

More than a Feeling: Impact of Discrimination Events on Affective Experience

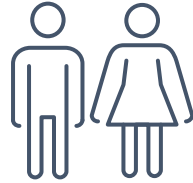
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Ipsos Public Affairs

Discrimination across the life course

A person's identity is multilayered, encompassing such factors as gender identity, age, race, ethnicity, ability status, and sexual orientation.

Gender Identity



Sexual Orientation



Race / Ethnicity



Immigration Status

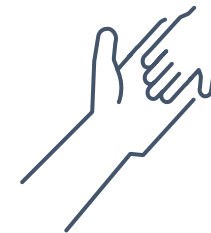


One may experience discrimination due to one, several, or a combination of a person's perceived identities.

Religion



Ability Status



Age



How might discrimination & mental health be linked?

Experiencing discrimination causes stress (Turner, 2010)

Anxiety and depression have been linked to:

- **Severe stress (Carlson, 1997)**
- **Chronic stress (Khan & Khan, 2017)**

Various forms of discrimination have been found to contribute to **negative mental health outcomes, such as increased rates of anxiety & depression**

- **Gender-based discrimination (Carr et al., 2014, McLaughlin, 2017)**
- **Homophobia (Kulick et al., 2017)**

Study Background

To fully understand the impact of discrimination on emotional well-being, we look beyond mental health diagnoses to the emotional experience of the person.

Historic approaches to mental health diagnoses often did not account for cultural or context specific stressors relevant for people of color.

- **Lack of access to quality healthcare that provides a mental health diagnosis**
- **Lack of representation amongst mental health practitioners (in 2018, less than 2% of the members of the American Psychological Association were Black)**

Mental Health America, Black and African American Communities and Mental Health
<https://www.mhanational.org/issues/black-and-african-american-communities-and-mental-health>

Research Questions



- **What is the association between experiencing any form of discrimination and diagnoses of depression & anxiety?**
- **What is the association between multiple forms of discrimination and negative affective experience?**
- **How does gender & race/ethnic discrimination impact affective experience?**

Method

Study Design

- Field period 9/4/2020-10/4/2020
- Approximately 6,052 respondents from Ipsos' probability-based KnowledgePanel
- Participants were asked to consider discrimination experiences for **three** randomly assigned reasons out of **seven** possible reasons:



Gender/gender identity



Sexual orientation



Race or ethnicity



Immigration status



Religion or religious beliefs



Disability (such as physical, visual, hearing, learning etc.)



Age



Discrimination question based on 8 types of events

Have you experienced discrimination due to your [reason] in any of the following contexts?



Being hired for a job



**Getting a loan to buy a place to live
(house, condo, etc.)**



Being promoted within a job



**Renting a place to live (apartment,
house, etc.)**



Getting an adequate education



**Receiving adequate health care when
needed**



**Getting a loan to buy a vehicle
(car, truck, etc.)**



**Interacting with police or legal
authorities**

Measuring Emotion and Mental Health

- Have you been diagnosed with any of the following mental health conditions?
(data collected from a prior health-related survey)

1. Anxiety

2. Depression

- How often do you feel the following? (from survey)

Never Sometimes Often Very Often

Sad
Stressed
Angry
Fearful

Happy
Excited
Relaxed
Successful

Examining Discrimination across Multiple Events & Reasons

Reasons for Discrimination

Events



3 events

+

2 events

+

0 events

=

5 events of discrimination

Index: How many of the 24 form/reason combinations were selected?

Binary:

- 1) No discrimination events
- 2) Reported 1 or more event

Trichotomous:

