

# Life Stress and Depression in Adolescents: The Moderating Effect of Racial Discrimination

## BACKGROUND

Racial discrimination can act as a social stressor that has harmful health effects (e.g., mental and physical)

**Interpersonal discrimination:** covert or overt microaggressions

**Institutional discrimination:** system structures that marginalize certain groups (e.g., laws, neighborhood disadvantage)

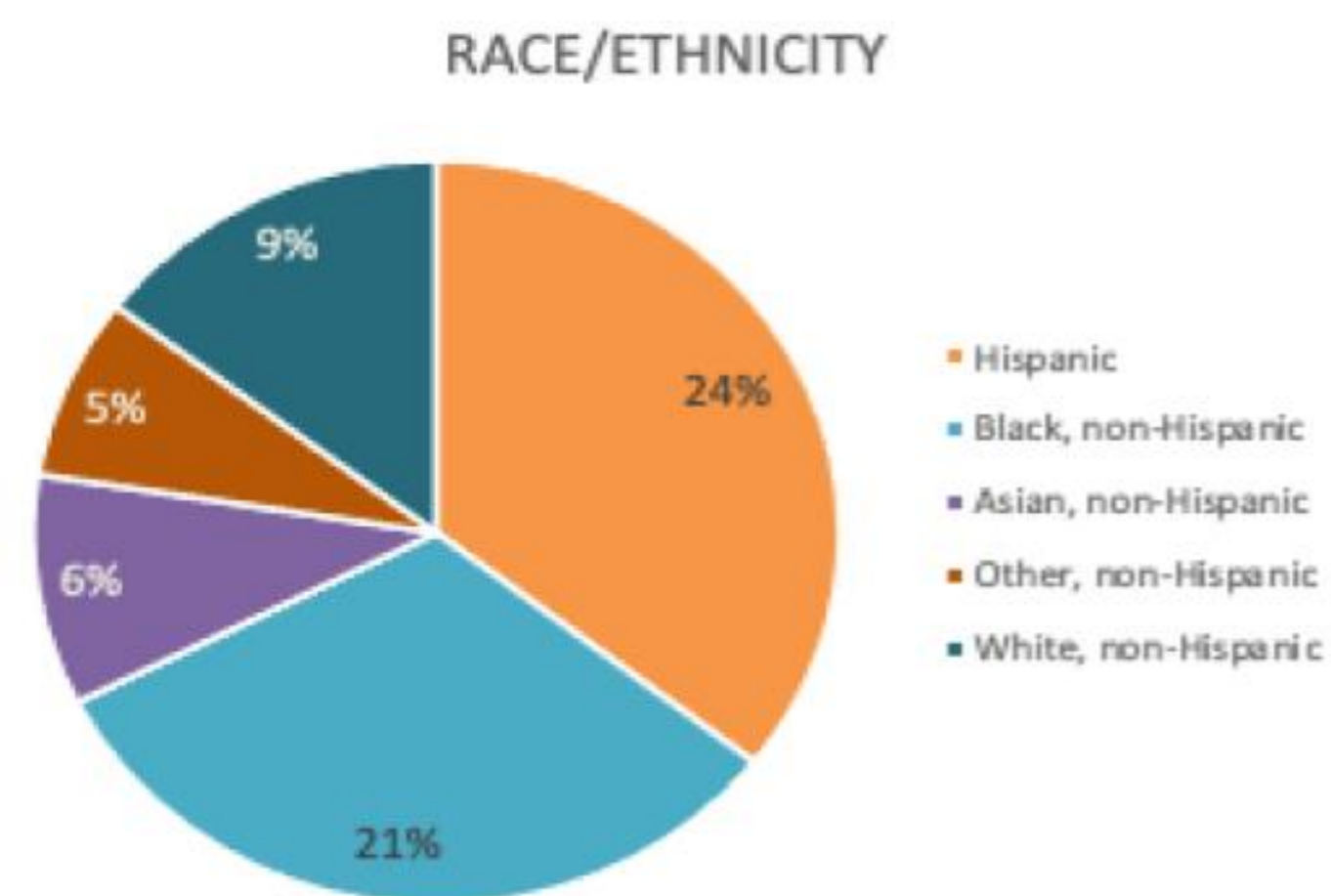
These various types may differentially moderate the relationship between life stressors and poor mental health outcomes in youth

Both **interpersonal** and **institutional** racial discrimination **moderate** the relationship between life stress and depressive symptoms among youth; thus, there is **significant** need for both **interpersonal** and **structural** interventions related to mental health outcomes.

