

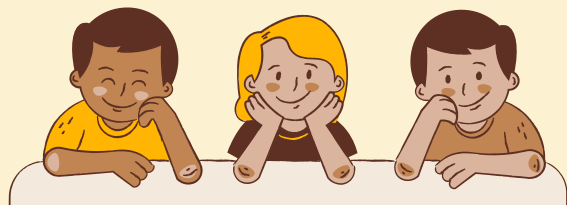
*Shift-&-Persist and
discrimination
predicting depression
across the life course:
An accelerated
longitudinal design
using MIDUSI-III*

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WHEN IS FACING DISCRIMINATION THE MOST HARMFUL?



CHILDHOOD/ADOLESCENCE

Studies suggest that there are **sensitive periods** in our lives, where facing discrimination might make us more at risk to experiencing depression symptoms.



What is a **sensitive period**?

It's a specific time in our life where we are more susceptible to the effects of certain experiences.



YOUNG ADULTHOOD (20S-30S)



Risk for depression episodes due to major life stressor is increasing. Early experiences may set the stage for later mental health difficulties.

MIDLIFE (40S-50S)

The risk of a depressive episode in response to life stress is at its highest. Facing discrimination during this time may be the most detrimental.



WHY MAY RISK BE HIGHEST IN MIDLIFE?

Discrimination & major life stressors may disrupt many common developmental milestones achieved in midlife



DISCRIMINATION MAY LEAD TO:

- Job instability
- Economic insecurity
- Family & Relational issues



OLDER ADULTHOOD (~65+)

Major life stressors may decrease and resilience against them grows.



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM AT HAND?

Discrimination is a pervasive stressor that can affect everyone, at any age.

Experiencing discrimination during **sensitive periods** of life could increase the risk of depression.

ARE THERE WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN PROTECT OURSELVES FROM THE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION?

A possible protective factor could be :

SHIFT & PERSIST COPING

SHIFT & PERSIST COPING

Coping strategy which involves 2 processes

1. **Shifting**: Accepting and changing your perspective on uncontrollable stressors.



2. **Persisting**: Maintaining hope for the future and meaning in life in spite of uncontrollable stressors



Shift & Persist has been shown to be protective against the **physical** toll uncontrollable stressors such as poverty have on our bodies (e.g., inflammation, asthma, etc).



BUT, shift and persist coping may also be protective against the **psychological** toll that may be caused by uncontrollable stressors such as discrimination.

CAN SHIFT AND PERSIST PROTECT AGAINST THE RISK OF **DEPRESSION, IN THE FACE OF **DISCRIMINATION**?**

1. Are there **sensitive periods** within the life course where facing discrimination makes us more vulnerable to depressive symptoms?

2. Can **Shift & Persist Coping** interact with these sensitive periods to protect against depressive symptoms brought on by discrimination?

METHODS

✦ 3,685 adults from ages 20-49 at Wave 1, were studied once per decade for 3 decades

✦ Looking at depressive symptoms, daily discrimination and Shift and Persist coping throughout life-course

WHAT DID THEY FIND?

Discrimination was strongly linked to more depressive symptoms throughout the life span.

1.

2.

SENSITIVE PERIODS:

The effect of DISCRIMINATION on depressive symptoms was stronger in the 30s and especially the 40s.

Discrimination people faced in their 40's lead to greater depression in their 50's - a full decade later.

3.

4.

However, using Shift & Persist during these sensitive periods was protective, nullifying the harmful effects of discrimination

MAIN TAKEAWAY

THIS SUGGESTS THAT SHIFT & PERSIST IS ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE DURING SENSITIVE PERIODS, WHEN DISCRIMINATION MAY BE AT ITS MOST HARMFUL COMPARED TO ANY OTHER TIME PERIOD ACROSS ADULTHOOD.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- ✦ LIFE IS FULL OF STRESSORS - DISCRIMINATION IS A PERVASIVE ONE WHICH CAN AFFECT ANYONE, AT ANY TIME POINT.
- ✦ IN THE 30S AND 40S, WE ARE ESPECIALLY AT RISK OF GREATER DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS DUE TO DISCRIMINATION
- ✦ HOWEVER, USING COPING STRATEGIES SUCH AS SHIFT & PERSIST CAN HELP PREVENT GREATER DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS DUE TO DISCRIMINATION

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

PRACTITIONERS MAY BENEFIT FROM PROMOTING SHIFT & PERSIST COPING WITHIN CLINICAL SETTINGS. ✦

HOWEVER, WE CAN ALSO BE PROMOTING ITS USE BEYOND THE CLINICAL SETTING, (E.G., SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY SETTINGS ETC.) ✦

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