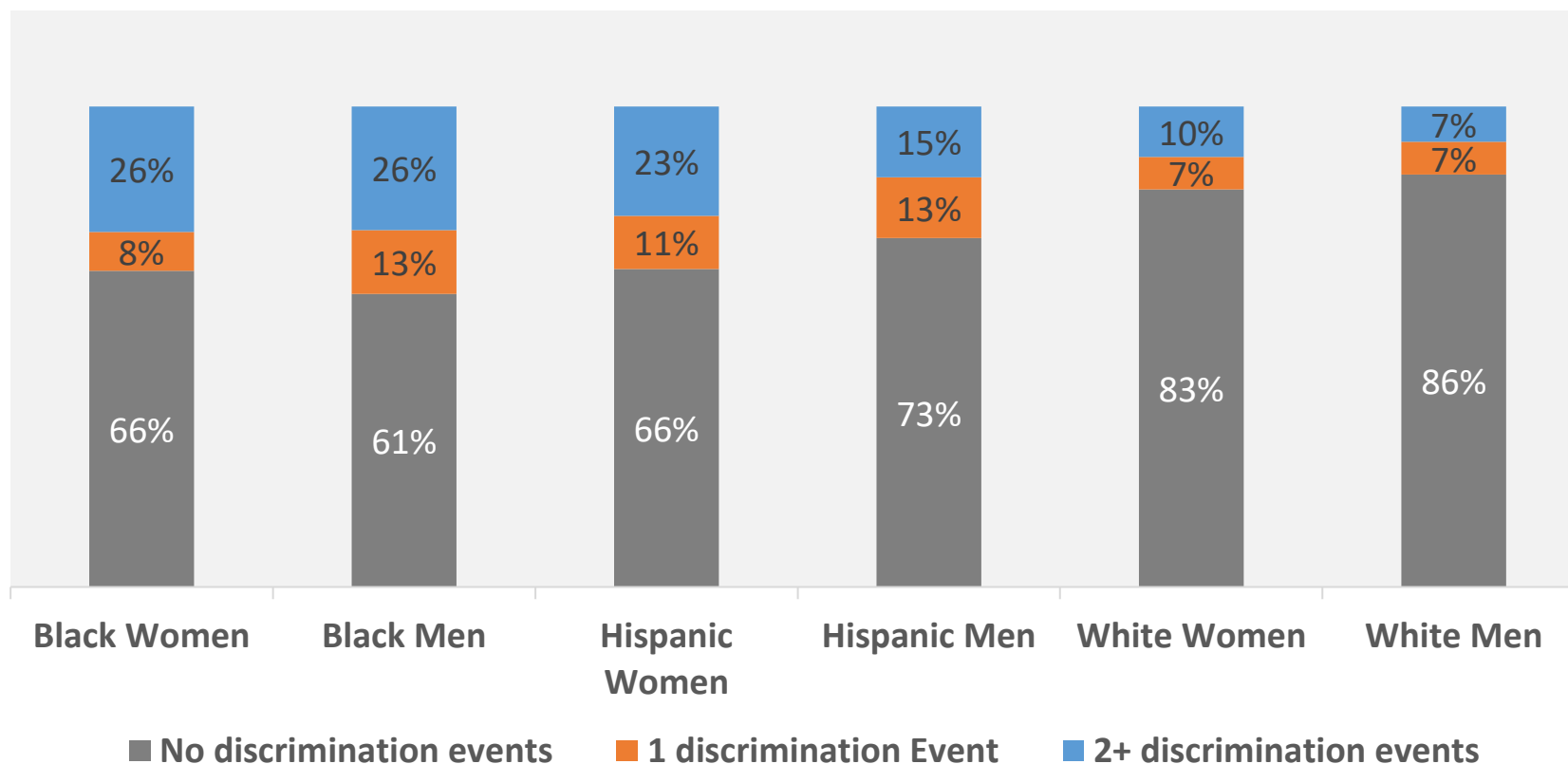
- 1) No discrimination events
- 2) Reported 1 event
- 3) Reported 2+ events

Specific Reasons: Looking at a type of discrimination, such as gender-based or race/ethnic based discrimination.

Results

Results – Discrimination by Race-ethnicity and Gender

Though the majority of participants reported no discrimination events, black men reported having the most discrimination experiences, while white men reported the fewest.