## METHODS

Survey data were collected across two timepoints (T1 & T2) over a six-month period

329 ethnically diverse adolescents aged 11-18 (Mage = 15)

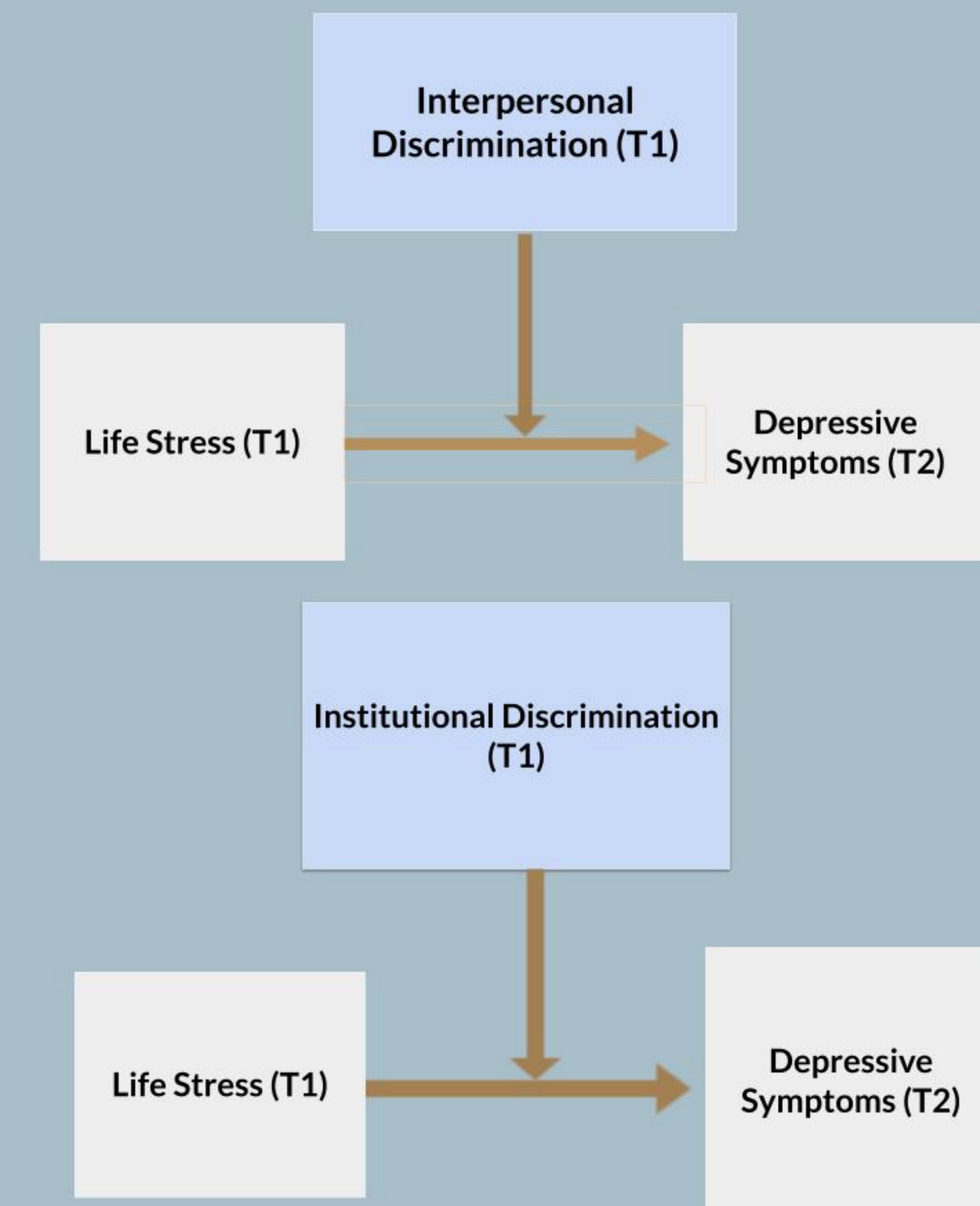
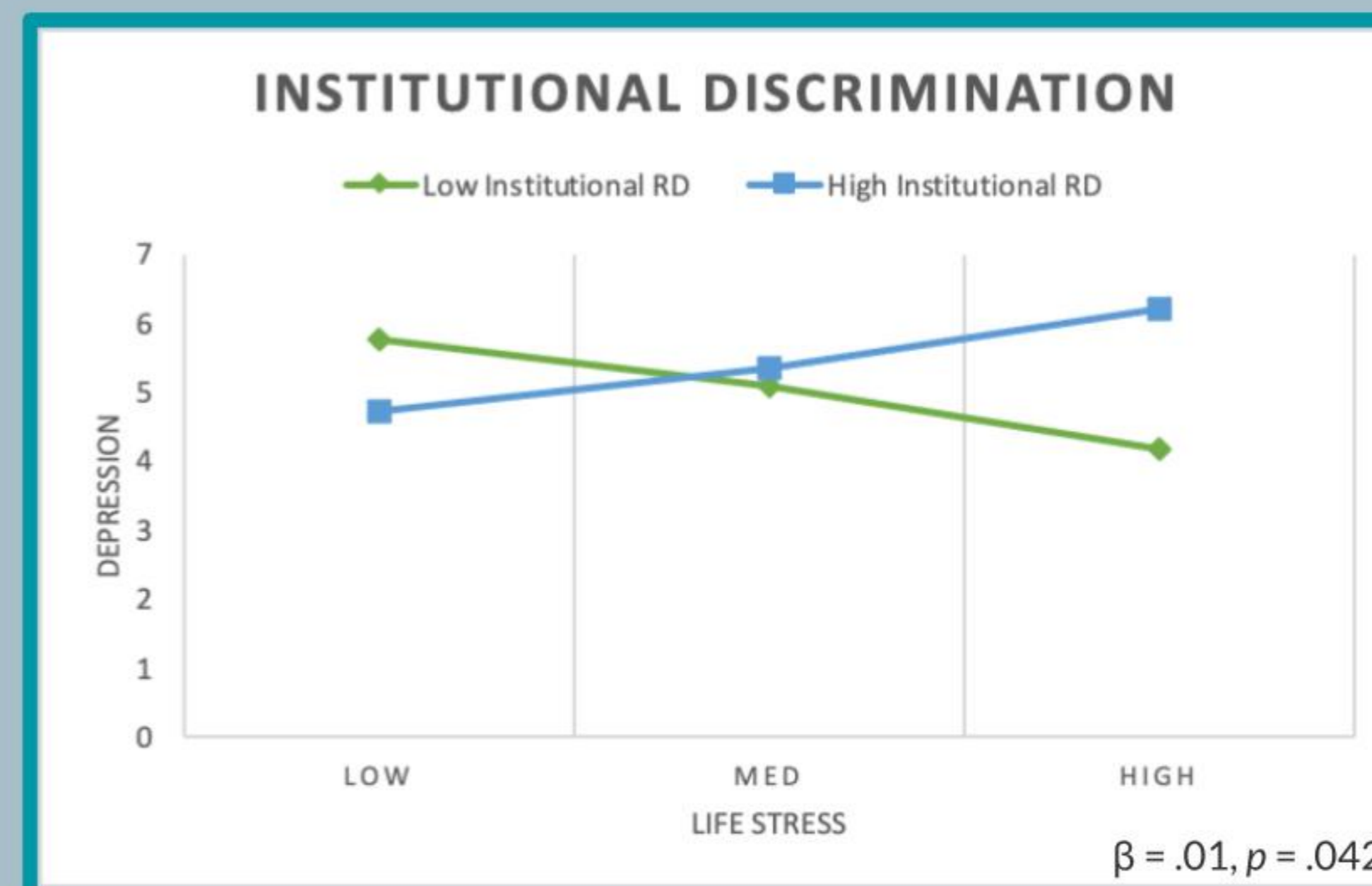
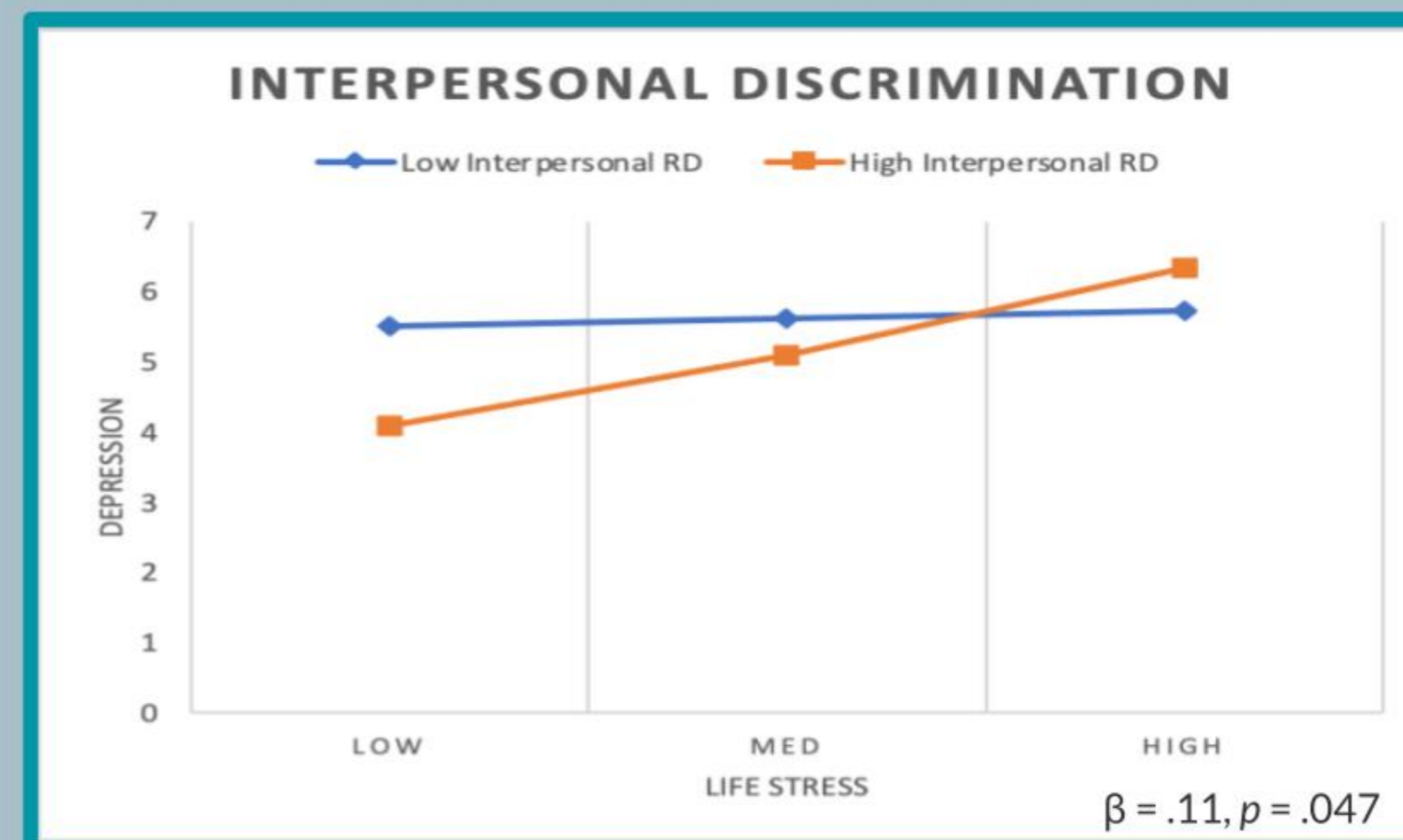


**Life Stress at T1:** Responses to life stress were measured using the Urban Adolescents Life Experiences Survey (UALES).

Interpersonal discrimination was measured using the item, "I'm treated differently because of my race" (UALES; Allison et al., 1999).

**Institutional Discrimination at T1:** Institutional discrimination was measured using the Systems Level Stress questionnaire (SLS). This was measured items like "My school has a building that is falling apart" (SLS; Grant et al., 2018).

**Self-Reported Health at T1 and T2:** Depressive symptoms (T1 & T2) were assessed with the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI).



Dana Mansfield, MA; Abigail Adan; Brittany Ricart, BA; Jocelyn Smith Carter, PhD

DePaul University

