., Miller, M., Metzger, R., & Borkovec, T. (1990). Development and validation of the penn state worry questionnaire. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, *28*(6), 487-95.
- Miranda, R., Polanco-Roman, L., Tsypes, A., & Valderrama, J. (2013). Perceived discrimination, ruminative subtypes, and risk for depressive symptoms in emerging adulthood. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, *19*(4), 395-403. doi:10.1037/a0033504
- Mirowsky, J., & Ross, C. (2003). *Social causes of psychological distress* (2nd ed. ed., Social institutions and social change). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Nadal, K., Wong, Y., Griffin, K., Davidoff, K., & Sriken, J. (2014). The adverse impact of racial microaggressions on college students' self-esteem. *Journal of College Student Development*, *55*(5), 461-474.
- Nadal, K., Griffin, K., Wong, Y., Davidoff, K., & Davis, L. (2017). The injurious relationship between racial microaggressions and physical health: Implications for social work. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, *26*(1-2), 6-17.
doi:10.1080/15313204.2016.1263813
- Nadimpalli, S., James, B., Yu, L., Cothran, F., & Barnes, L. (2015). The association between discrimination and depressive symptoms among older african americans: The role of psychological and social factors. *Experimental Aging Research*, *41*(1), 1-24.
doi:10.1080/0361073X.2015.978201

- Nguyen, A., Chatters, L., Taylor, R., Aranda, M., Lincoln, K., & Thomas, C. (2018). Discrimination, serious psychological distress, and church-Based emotional support among african american men across the life span. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 73(2), 198-207. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbx083
- O'Keefe, V., Wingate, L., Cole, A., Hollingsworth, D., & Tucker, R. (2015). Seemingly harmless racial communications are not so harmless: Racial microaggressions lead to suicidal ideation by way of depression symptoms. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior*, 45(5), 567-576. doi:10.1111/sltb.12150
- Pittman, C. (2011). Getting mad but ending up sad: The mental health consequences for african american using anger to cope with racism. *Journal of Black Studies*, 42(7), 1106-1124. doi:10.1177/0021934711401737
- Powell, W., Banks, K., & Mattis, J. (2017). Buried hatchets, marked locations: Forgiveness, everyday racial discrimination, and african american men's depressive symptomatology. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 87(6), 646-662. doi:10.1037/ort0000210
- Schieman, S. (1999). Age and anger. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 40(3), 273-273. doi:10.2307/2676352
- Schuman, H., Steeh, C, Bobo, L., & Krysan, M. (1997). Racial attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Segerstrom, S., Tsao, J., Alden, L., & Craske, M. (2000). Worry and rumination: Repetitive thought as a concomitant and predictor of negative mood. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 24(6), 671-688. doi:10.1023/A:1005587311498

- Shankar, A., & Hinds, P. (2017). Perceived discrimination: Associations with physical and cognitive function in older adults. *Health Psychology : Official Journal of the Division of Health Psychology, American Psychological Association*, 36(12), 1126-1134.
doi:10.1037/hea0000522
- Simons, R., Chen, Y., Stewart, E., & Brody, G. (2003). Incidents of discrimination and risk for delinquency: A longitudinal test of strain theory with an african american sample. *Justice Quarterly*, 20(4), 827-854. doi:10.1080/07418820300095711
- Snell, W., Gum, S., Shuck, R., Mosley, J., & Hite, T. (1995). The clinical anger scale: Preliminary reliability and validity. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 51(2), 215-26.
- Soto, J., Dawson-Andoh, N., & BeLue, R. (2011). The relationship between perceived discrimination and generalized anxiety disorder among african americans, afro caribbeans, and non-hispanic whites. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 25(2), 258-65.
doi:10.1016/j.janxdis.2010.09.011
- Sue, D., Capodilupo, C., Torino, G., Bucceri, J., Holder, A., Nadal, K., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *The American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-86.
- Sukhodolsky, D., Golub, A., & Cromwell, E. (2001). Development and validation of the anger rumination scale. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 31(5), 689-700.
doi:10.1016/S0191-8869(00)00171-9
- Torres-Harding, S., Andrade, A., & Romero, D. (2012). The racial microaggressions scale (RMAS): A new scale to measure experiences of racial microaggressions in people of color. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 18(2), 153-64.
doi:10.1037/a0027658