Discrimination and Mental Health in our Sample



15%

Depression

17%

Anxiety



21%

Any kind of
Discrimination

12%

Gender-Based
Discrimination

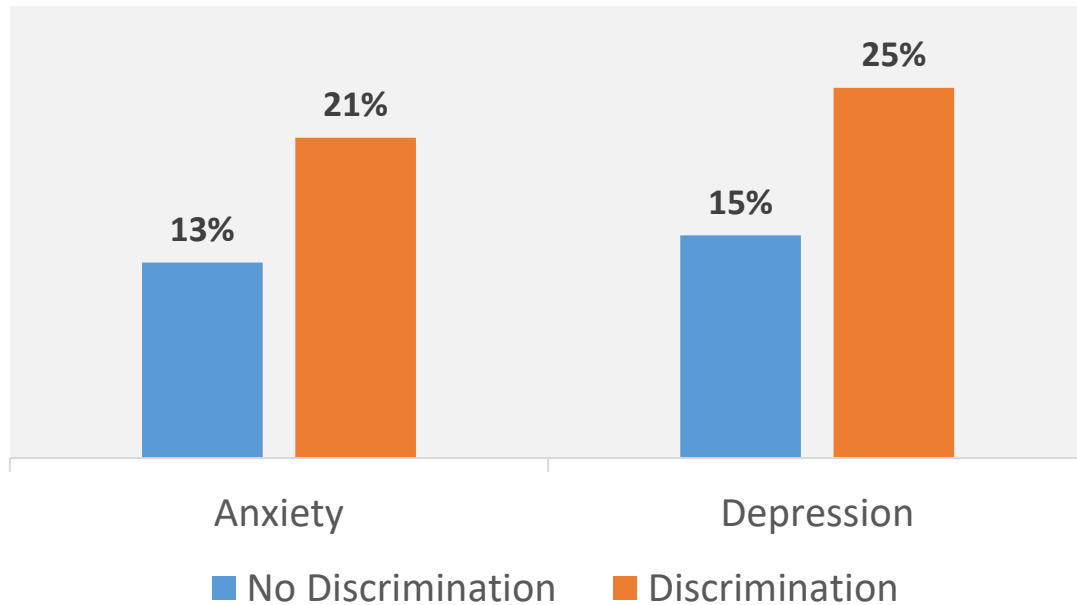
14%

Race/Ethnicity-
Based
Discrimination

Results – Discrimination by Race-ethnicity and Gender

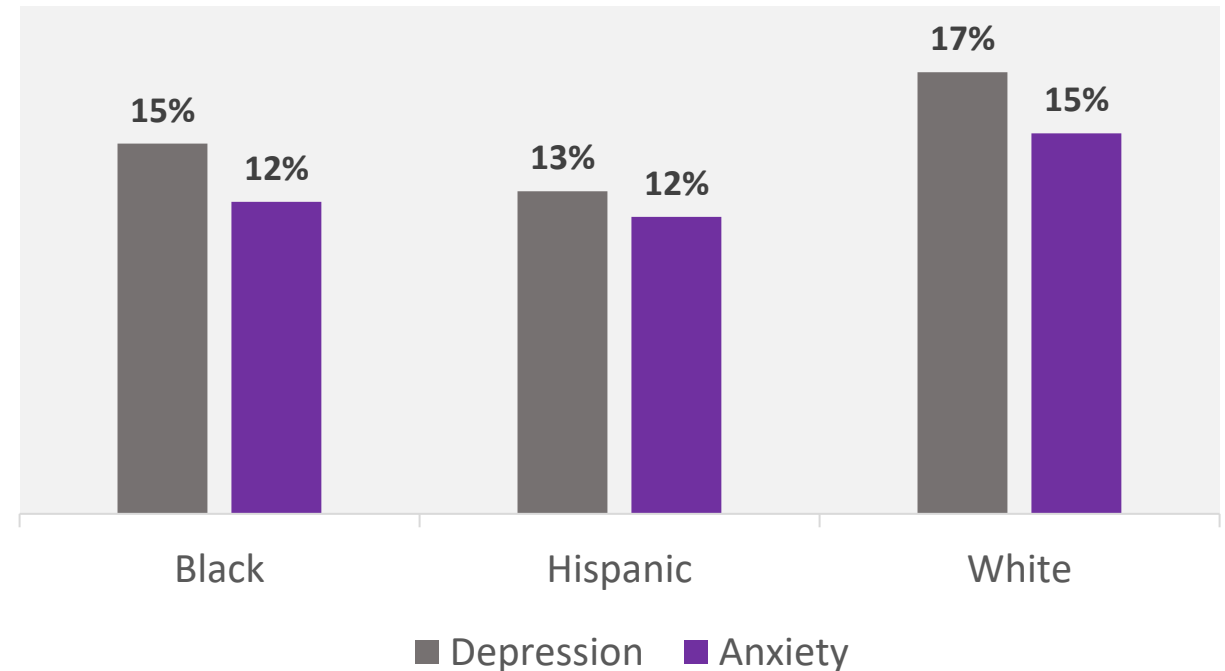
Experiencing any kind of discrimination was associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression

Discrimination, Anxiety & Depression



Prevalence rates of depression & anxiety differed by race-ethnicity

Rates of Depression & Anxiety by Race



Emotional Consequences of Discrimination

Discrimination and Positive Emotions

	Happy	Excited	Relaxed	Successful
Stressed	.536**			
Angry	.589**	.390**		
Fearful	.580**	.451**	.504**	
Discrimination Index	-.072**	0.002	-.096**	-.059**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Respondents who indicated they'd experienced discrimination also reported feeling somewhat less happy, relaxed & successful overall.

