

Introduction

- Sexual minorities (SM), particularly Lesbian and Multisexual women are at higher risk for psychological distress and substance use
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, college student
 - Psychological distress increased
 - Mixed findings on substance use
- Concurrent substance use increases risk of negative consequences of use

The Present Study

- This study tests whether Lesbian, Gay, Heterosexual, and Multisexual college students report different levels of concurrent substance use and psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

- SM report greater distress and concurrent use than heterosexual participants
- Lesbian and Multisexual endorse the most distress and concurrent use

Methods

- Survey administered Fall 2020 – remote instruction due to COVID-19 pandemic

Participants

- 1,477 full-time students from large university in the northeast
- $M_{age} = 23.44$, $SD_{age} = 6.85$, 69.5% women, 45% BIPOC

Measures

- Psychological Distress (Kessler 6)
- Concurrent substance use – past 30 days

There was a **significant** multivariate main effect of sexual orientation. **Multisexual reported more concurrent substance use and more psychological distress during COVID-19 pandemic.**

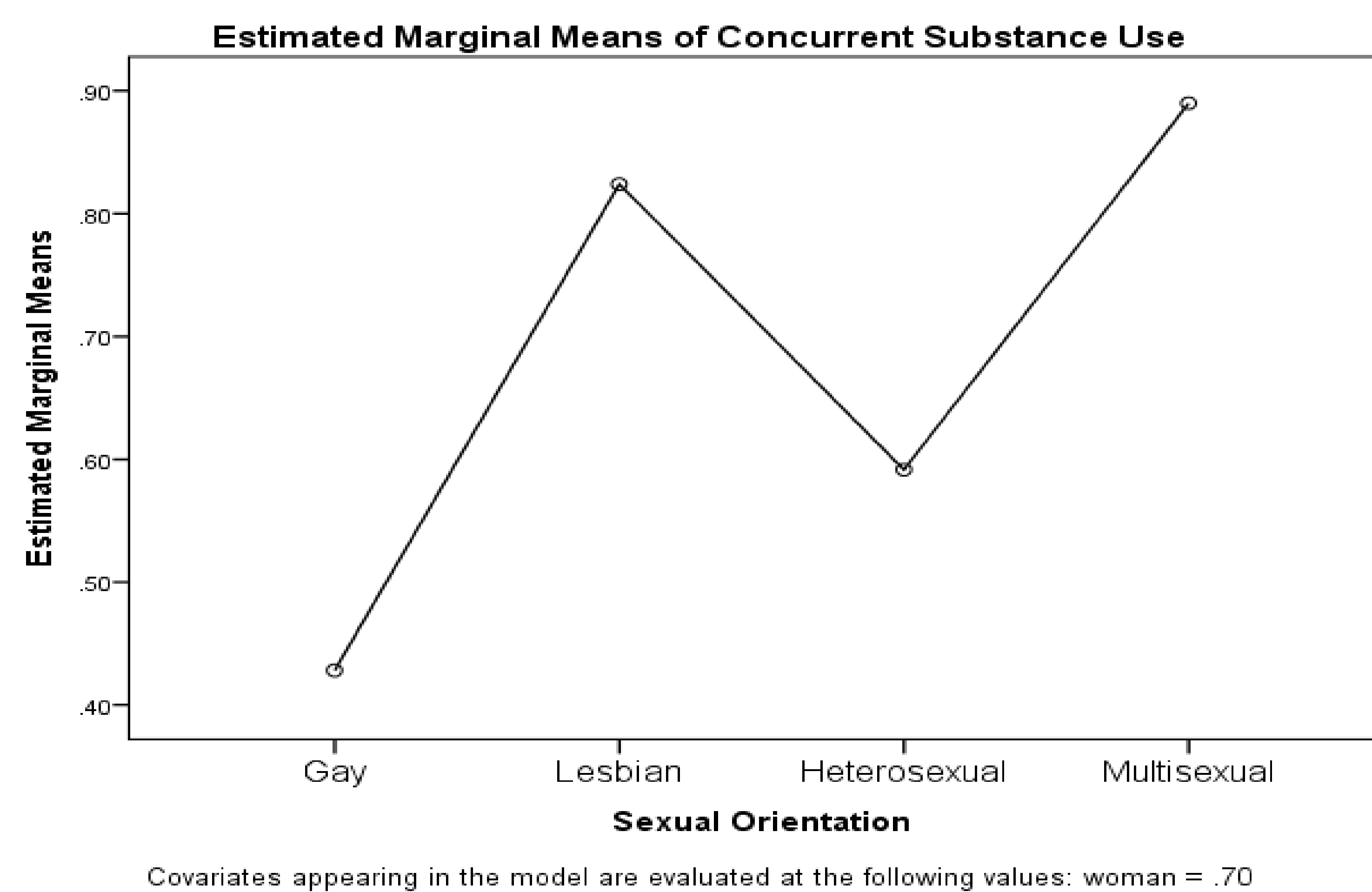


Figure 1. Plot of estimated marginal means of concurrent substance use. Mean concurrent substance use were significantly different between Multisexual and Heterosexual groups.

