

# Structural Discriminatory Factors Related to Cognitive Functioning among Older Hispanics: Results from HRS

Ernest Gonzales, PhD, & Cliff Whetung, PhD Candidate  
Natalie Green, MSW Student, Rachel Kruchten, MSW/MPH

We examined cognitive health trajectories within the context of structural discrimination and resilience among older Hispanic men and women in the Health and Retirement Study (2008-2020) with mixed-effects regression.

The majority of older Hispanics reported less than a college education. Men reported significantly more economic resources, and experiences of major and everyday discrimination, than women. Men reported higher levels of smoking, alcohol consumption, and vigorous physical activity when compared to women. Women reported higher levels of memory problems, high blood pressure, diabetes, lung disease, arthritis, psychiatric diagnosis, and depression. Overall, women reported higher levels of weighted multi-morbidity than men. Men's total cognition score was slightly higher than women's.

Everyday discrimination affected women's cognitive functioning more severely than men's, while controlling for important factors. Some data support multi-jeopardy hypothesis, as well as differentiations between positive, tolerable, and toxic stress. Men and women may cope differently within the context of discrimination and these coping strategies may shape cognitive trajectories. Qualitative research that contextualizes positive and negative coping strategies within various stressful environments may bring greater clarity to these longitudinal quantitative results.