Emotional Consequences of Discrimination

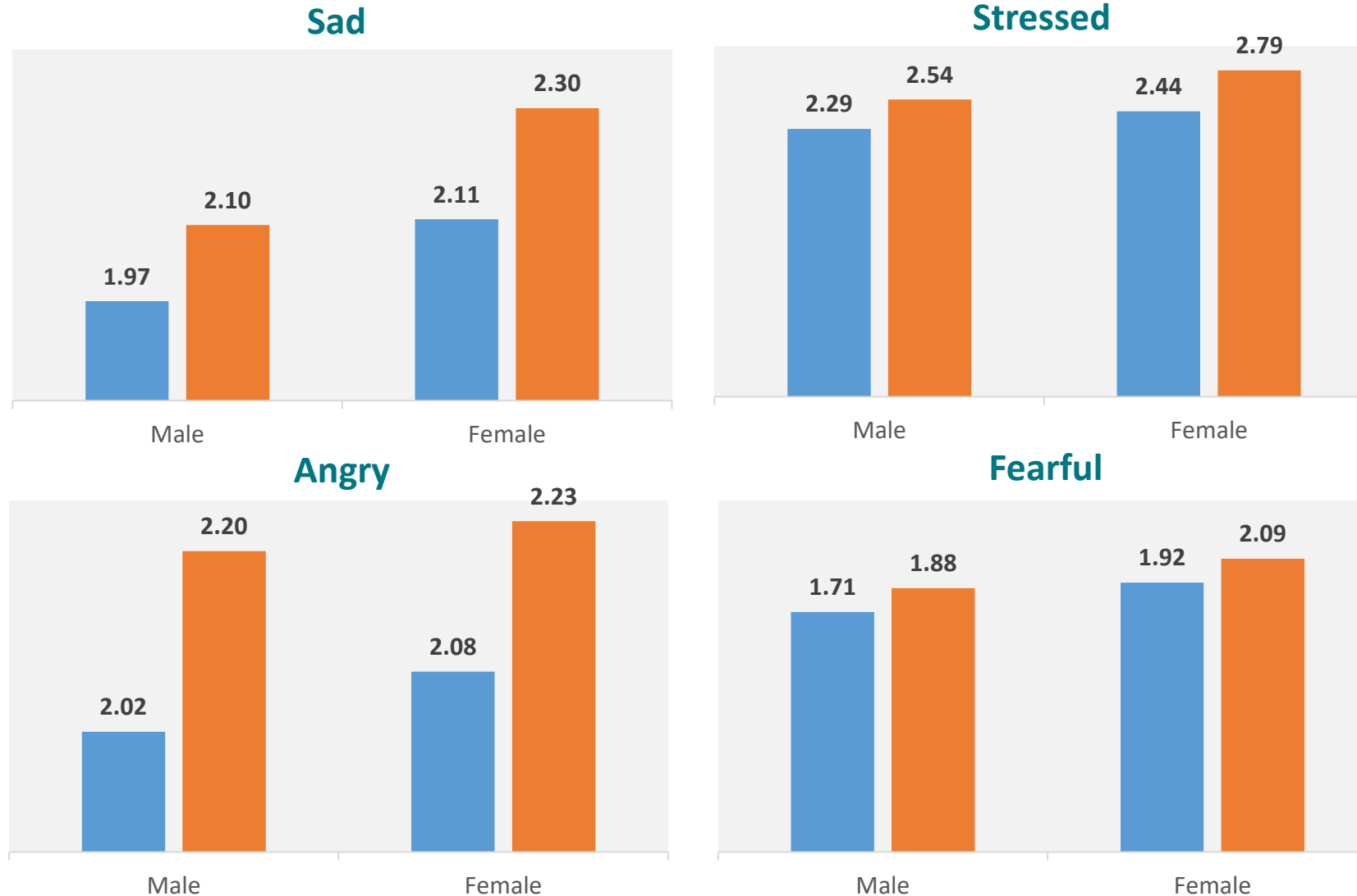
Discrimination and Negative Emotions

	Sad	Stressed	Angry	Fearful
Stressed	.549**			
Angry	.449**	.433**		
Fearful	.487**	.465**	.351**	
Discrimination Index	.116**	.130**	.101**	.098**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Respondents who indicated they'd experienced discrimination also reported feeling somewhat more sad, stressed, angry & fearful overall.

