



The Association Between Active Political Involvement and Awareness of Racial Inequality in the U.S Across Education Levels

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Introduction

- The 1965 Voter Rights Act was enacted as a result of organized protests which elicited awareness of the maltreatment of minority group. (Voter Rights Act, 1965)
- A significant relationship was found between involvement in co-curricular activities oriented around politics by Asian Pacific American students and its association with racial and ethnic understanding. (Inkelas, 2004)
- ID is important for political involvement for example in voting eligibility. 1 in 4 African Americans do not have government-issued ID while 1 in 10 average Americans don't have one (ACLU, 2012). This shows the importance of encouraging minority groups to engage in politics in order to bring attention to racial inequality amongst the general population.
- Low educated black men living in over-policed neighborhoods are less likely to believe that their political action makes a difference and therefore protest less often. (Maltby, 2017).

Research Question

- Are active forms of political involvement associated with greater recognition and awareness of racial inequality.
- How does this relationship vary across education level?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=2294) were drawn from the 2012 Outlook on Life Survey (OOL), a nationally representative random sample of non-institutionalized adults age 18 or older from all ethnic backgrounds across the United States. Participants responded virtually and were provided internet if needed.

Measures

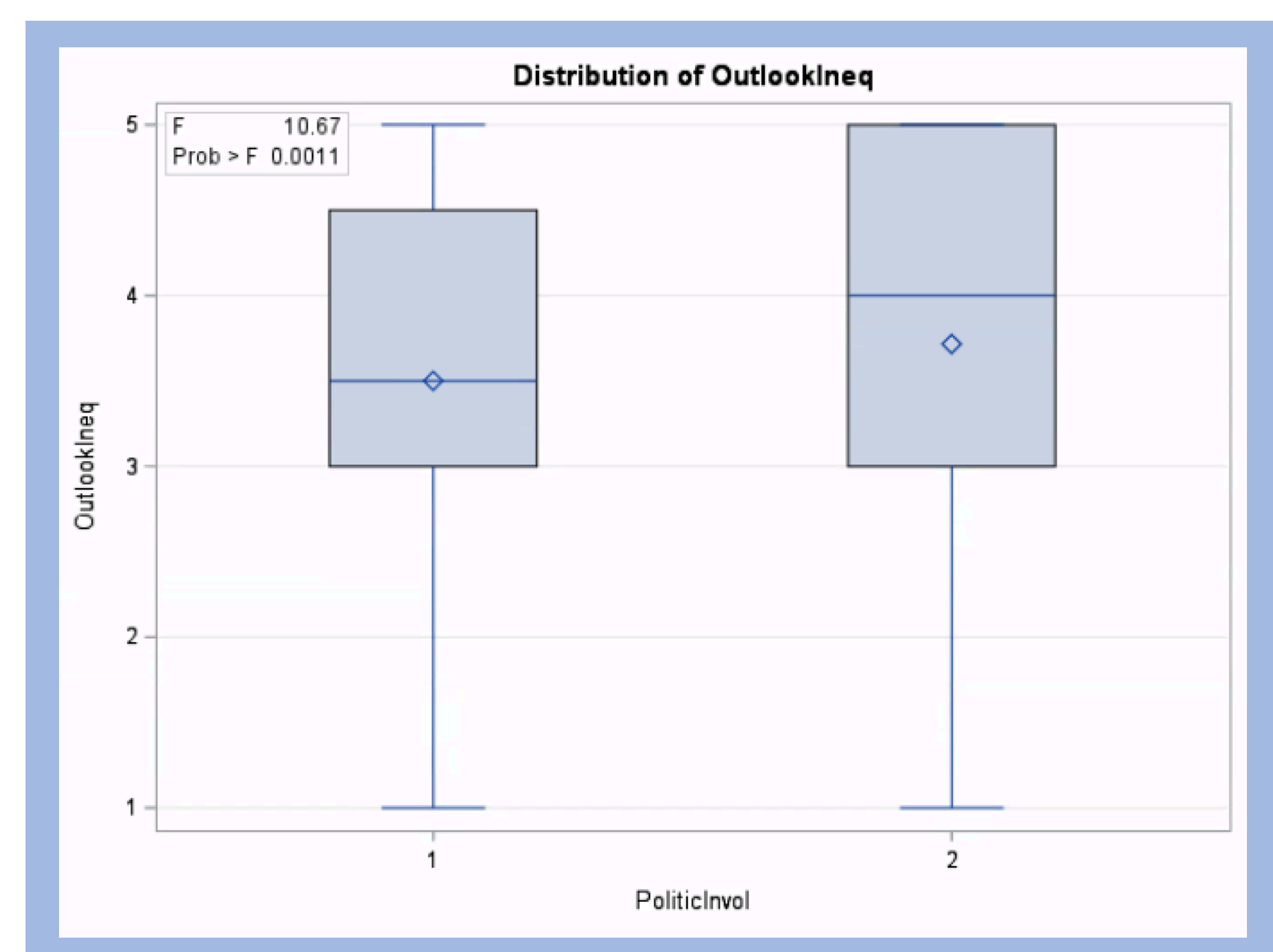
- Political involvement, (the explanatory variable) was categorized as "1" (not involved) and "2" (involved). The variable is a combination of two "yes/no" responses to questions about whether or not respondents had attended a demonstration or a voter registration drive in the past two years. A "yes" response to either question constituted as a "2".
- Awareness of racial inequality (the response variable) was measured on a quantitative scale (1-5) which combined responses to two questions (each organized by 5 possible responses ("strongly agree to strongly disagree")) based on participants' accordance with statements such as "Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the U.S."
- Education, the third variable, was measured by 5 categories based on level of completed education ranging from middle school completion (1) to college/graduate degree (5).