### Next Steps:

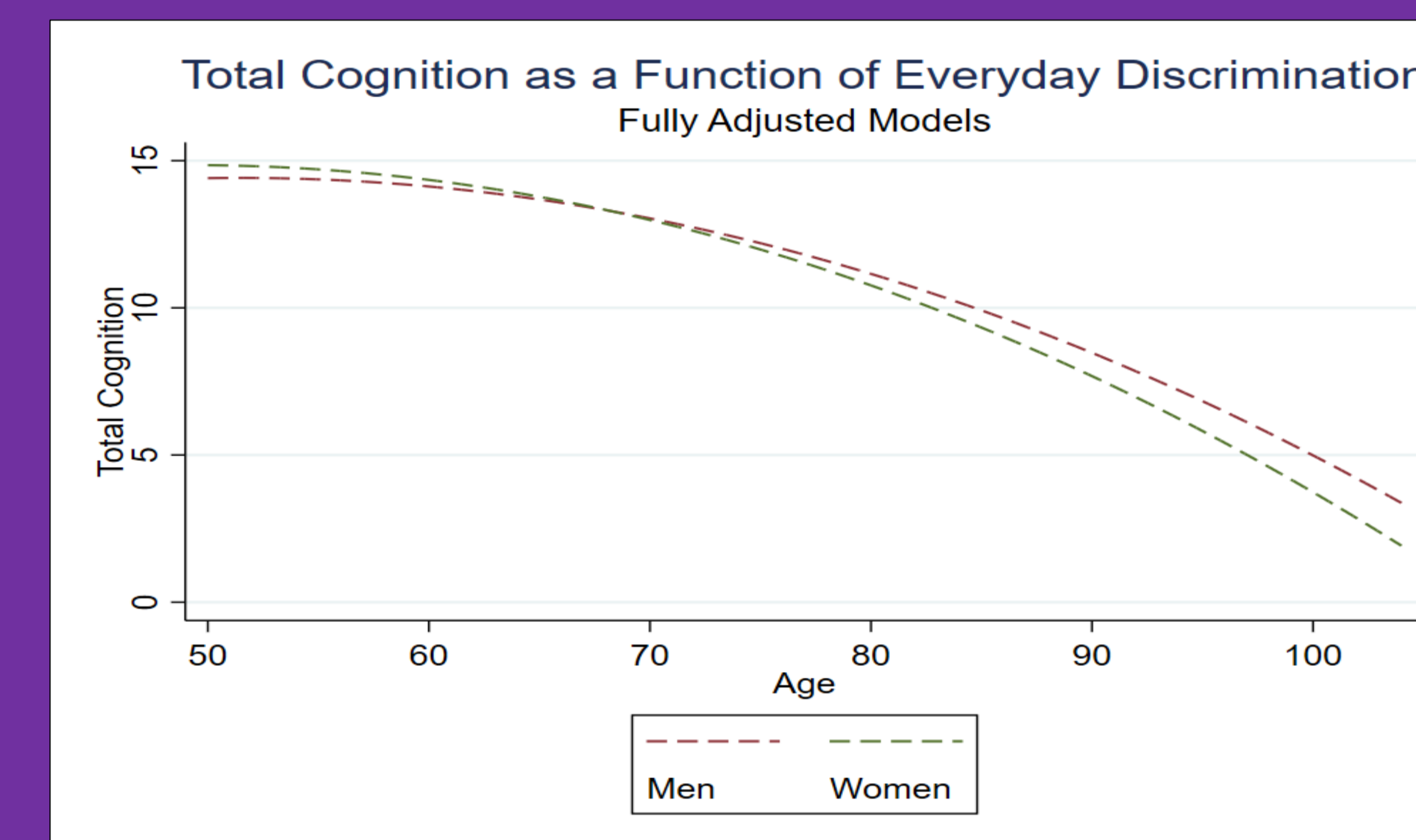
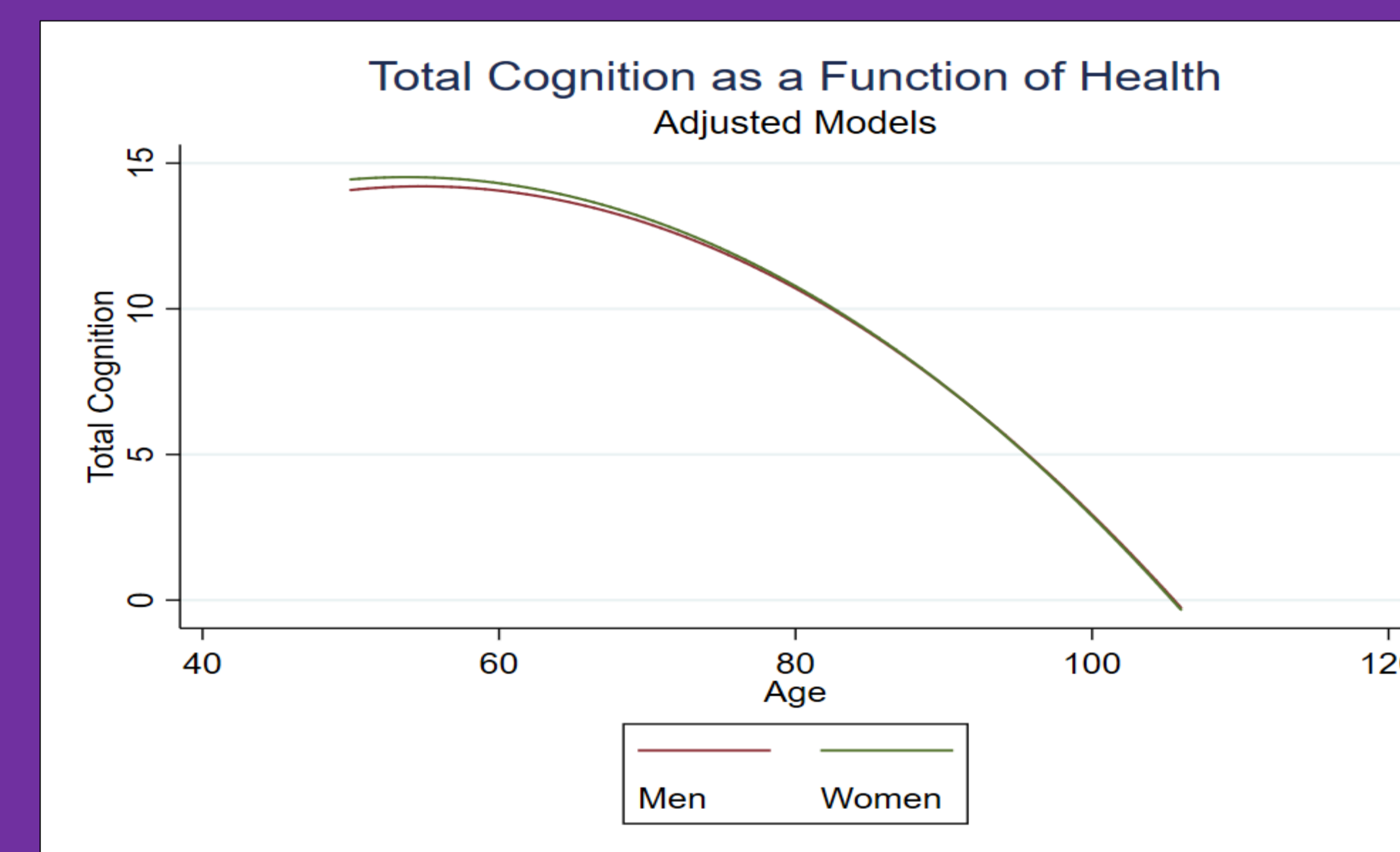
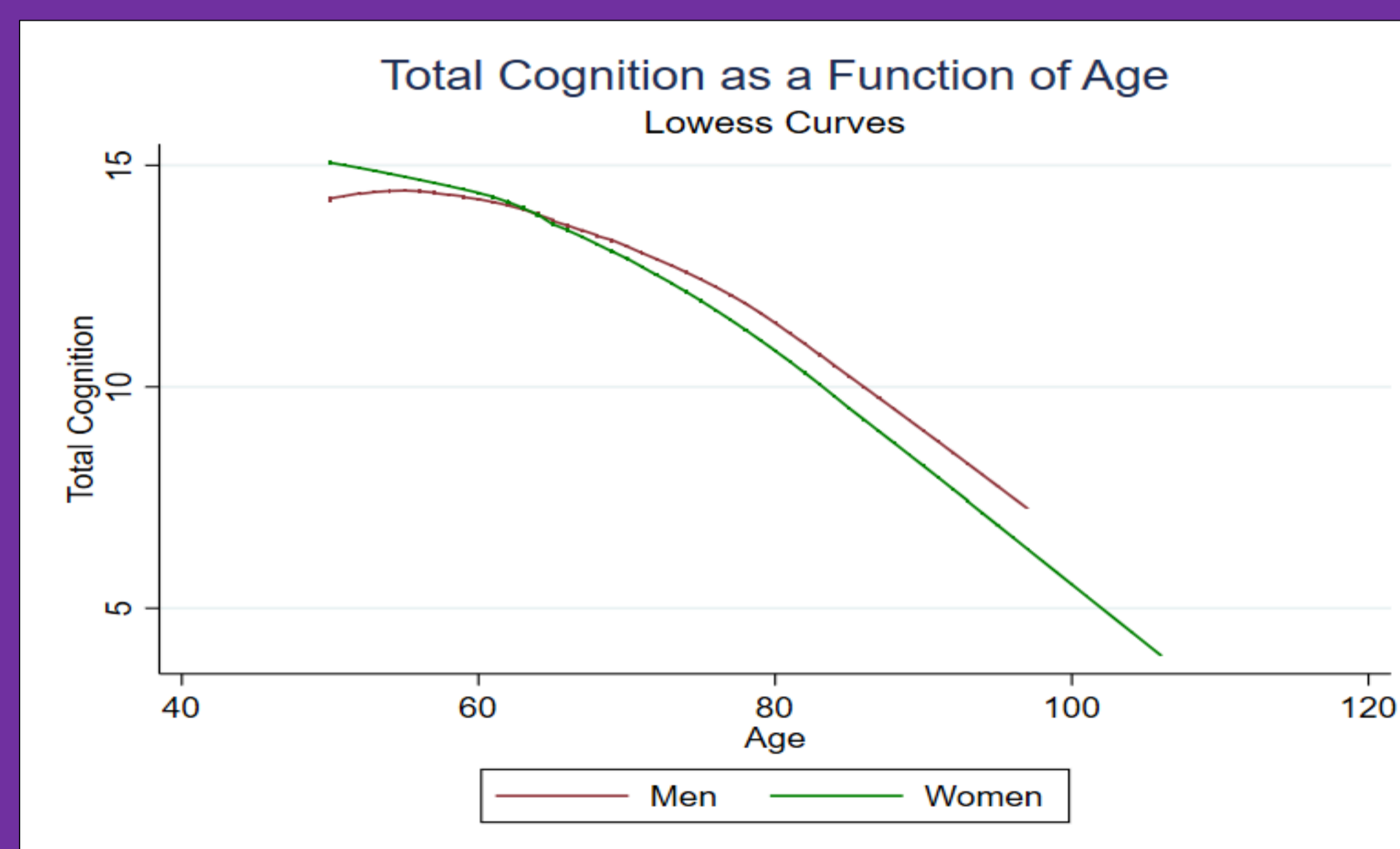
- Perform additional interaction effects
- Add additional protective coping strategies (e.g., religiosity and prayer; social convoys)