Weathers, F.W., Litz, B.T., Herman, D.S., Huska, J.A. & Keane, T.M. (1993). The PTSD Checklist (PCL): Reliability, validity, and diagnostic utility. Paper presented at the 9th Annual Conference of the ISTSS, San Antonio.

Wheaton, F., Thomas, C., Roman, C., & Abdou, C. (2018). Discrimination and depressive symptoms among african american men across the adult lifecourse. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 73(2), 208-218. doi:10.1093/geronb/gbx077

Yetman, N. (1999). *Majority and minority : The dynamics of race and ethnicity in american life*. Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon.

Yip, T., Gee, G., & Takeuchi, D. (2008). Racial discrimination and psychological distress: The impact of ethnic identity and age among immigrant and united states-born asian adults. *Developmental Psychology*, 44(3), 787-800. doi:10.1037/0012-1649.44.3.787

Table 1

Descriptive Analysis of Younger and Older Groups.

Variable	Younger Group		Older Group	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Racial Microaggressions	72.63	23.13	80.95	20.92
General Ethnic Discrimination	149.37	60.39	155.55	55.25
Clinical Anger	37.91	14.16	33.14	14.16
Depression	38.44	14.83	33.69	13.71
Social Anxiety	50.58	16.72	44.38	14.89
Anger Rumination	41.11	13.47	36.43	12.46

Table 2

Descriptive Analysis of Independent and Dependent Variables of Younger and Older Cohorts by Ethnic Group.

	African-American/Black				Asian/Oriental/Asian-American				Hispanic/Latino			
	Younger		Older		Younger		Older		Younger		Older	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
RMAS	74.70	24.28	83.96	18.30	71.88	23.27	86.77	23.52	70.32	23.17	72.82	24.69
CAS	38.36	14.31	35.69	13.56	36.29	15.072	30.17	12.10	38.03	15.27	27.48	9.79
GEDS	157.14	58.60	162.33	51.061	142.88	64.34	163.17	69.00	143.10	57.39	135.10	52.25
ARS	42.91	13.60	38.38	12.46	38.30	13.51	35.50	13.23	40.48	14.81	30.14	9.89
SIAS	50.25	16.98	45.62	14.29	48.04	18.17	46.83	15.95	49.55	17.36	38.47	13.09
BDI	37.02	13.83	34.74	12.95	39.17	17.02	32.58	12.29	38.69	15.38	29.381	11.29

Table 2 (Continued)

Descriptive Analysis of Independent and Dependent Variables of Younger and Older Cohorts by Ethnic Group.

Variable	Middle Eastern/East Indian/Pakistani				Native American/American Indian/Eskimo				Mixed; parents are from different groups			
	Younger		Older		Younger		Older		Younger		Older	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
RMAS	74.50	20.51	77.50	9.95	66.43	21.84	85.14	21.15	69.58	21.01	65.00	12.53
CAS	42.00	9.90	27.00	5.48	43.14	14.93	45.86	19.33	33.70	9.92	28.50	7.78
GEDS	148.50	65.76	141.25	18.12	147.86	80.65	178.71	77.45	129.80	62.34	129.50	0.71
ARS	52.50	12.02	38.00	18.08	48.14	10.67	45.71	9.30	33.10	7.09	30.50	16.26
SIAS	48.50	0.71	48.00	22.61	65.29	10.92	50.14	18.25	48.44	11.833	42.00	15.56
BDI	58.00	.	34.67	14.57	41.57	14.01	45.71	21.75	34.33	10.34	21.50	0.71

Table 3
Independent Samples Test Split by Ethnic Group.

