

# Exploring the Relationships Between Trauma and the Onset of Dementia Among Older Adults

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## Overview

The study was to explore the influence of Adverse Childhood Experiences on the risk of dementia later in life among older adults, particularly women. The focus was to examine the interplay between abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction when it comes to older women developing dementia.

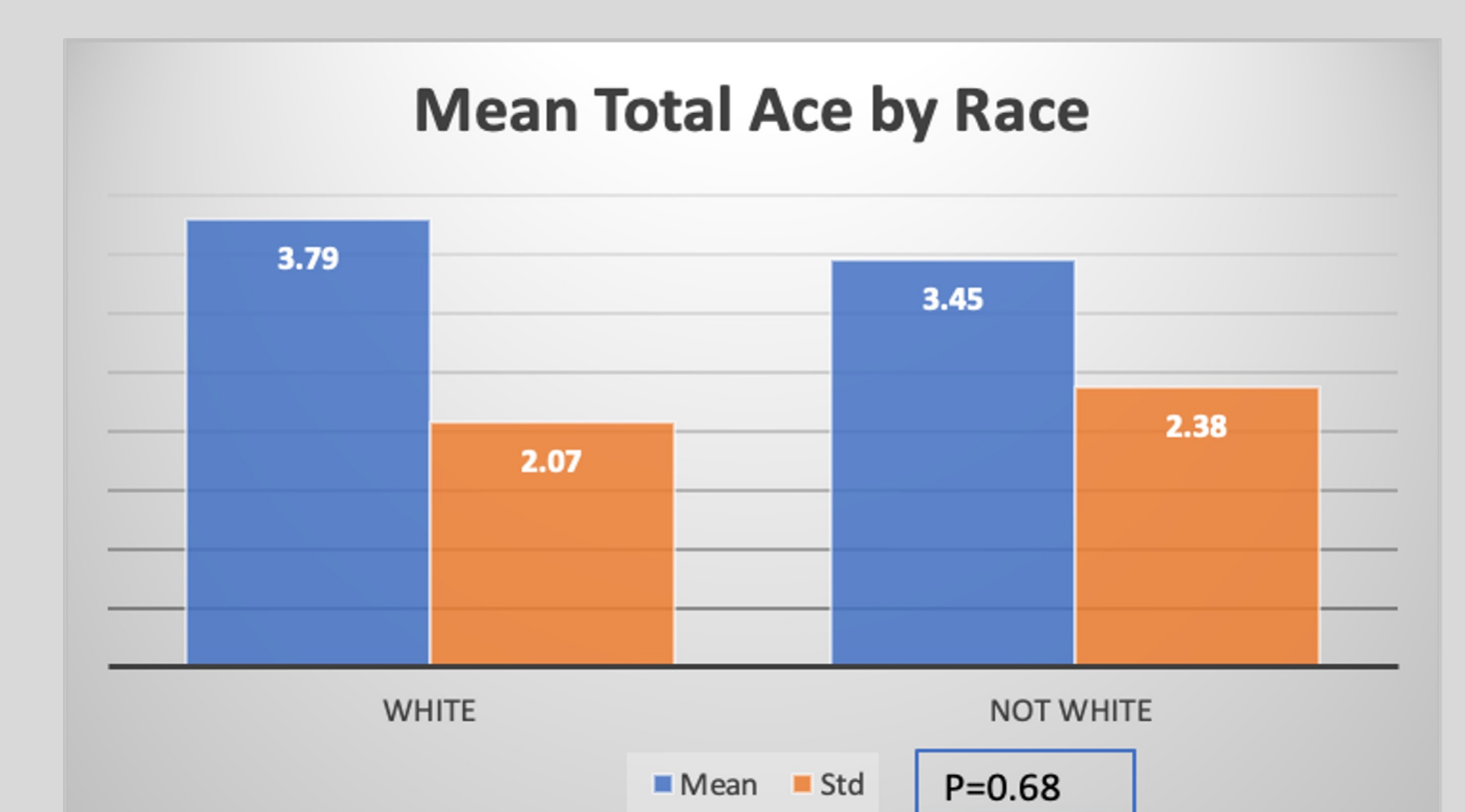