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics	Total N = 3,249	Men N = 1,329	Women N = 1,920
<i>Bivariate analyses included t-tests and chi-square. * p &lt; 0.05, ** p &lt; 0.01, *** p &lt; 0.001</i>	Mean (SD) or %	Mean (SD) or %	Mean (SD) or %
Age***	64.61 (9.57)	64.56 (9.28)	64.65 (9.76)
Unpartnered***	0.34	0.20	0.43
Education**			
Less than HS	0.49	0.48	0.50
High School	0.22	0.23	0.22
Some College	0.18	0.18	0.18
College+	0.11	0.11	0.10
Total Household Assets***	\$257 (\$9527)	\$359 (\$14,910)	\$186 (\$609)
Total Household Income ***	39.06 (101)	\$42 (\$66)	\$36 (\$119)
Major Discrimination***	0.46 (0.92)	0.58 (1.06)	0.38 (0.81)
Everyday Discrimination***	0.59 (0.84)	0.66 (0.92)	0.54 (0.79)
Current Smoker***	0.08	0.10	0.07
Alcohol Consumption***			
No Consumption	0.61	0.42	0.74
Light/Moderate Consumption	0.23	0.27	0.20
Heavy Consumption	0.16	0.31	0.06
Physical Activity***			
Little or No Activity	0.12	0.16	0.10
Light Activity	0.19	0.10	0.25
Moderate Activity	0.34	0.31	0.36
Vigorous Activity	0.34	0.43	0.28
Any Memory Problem	0.04	0.03	0.04
High Blood Pressure***	0.41	0.39	0.42
Diabetes***	0.24	0.22	0.25
Lung Disease***	0.04	0.03	0.05
Any Heart Condition**	0.11	0.12	0.11
Stroke**	0.04	0.04	0.03
Arthritis***	0.34	0.25	0.40
Any Psychiatric Diagnosis***	0.14	0.08	0.18
CESD Depression Score***	1.99 (2.33)	1.62 (2.10)	2.25 (2.45)
MWI***	4.18	3.65	4.55
Total Cognition***	13.79 (4.47)	13.83 (4.17)	13.76 (4.66)