Ethnic group	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig (2-tailed)	<i>M</i> Difference	<i>SE</i> Difference
Black	-2.123	100	0.036	-9.25380	4.35819
Asian	-1.852	35	0.073	-14.89423	8.04357
Hispanic	-0.376	51	0.708	-2.49560	6.63628
Native American	-1.629	12	0.129	-18.71429	11.48972
Middle Eastern ^a	0.230	4	0.830	7.25000	31.55130
Mixed; different groups	0.356	13	0.728	4.58333	12.87379

^aAdjusted *t-test* was used because this small sample did not meet assumption of equal variances.

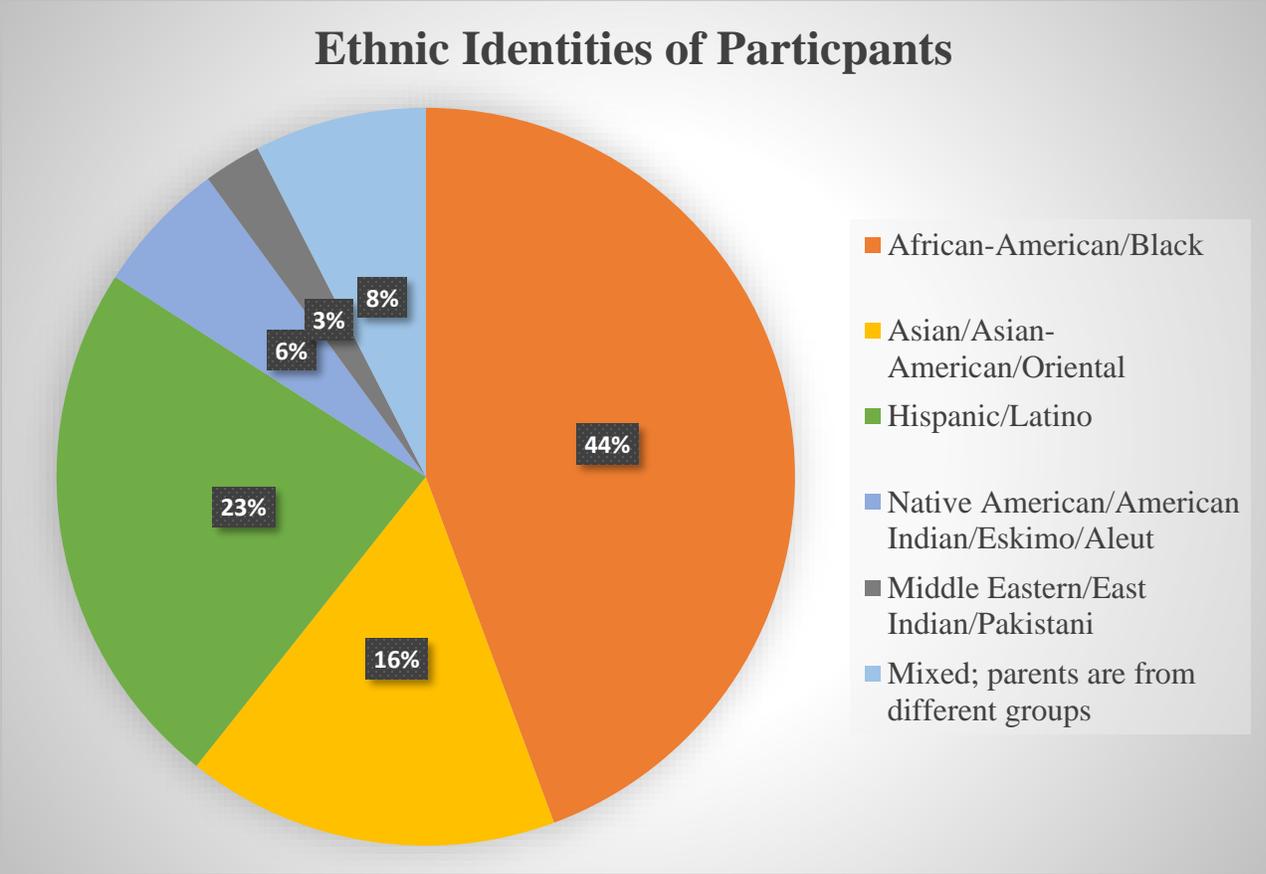


Figure 1. Descriptive analysis of the participants' ethnic identities.

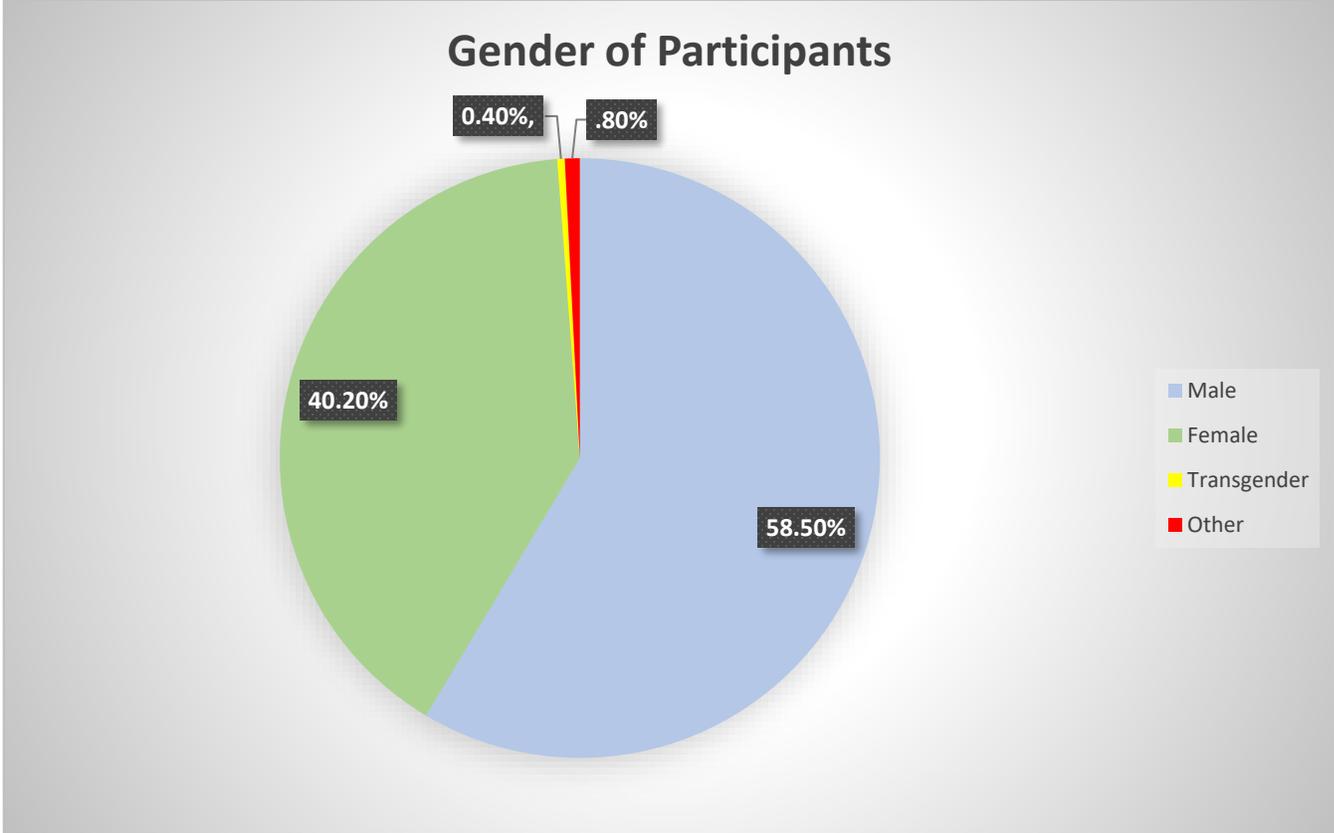


Figure 2. Descriptive analysis of the participants' gender identity.