Mean value of emotional experience by gender & gender-based discrimination

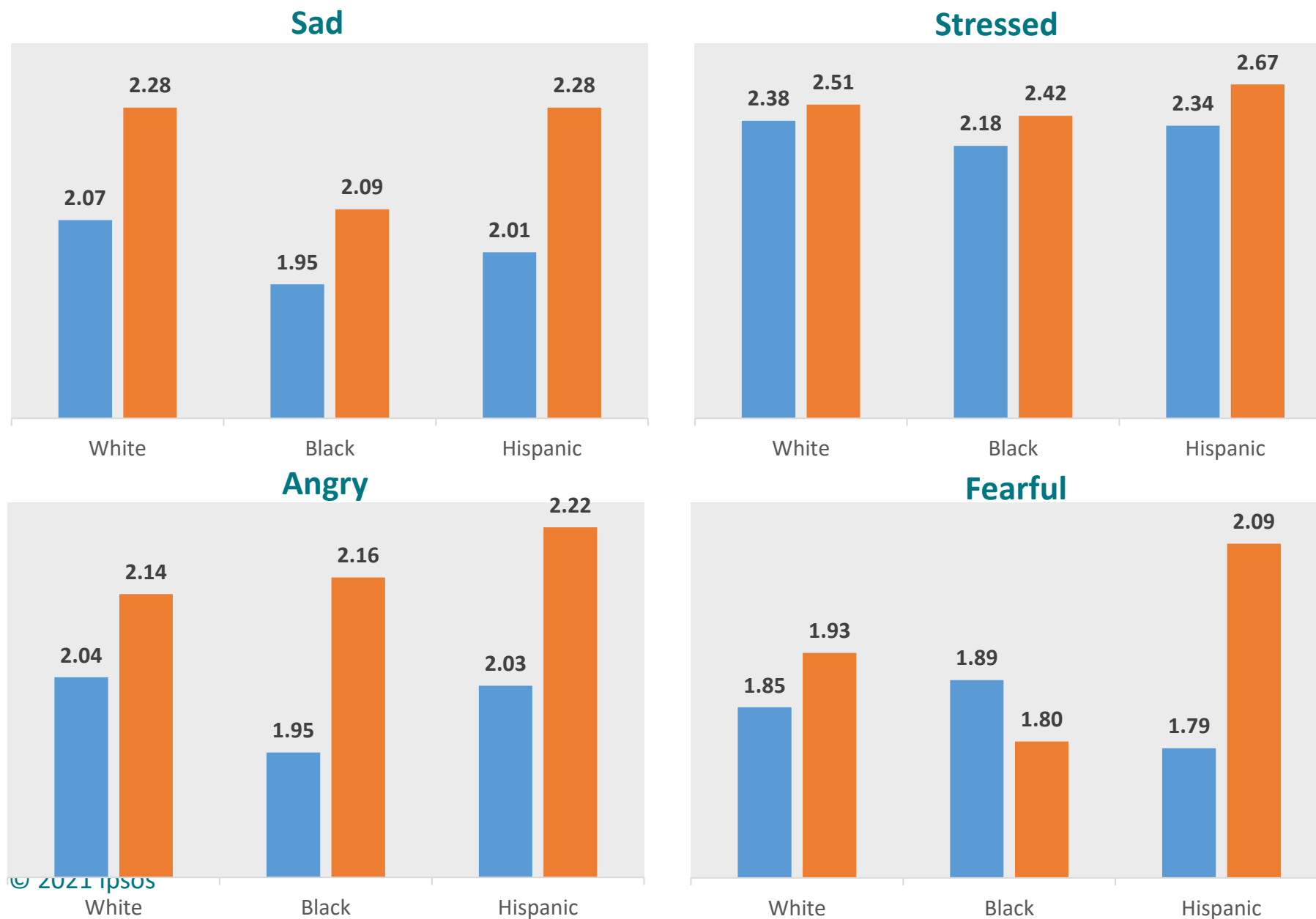


No Discrimination Experienced

Discrimination Experienced

Gender-based discrimination was significantly associated with increased negative emotion ($p < .05$)

Mean values of emotional experience by race & discrimination experience



No Discrimination Experienced

Discrimination Experienced

Racial/ethnic discrimination was significantly associated with increased negative emotion ($p < .05$)

Discussion

Key Takeaways

1

Experiences of any kind of discrimination were correlated with diagnoses of anxiety & depression

2

Higher numbers of discrimination events of any kind was associated with lower frequency of positive emotions and higher frequency of negative emotions

3

Race/ethnic-based discrimination & gender-based discrimination were associated with higher overall negative emotional experience.

Thank you!

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