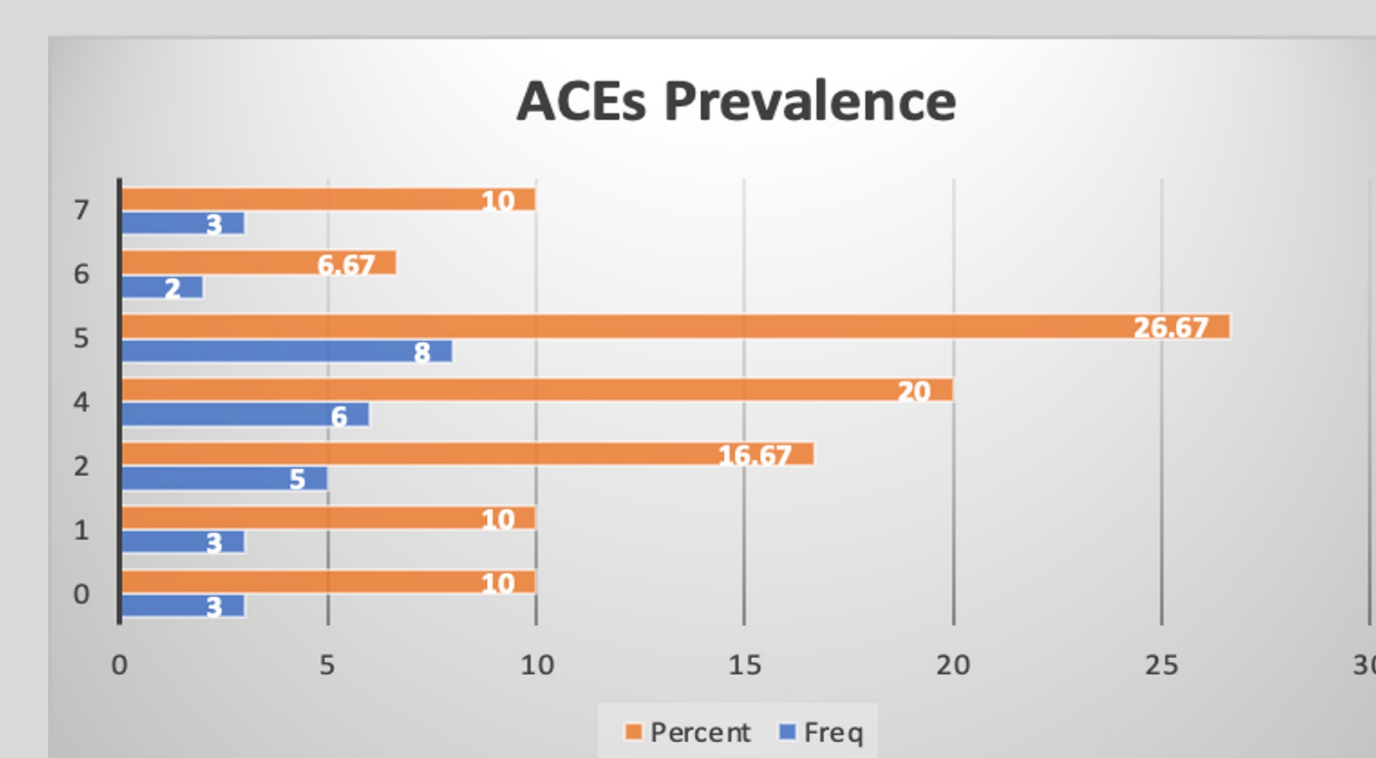
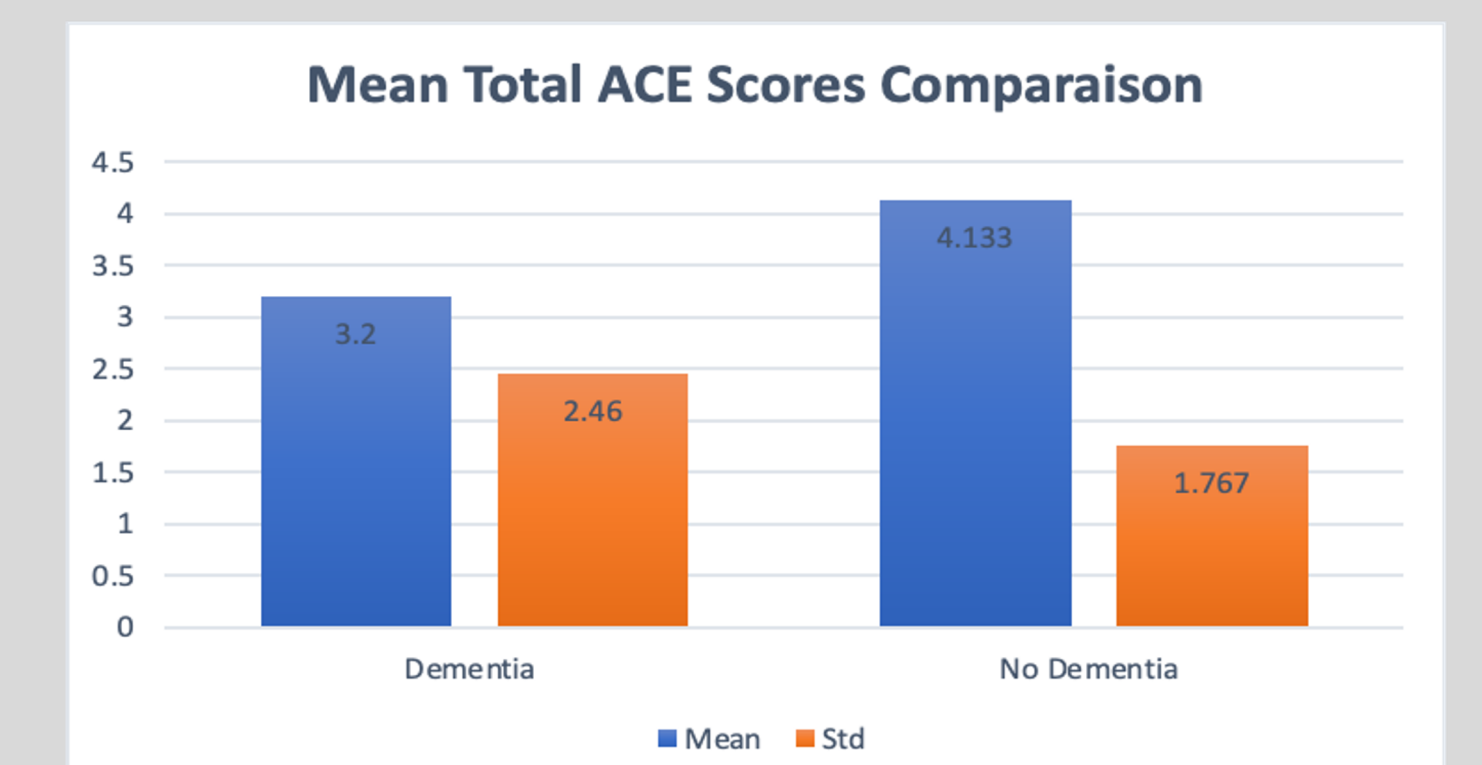
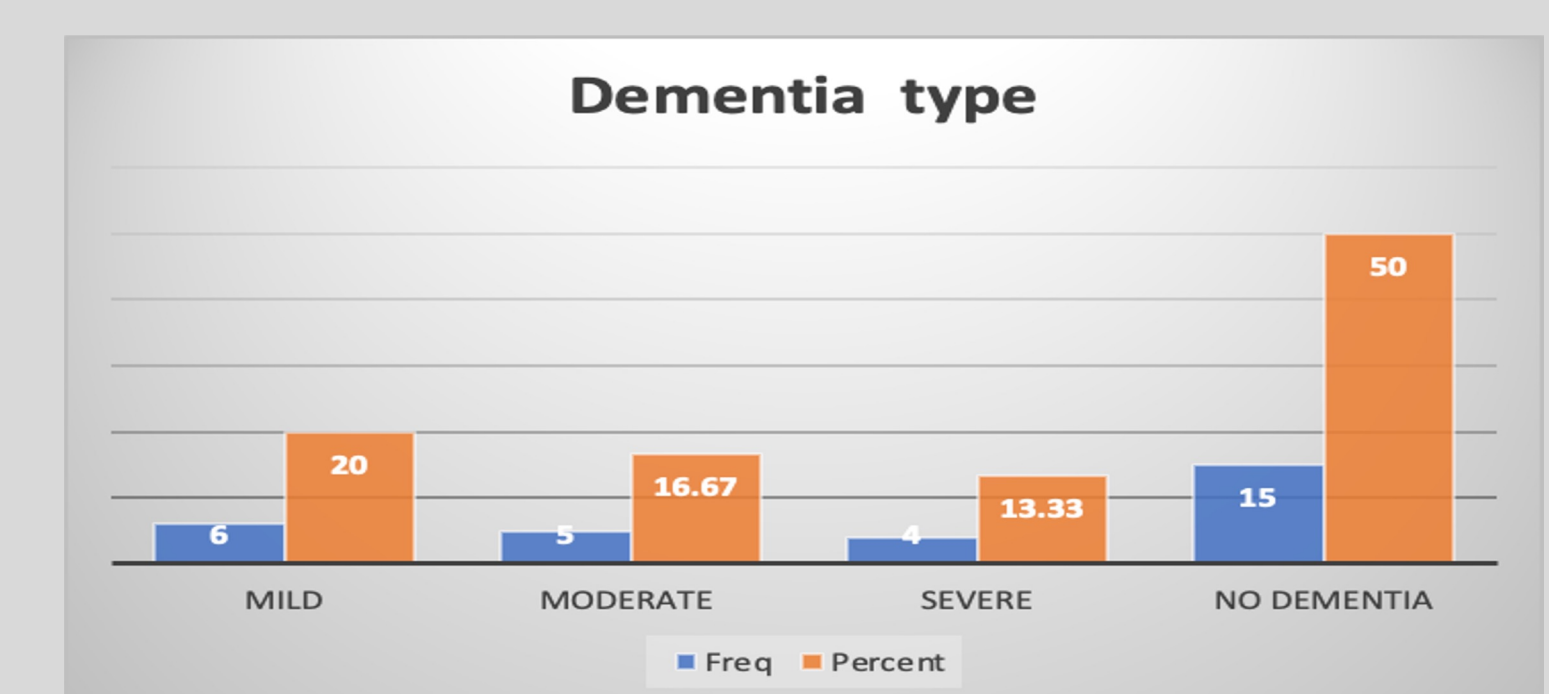
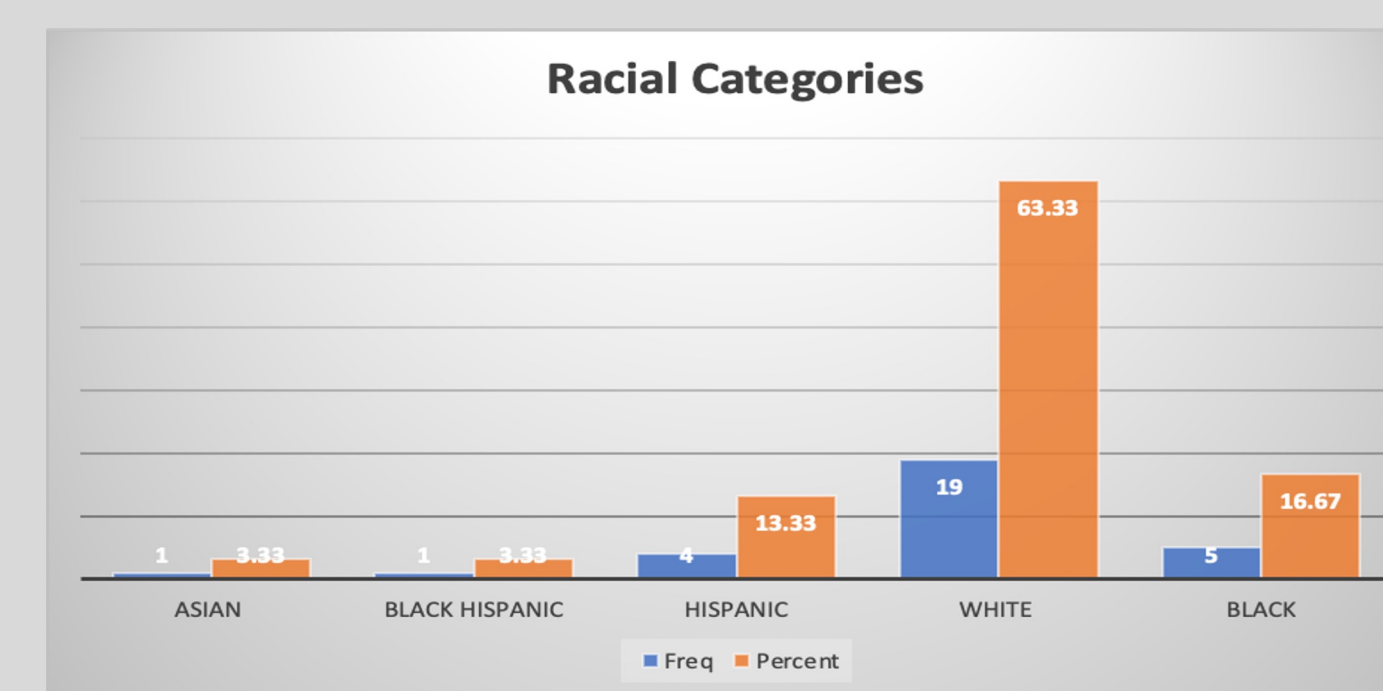
## Background

