

**Objective:** Research suggests that reports of interpersonal discrimination result in poor mental health. Because personality characteristics may either confound or mediate the link between these reports and mental health, there is a need to disentangle its role in order to better understand the nature of discrimination-mental health association. We examined whether hostility, anger repression and expression, pessimism, optimism, and self-esteem serve as confounders in the association between perceived interpersonal discrimination and CESD-based depressive symptoms in a race/ethnic heterogeneous probability-based sample of community-dwelling adults.

**Methods:** Following an approach used in the literature, we employed a series of ordinary least squares regression analyses that compared.

**Results:** Hostility, anger repression, pessimism and self-esteem were significant as possible confounders of the relationship between interpersonal discrimination and depressive symptoms, together accounting for approximately 38% of the total association (beta: 0.1892,  $p < 0.001$ ). However, interpersonal discrimination remained a positive predictor of depressive symptoms (beta: 0.1176,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** As one of the first empirical attempts to examine the potential confounding role of personality characteristics in the association between reports of interpersonal discrimination and mental health, our results suggest that personality-related characteristics may present important confounding. Nevertheless, our results also suggest that, net of these characteristics, reports of interpersonal discrimination is associated with poor mental health.

**Keywords:** Stress, psychological; discrimination (psychology); depression; personality; affect