

Experiences of Aging in Society Project



JULY 2024 REPORT

This study investigates racial/ethnic differences in ageism and health in a multi ethnic sample of over 200 U.S. adults ages 50 and older.

Everyday Ageism Scale

0-30

Higher scores indicate report of more routine age-related discrimination

12.19

Average amount in this study

Hispanic

12.64

Black, Non-Hispanic

12.05

White, Non-Hispanic

12.03

Asian American

11.89

Participants reported significantly more ageism than national averages collected in 2019 (National Poll on Healthy Aging), both overall and for specific racial/ethnic groups.

Major Findings

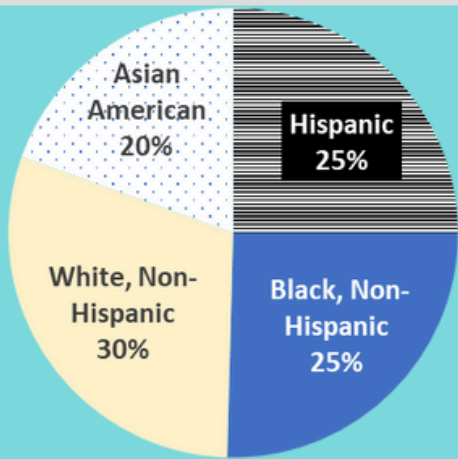
Higher levels of everyday ageism were associated with having more chronic health conditions in the full sample.

Among the subgroups, everyday ageism was associated with

- More chronic health conditions among Black & White adults *Also*
- Fewer chronic health conditions among Asian Americans
- Poorer mental health among White adults but no other groups

People from all racial & ethnic groups reported heightened fight or flight responses after negative experiences with ageism and aging.

Who were our participants?



Average Age

65

41%

Employed

Female

72%

65%

Bachelor Degree

Median Household Income per year

\$60-70 THOUSAND

Most Common Health Issues

Hypertension
41%

High Cholesterol
37%

Chronic Pain
23%

Arthritis
39%

62%

Reported long term health issues: COPD, cancer, pain, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke

25%

Reported depression, anxiety or other mental health disorder

Reasons for Discrimination

Gender

30%

Reported most often by White adults

Age

38%

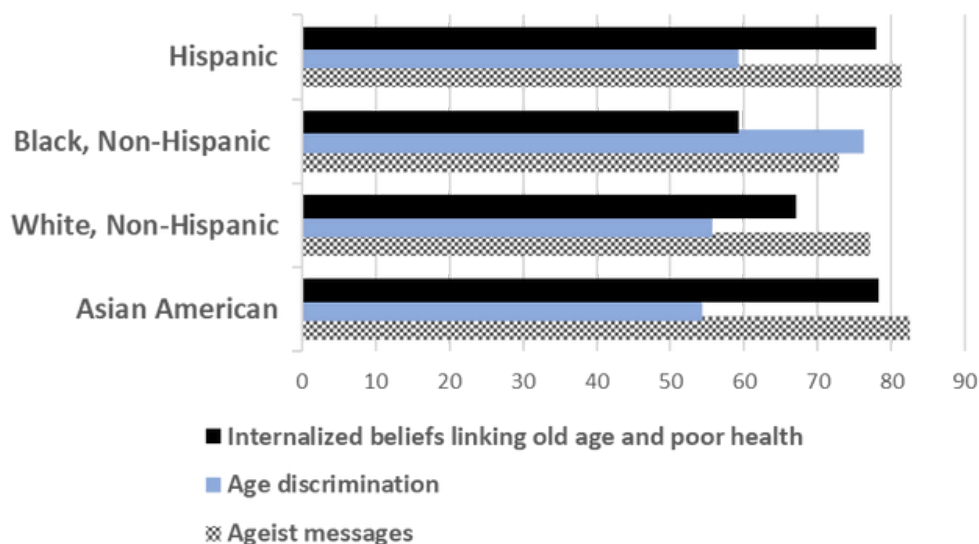
Reported most often by White adults

Race or Nationality

43%

Reported most often by Black and Asian-American adults

Differences in Reported Forms of Everyday Ageism



Internalized ageism was most evident among Hispanic and Asian American adults.

Age discrimination was experienced more often by Black adults.

Exposure to ageist messages was reported more among Asian American and Hispanic adults.

Ageism and Health

Level of
Everyday Ageism
Reported

Average #
Chronic Health
Conditions

Above Average

3.16

Below Average

2.78

Black and White adults who experienced high level of everyday ageism had more chronic health conditions.

Whereas, high levels of everyday ageism were marginally associated with having fewer chronic health conditions among Asian American adults.

White adults who experienced high level of everyday ageism had greater odds of having poor mental health such as depression, anxiety or another mental health disorder. Ageism was unrelated to mental health among Black, Hispanic and Asian American adults.

Positive Experiences of Aging

Most adults of all racial/ethnic groups reported positive things about being an older adult, such as:

Services such as Social Security and Medicare (92%)

Treated with respect by others (93%) & family (82%)

More comfortable being self (90%)

Spending time with family (89%)

Being a good example to younger people (87%)

Their opinions & choices matter (86%)

Black adults reported more positive experiences of aging than other racial groups.

More positive experiences of aging were linked to fewer chronic conditions. The relationship was strongest for White followed by Asian American adults.

More positive experiences of aging were linked to lower odds of having a mental health condition, especially among Hispanic followed by Asian American adults.

Coping with Ageism

When faced with negative experiences with aging and ageism, reported behaviors to relax or feel better were:

85%

88%

86%

75%

79%

79%

USING ELECTRONICS TV, INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA, VIDEO GAMES

TALK TO SOMEONE

EXERCISE/PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

AVOIDING PEOPLE/PLACE WITH BAD EXPERIENCES

DISTRACTION

MEDITATION

Most common in all the racial/ethnic groups

Reported highest by Black adults compared to other groups

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