- Dementia has become a prominent public health issue affecting “55 million people worldwide”, affirmed the World Health Organization.
- According to the CDC, “Alzheimer’s disease, which is the most common type of dementia, is estimated to affect 5.8 million people in the United States”, and By 2060, the number of Alzheimer’s disease cases is predicted to rise to an estimated 14 million people, with minority populations being affected the most.”
- The Alzheimer’s Association found that “Nearly two-thirds of the more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer’s are women.”
- A considerable body of research shows the negative relationship between early life challenges and health in adulthood. One interesting but overlooked aspect is the potential link between childhood trauma and the risk for dementia later in life.

## Methods: Qualitative & Quantitative

- 3 semi-structured interviews were completed in person.
- 30 female case files were chosen randomly by the social workers.
- Population ages range from 58-93. The mean(SD) age was 72.7 (11.1) years
- Social Workers are conveniently chosen. Ages ranged between 36-65. Each was asked 9 questions that included demographic information
- Interviews were recorded using voice memos and transcribed manually.
- Case files were analyzed with the help of STATA

## Results



- A Pearson correlation coefficient examined the relationship between age and total ace and showed a weak negative linear relationship ( $r = -0.24$ ,  $P = 0.18$ ), which means as age increases, total ace decreases. This correlation is not statistically significant since ( $p < 0.05$ ).
- Another Pearson correlation coefficient analyzed the relationship between dementia type and total ACE, revealing a weak negative relationship ( $r = -0.02$ ,  $p = 0.90$ ). This relationship is not statistically significant since ( $p = 0.90$ )

## Conclusion

Dementia continues to be a serious public health problem as its impact reaches far beyond the individual who is affected by the condition. While insights from social workers underscored the prevalence of ACEs among their clients and suggested a potential correlation with dementia, the bivariate analysis did not reveal statistically significant results linking ACEs to dementia diagnosis. Ultimately, further research with larger and more diverse samples, as well as longitudinal designs, is crucial for deepening our understanding of the relationship between childhood trauma and dementia.

## References

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