Univariate

- About 84% of respondents were in category 1 indicating no political involvement.
- The mean score for outlook on racial inequality was 3.53 out of 5 (sd=1.10).

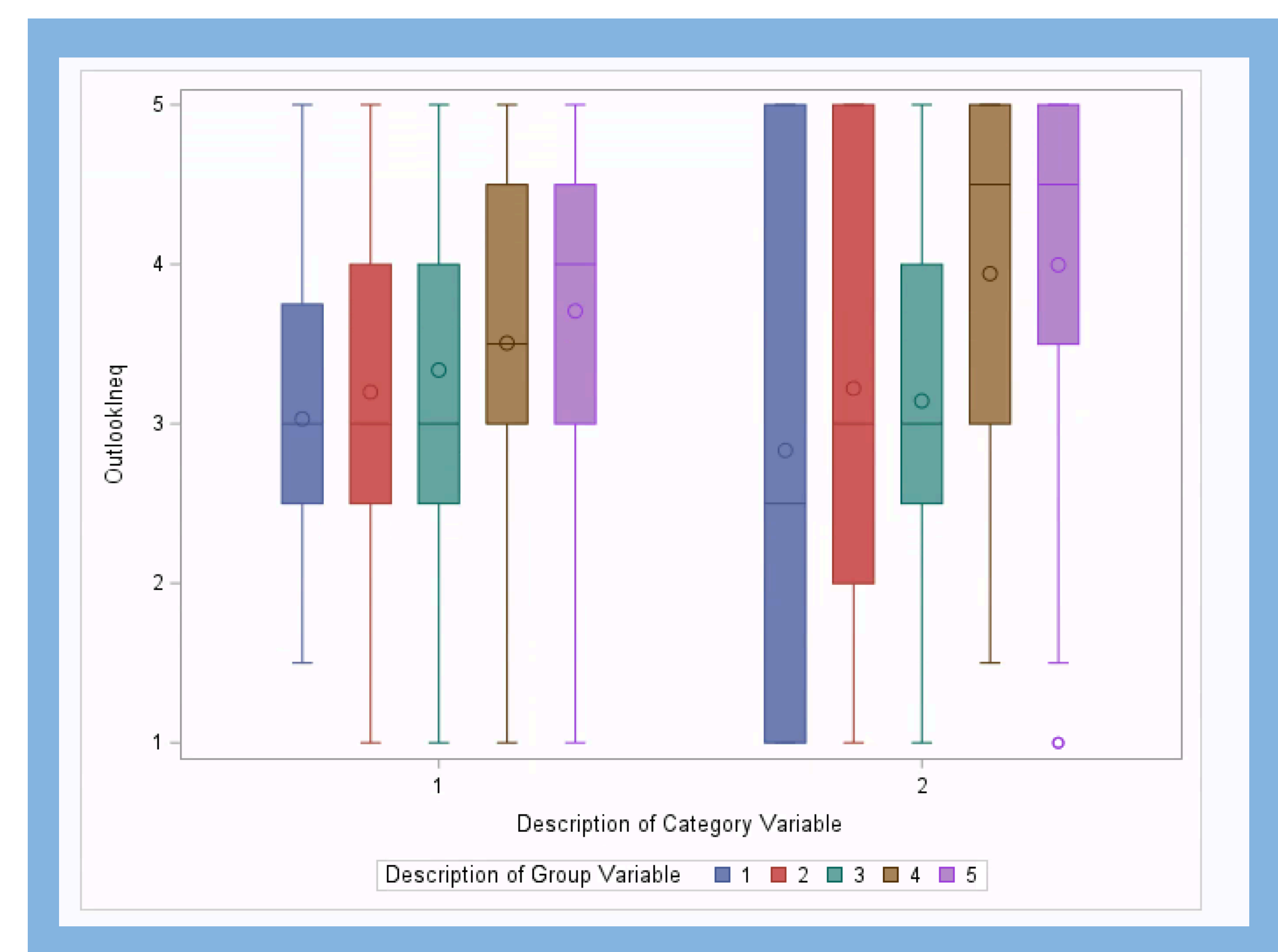
Bivariate

- The ANOVA analysis showed that there was a significant association between the outlook on racial inequality amongst non-politically involved individuals (mean=3.50, sd=1.09) and politically involved individuals (mean=3.72, sd=1.18) ($F(1,2140)=10.7$, $p<.01$). The B value is $-.21$.



Multivariate

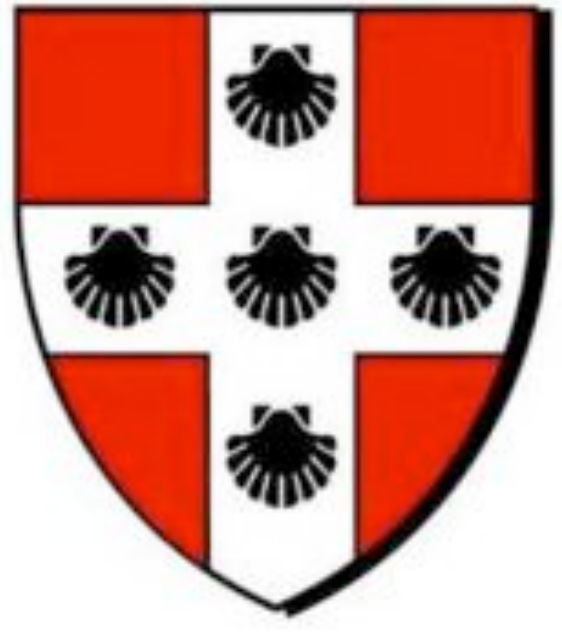
- Education status is not a confounder (since the relationship remains significant) nor a moderator since group 2 remains more aware of racial inequality while accounting for education. Therefore, education helps to explain the relationship as a covariate.
- After controlling for education, the association between political involvement and awareness of racial inequality remains significant ($B=-0.186$, $p<0.01$).
- The B value for EDUC is $.200$ ($p<.0001$) indicating that the score for racial inequality increases with education status.



- The B value changed from $-.21$ to $-.18$ when accounting for education status indicating that the relationship remains similar in the multivariate condition.

Discussion

- Being politically engaged by participating in voter registration drives and attending demonstrations positively affects individuals' recognition of racial discrimination and unequal opportunities amongst minority groups.
- Education status acts as a covariate in the presented relationship indicating that, in addition to political involvement, a higher level of completed schooling positively affects one's recognition of racial inequality.
- US citizens may use this information to realize that activism needs to move beyond social media platforms (such as in "blackout Tuesday") to allow a deeper understanding of structural racism in the U.S. Engaged forms of activism (discussed in the present study) may further the understanding of inequality and incentivize real change in policy.