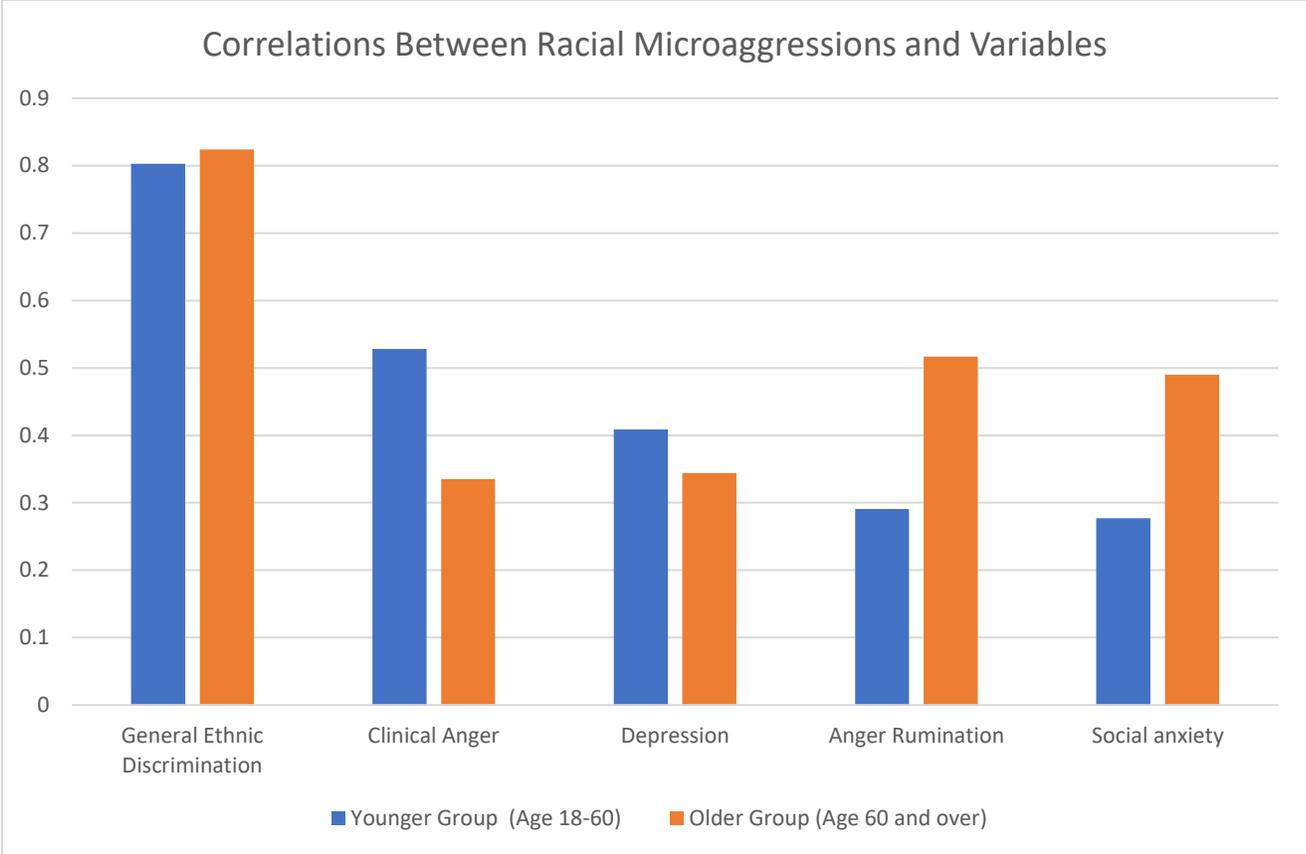


Figure 3. Correlations between racial microaggressions and the dependent variables for the younger group and older group

