

Figure 3.

Now having seen that there seem to be some indications of significant attitude changes across generational lines since the end of apartheid, it begs the question as to how successfully these different groups have been able to put the past behind them.

From Figure 3, it seems clear that the groups which have had the most success in this area are the colored group and the Afrikaans-speaking white group. With 80% of these two older groups testifying to feelings of lingering anger and/or guilt due to the events of apartheid, the older generations admit to markedly more emotional effects from apartheid than do their younger counterparts. As, respectively, there is a 46.67% and a 30% generational decline in the percentages of coloreds and Afrikaans-speaking whites who testify to experiencing similarly lingering emotions from the events and history of apartheid.

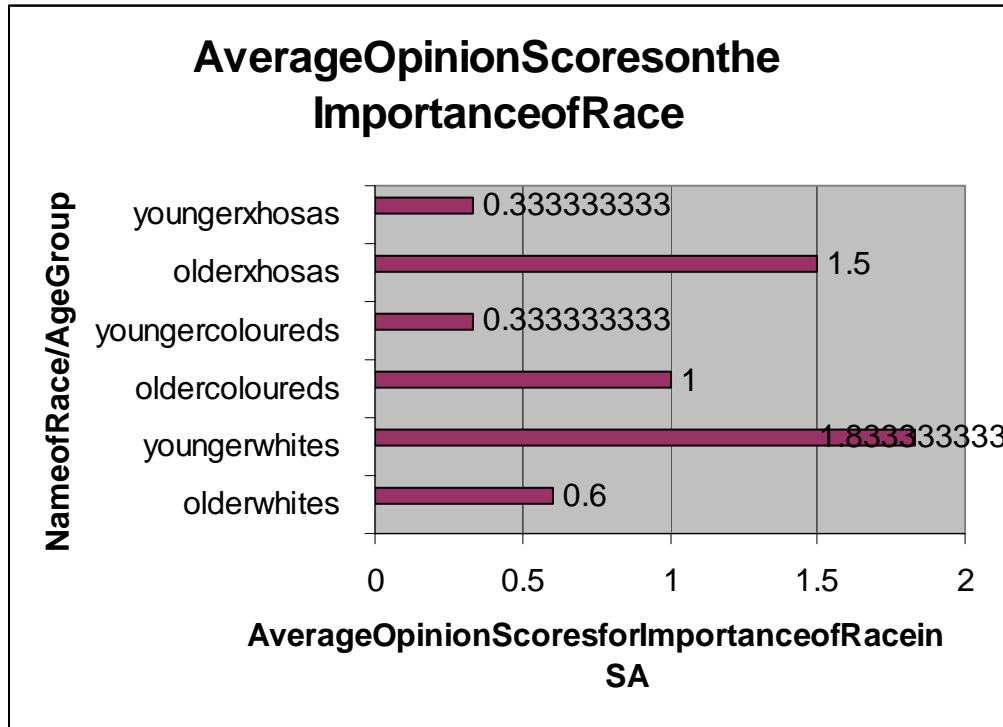
On the surface this seems to suggest that the younger members of these groups have been afforded an opportunity to be less emotionally tied to the events of apartheid history, and this is most likely because they experience fewer or are aware of experiencing fewer of the long-term effects of the previous white-supremacist regime. Or they may simply feel less personal responsibility or involvement than their elders feel for the events of apartheid.

The percentage of respondents who felt lingering emotions regarding apartheid may be slightly higher for the younger white group than for the younger colored group because, as testified by many white respondents, of the current fact of affirmative action, which may remind younger whites of their elder's deed through South Africa's legalized corrective discrimination against them.

Given the proposed explanation for a decline in numbers, the fact that 100% of both the older Xhosa and the younger ones testified to lingering feelings related to the history of apartheid suggests that the younger Xhosa have not been given the same opportunity to be emotionally removed from the events of apartheid. This may be speculatively explained by noting the continued social and economic disempowerment of this group in their lack of access to proper housing, medical care, educational facilities, etc., and other life opportunities which come as a result of having such things as proper housing, medical care, education, and so on.

Figure 4.

Ironically, it is the Xhosa group which shows a sharp decline in generational opinions on the importance of race in South Africa today. Despite the lingering effects of disadvantages in housing, education, medical care, and so on, it is the younger Xhosa who are now more likely to testify that race is not so important in South Africa today. This may be explained by noting that many Xhosa-speaking youth cited affirmative action as one of the benefits of being a member of their race and that perhaps there is some perceived (though unmentioned in testimonials) benefit in being the political majority in the country.



Perhaps they feel that this attempted corrective action reduces the importance of race for them in their day today lives from what it might be without corrective action and political majority. This as well as having experienced fewer incidents so far being the target of racism, according to Figure 2.

If either or both of these reasons is taken to be true, then this would be consistent with the responses of the colored and the Afrikaans-speaking white groups. For instance, it would be reasonable to say that if the younger Xhosa group perceived the change of government and the institution of corrective action as a reason to see their race as less significant factor in their lives, then the same change in government and corrective action, which is meant to benefit black over whites, would be a reason for the younger Afrikaans-speaking whites to see their race as more important than it was for their progenitors.

Interestingly enough, the younger colored group also demonstrated a decline in the perceived importance of race in their lives despite the fact that there is also a significant decline in the percentage of younger coloreds who testify to still feeling lingering emotional effects from apartheid. Perhaps this is also explained by the fact of corrective action being also helpful to coloreds, though as testimonials suggest, perhaps less helpful than to black Africans.