The Association Between Smoking Quantity and Nicotine Dependence among Young Adults with and without Psychiatric Disorders



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Introduction

- Psychiatric disorders are a potent group of risk factors consistently implicated in the development of nicotine dependence (Rohde et al., 2003; 2004).
- While the association has been well established in the literature, less is known about the ways in which psychiatric disorders may play a role in the emergence of nicotine dependence.
- Most research has focused on how psychiatric disorders and may be a risk factor for heavy smoking e.g. the self medication hypothesis (Khantzian, 1997).
- Alternately, however, psychiatric disorders may signal a greater sensitivity to nicotine dependence at low levels of smoking (i.e. individuals with psychiatric disorders may develop nicotine dependence symptoms at lower levels of smoking than those without psychiatric disorders).

Methods

Sample

- Young adults (age 18 to 25) who reported daily smoking in the past year (n=1320) were drawn from the first wave of the National Epidemiologic Study of Alcohol and Related Conditions (NESARC).
- NESARC is a nationally representative sample of non-institutionalized adults in the U.S.

Measures

- Lifetime psychiatric disorders were assessed using the NIAAA, Alcohol Use Disorder and Associated Disabilities Interview Schedule – DSM-IV (AUDADIS-IV).
- The tobacco module includes questions on symptom criteria for DSM-IV nicotine dependence.
- Current smoking was evaluated through quantity (“On the days that you smoked in the last year, about how many cigarettes did you usually smoke?”).

Research Questions

- Which psychiatric disorders are associated with nicotine dependence after controlling for comorbidity?
- Does the association between smoking quantity and nicotine dependence differ for individuals with and without a psychiatric disorders?

Results

Univariate

- Fully 61% of daily, young adult smokers met criteria for DSM-IV nicotine dependence in the past year.
- A total of 55% met criteria for one or more psychiatric disorders.

Bivariate

- Chi-Square analysis showed that daily, **young adult smokers with a psychiatric disorder were significantly more likely to meet criteria for nicotine dependence** (78.5%) than those without a psychiatric disorder (60.7%), $X^2=152.3$, 1 df, $p<.0001$. The most common disorder among daily smokers was alcohol dependence (45% SE 1.9).
- As expected, the **number of cigarettes** smoked per day was significantly associated with **DSM-IV nicotine dependence**, OR=1.04 (95% CI: 1.03-1.06).

Multivariate

- Major depression (MDD), specific phobia, alcohol dependence, and antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) were each associated with DSM-IV nicotine dependence after controlling for comorbidity.
- The interaction between number of cigarettes smoked per day four specific phobia, ASPD and MDD was not found to be significantly associated with the presence of nicotine dependence.
- At each level of use, the probability of nicotine dependence is significantly higher among those with the disorder than those without (Figure 1).