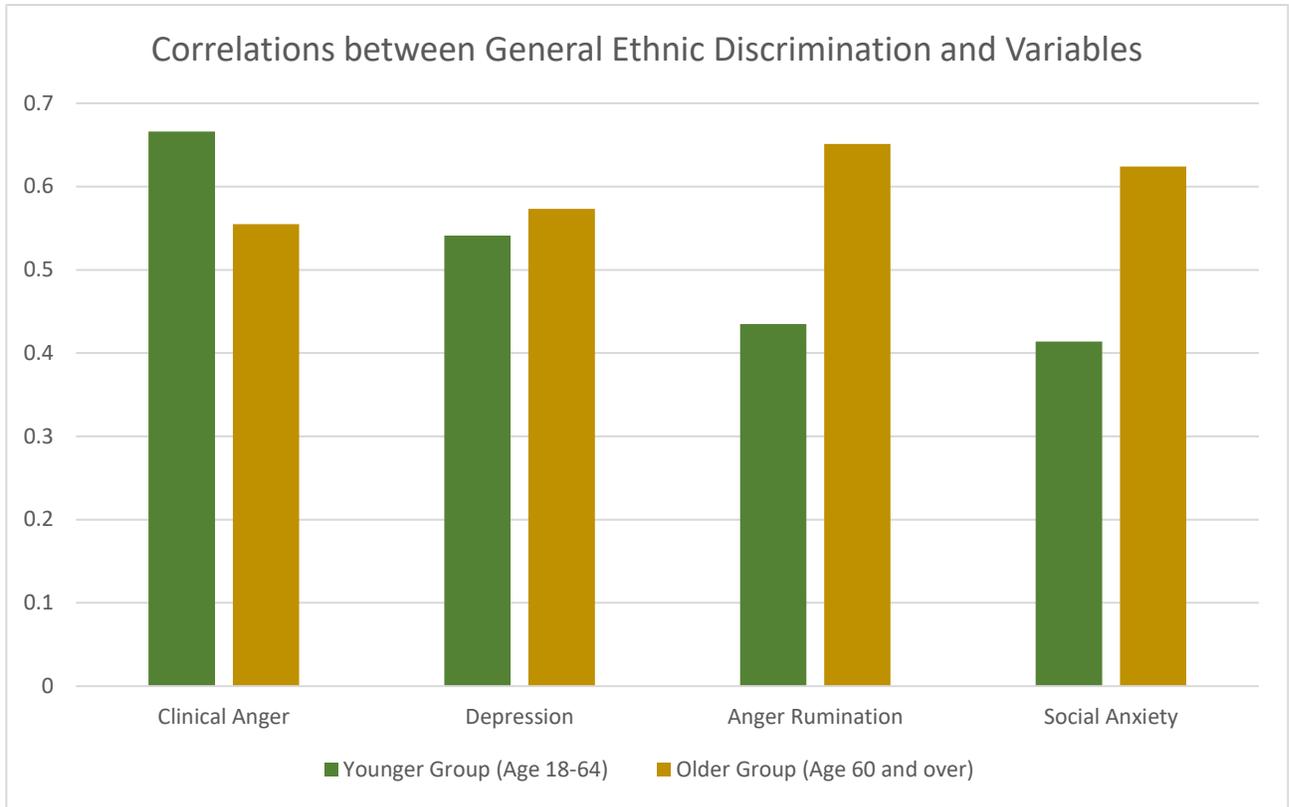


Figure 4. Correlation between general ethnic discrimination and the dependent variables for the younger group and the older group.