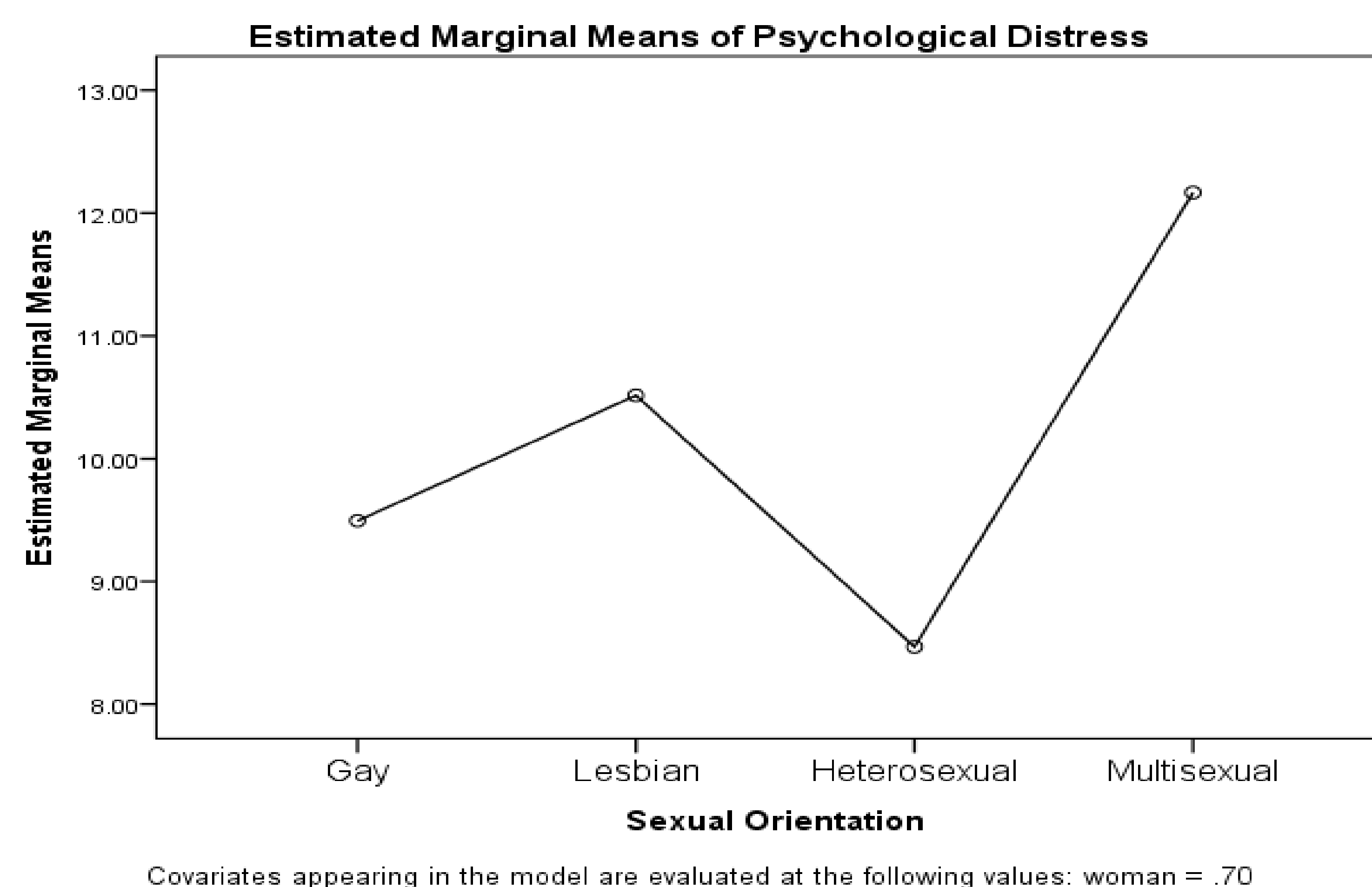


Figure 2. Plot of estimated marginal means of psychological distress scores. Mean psychological distress scores were significantly different between Multisexual and Heterosexual groups

Results

MANCOVA

- One-way MANCOVA results indicated a significant multivariate main effect for sexual orientation (Wilks $\lambda = .945$, $F(6,2942) = 13.952$, $p < .001$).

Follow up ANOVA

- There was a significant difference in concurrent use, $F(4,1524) = 5.065$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .013$; Multisexual reported more concurrent substance use ($M = .891$, $SE = .075$) than Heterosexual ($M = .592$, $SE = .034$).
- Distress was significant, $F(4,1524) = 20.073$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .050$; Multisexual reported higher scores ($M = 12.166$, $SE = .390$) than Heterosexual ($M = 8.466$, $SE = .177$).
- No other significant differences across groups

Discussion

- Multisexual participants reported more concurrent substance use and psychological distress than heterosexual participants
- No other significant differences in this sample
- Clinicians working with Multisexual clients should recognize increased risk and work with clients to develop and implement coping and protective behavioral strategies to reduce risk
- Future studies should explore factors contributing to disparities experienced by Multisexual individuals that may lead to increased risk for substance use.



References



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