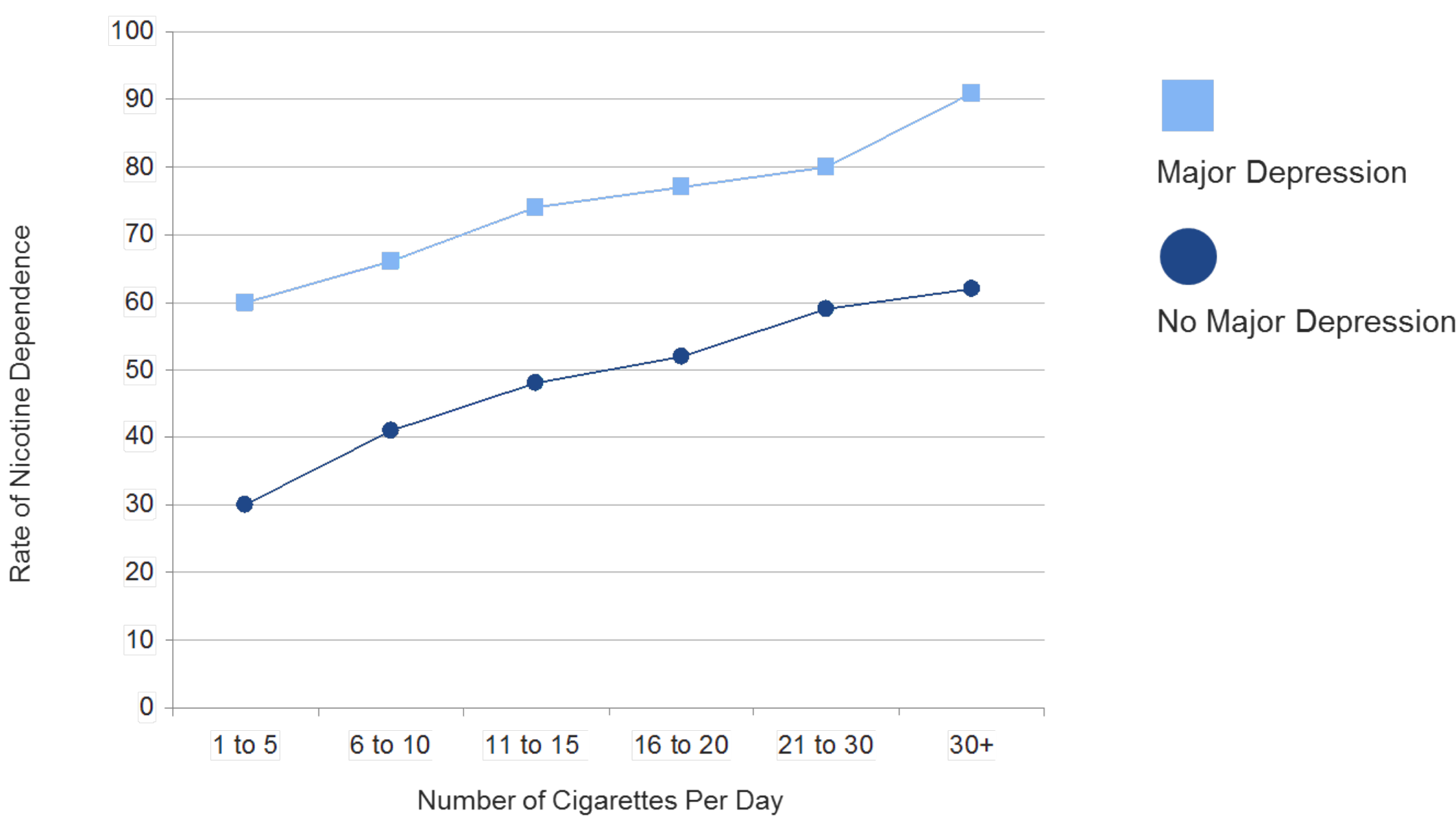


Figure 1. Smoking and Nicotine Dependence by Major Depression among Daily, Young Adult Smokers

Multivariate (cont.)

- In contrast, the interaction between alcohol dependence and number of cigarettes smoked per day was statistically significant when predicting nicotine dependence (Figure 2).