Table 2. Regression Results	Discrimination Experiences	Discrimination Experiences among Men	Discrimination Experiences among Women
Age	-0.09*** (0.01)	-0.08*** (0.01)	-0.10*** (0.01)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)
Female	0.13 (0.14)		
Unpartnered	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.23 (0.22)	0.03 (0.17)
Education	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)
Less than HS	1.84*** (0.17)	1.55*** (0.25)	2.04*** (0.23)
High School	2.58*** (0.19)	2.33*** (0.28)	2.74*** (0.25)
Some College	3.42*** (0.23)	3.38*** (0.34)	3.44*** (0.31)
Total Household Assets	0.00** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)
Total Household Income	0.00** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)
Current Smoker	-0.38* (0.18)	-0.65** (0.25)	-0.15 (0.25)
Physical Activity	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)	0.00 (.)
Little or No Activity	0.42* (0.18)	0.62* (0.28)	0.38 (0.25)
Light Activity	0.39* (0.16)	0.36 (0.22)	0.41 (0.25)
Moderate Activity	0.50** (0.17)	0.36 (0.22)	0.61* (0.26)
Multimorbidity Weighted Index	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.07* (0.03)	-0.04 (0.02)
CESD Depression Score	-0.11*** (0.02)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.10** (0.03)
Any Psychiatric Diagnosis	-0.14 (0.15)	-0.17 (0.28)	-0.14 (0.19)
Everyday Discrimination Experiences	-0.14* (0.06)	-0.16 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.09)
_cons	12.46*** (0.21)	12.89*** (0.28)	12.24*** (0.31)
sd(age)	0.05*** (0.03)	0.06*** (0.04)	0.03 (0.06)
sd(_cons)	2.71*** (0.07)	2.53*** (0.10)	2.82*** (0.10)
sd(residuals)	0.34 (0.28)	0.20 (0.24)	0.71 (2.19)
Insig_e	2.41*** (0.04)	2.32*** (0.06)	2.47*** (0.05)
Observations	4865	1979	2886
AIC	25464.26	10212.41	15262.63
BIC	25607.04	10329.81	15387.95



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