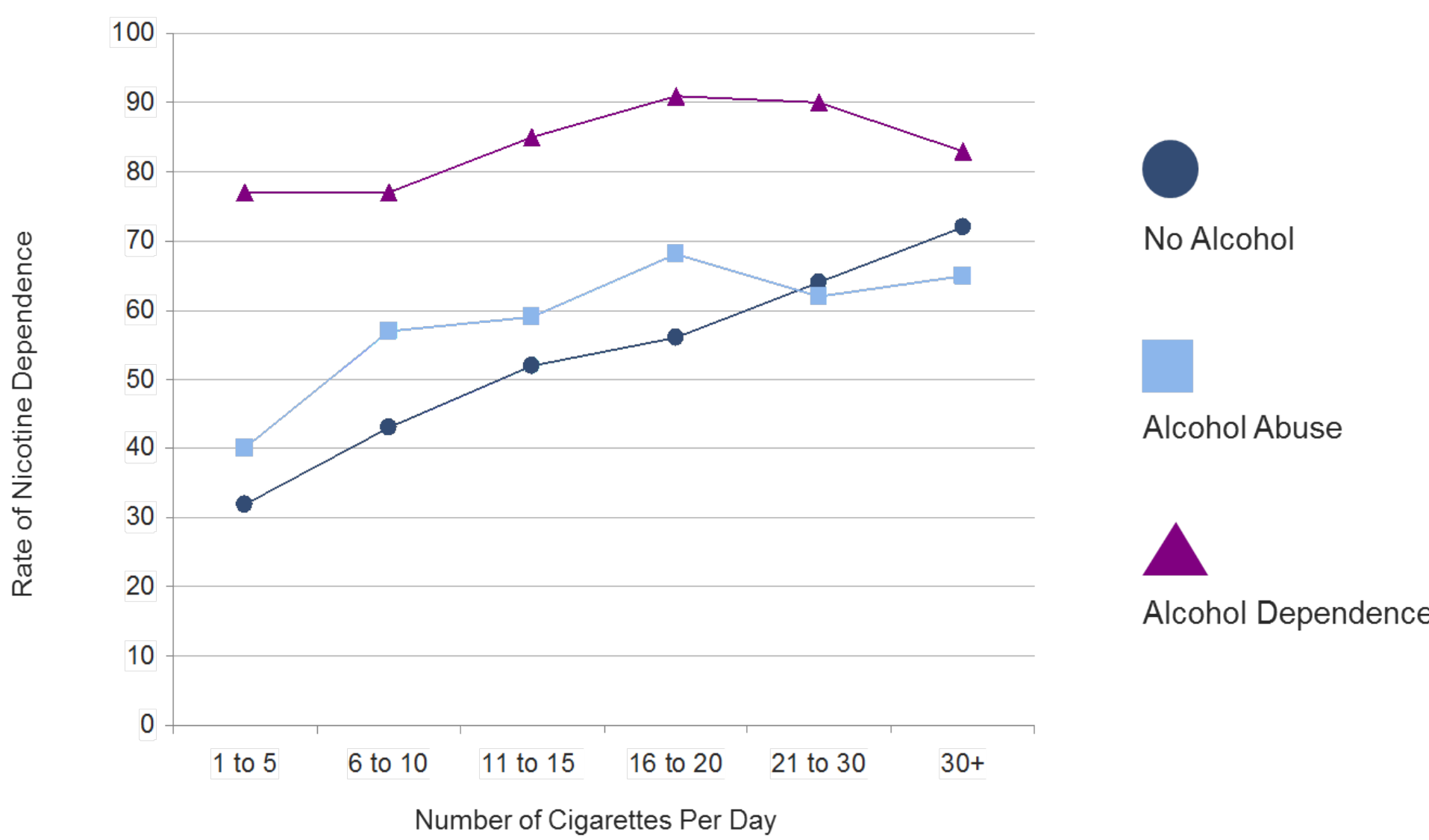


Figure 2: Smoking and Nicotine Dependence by Alcohol Use Disorders among Daily, Young Adult Smokers

- At lower levels of smoking, individuals with alcohol dependence have substantially elevated rates of nicotine dependence compared to those without alcohol dependence.
- At highest levels of use (30+ cigarettes/day), rates of nicotine dependence are statistically similar for those with and without alcohol dependence.

Discussion

- Individuals with major depression, specific phobia and ASPD may be more sensitive to nicotine dependence across levels of smoking.
- Individuals with alcohol dependence are more sensitive to nicotine dependence at low levels of daily smoking, but not at the highest levels when compared to individuals without alcohol dependence.
- Notably, the present findings are based on cross-sectional data and do not reflect the smoking levels at which nicotine dependence emerges among those with and without psychiatric disorders.
- Further research is needed to determine whether sensitivity to nicotine dependence is based on physical and/or psychological differences related to psychiatric disorders.

Khantzian, Edward J. (1997). The self-medication hypothesis of substance use disorders: A reconsideration and recent applications. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*. 4(5), 231-244.

Rohde, P., Lewinsohn, P. M., Brown, R. A., Gau, J. M., & Kahler, C. W. (2003). Psychiatric disorders, familial factors and cigarette smoking: I. Associations with smoking initiation. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, 5(1), 85-98.

Rohde, P., Kahler, C. W., Lewinsohn, P. M., & Brown, R. A. (2004). Psychiatric disorders, familial factors, and cigarette smoking: II. Associations with progression to daily smoking. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, 6(1), 119-132.