

# INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENT VICTIMIZATION, STRESS, & ALCOHOL USE IN SEXUAL MINORITIES

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## BACKGROUND

- **Intimate partner violent victimization (IPV)** includes behaviors within an intimate relationship that cause physical, sexual, or psychological harm; includes physical aggression, sexual coercion/assault, and psychological abuse.
- Significant link between IPV and alcohol use.
- IPV predicts depression, anxiety, PTSD, and **stress**.
- Those experiencing IPV may *drink alcohol to cope* with IPV-related distress.
- Majority of research conducted with heterosexual individuals.
- Equivalent or higher rates of IPV in sexual minority populations compared to heterosexuals.
- Greater risk of injury, depression, anxiety, and behavioral and academic functioning compared to heterosexuals.
- **Sexual minority stress** may contribute to greater risk.

**AIM 1:** Identify whether stress mediates the relationship between two forms of IPV (emotional/physical IPV, sexual orientation-related IPV) and coping with alcohol.

**AIM 2:** Identify whether internalized heterosexism and identity concealment moderate the mediated relationships between two forms of IPV and coping with alcohol via stress.

## METHOD

### Data Source:

- National Couple's Health and Time Study (2020-2021)
- Cohabiting/married same- or different-gender couple in the United States (n = 3,642).

### Measures:

- **Sexual orientation** → identify as gay/lesbian, bisexual, same-gender loving, queer, pansexual, omnisexual, or questioning
- **Emotional/Physical IPV** → Frequency of emotional and physical IPV in current relationship.
- **Sexual Orientation-Related IPV** → Frequency of sexual-orientation-related IPV in current relationship (e.g., "Threatened to 'out' me")
- **Stress** → "Like nothing was going right" "Like there was no escape" "Like just giving up"
- **Coping with Alcohol** → Yes or No

The links between emotional/physical IPV → coping with alcohol and sexual orientation-related IPV → coping with alcohol through stress are significant for sexual minority individuals when internalized homophobia is high, but not moderate or low.

Preliminary findings provide support for the role of sexual minority stress as a risk factor in the link between two forms of IPV and alcohol use.

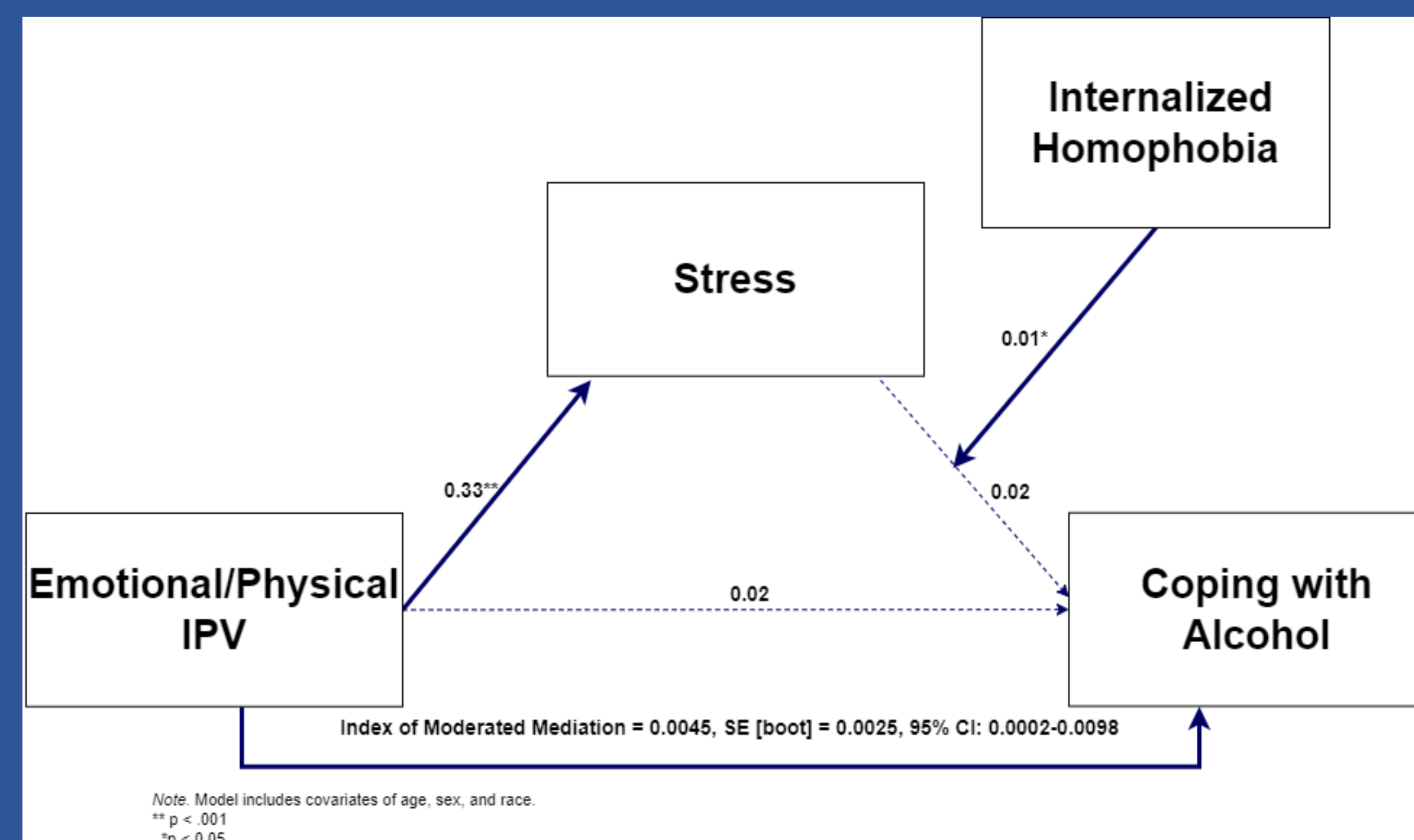


Fig 1. Path analysis of moderated (internalized homophobia) mediated (stress) link between emotional/physical IPV and coping with alcohol.

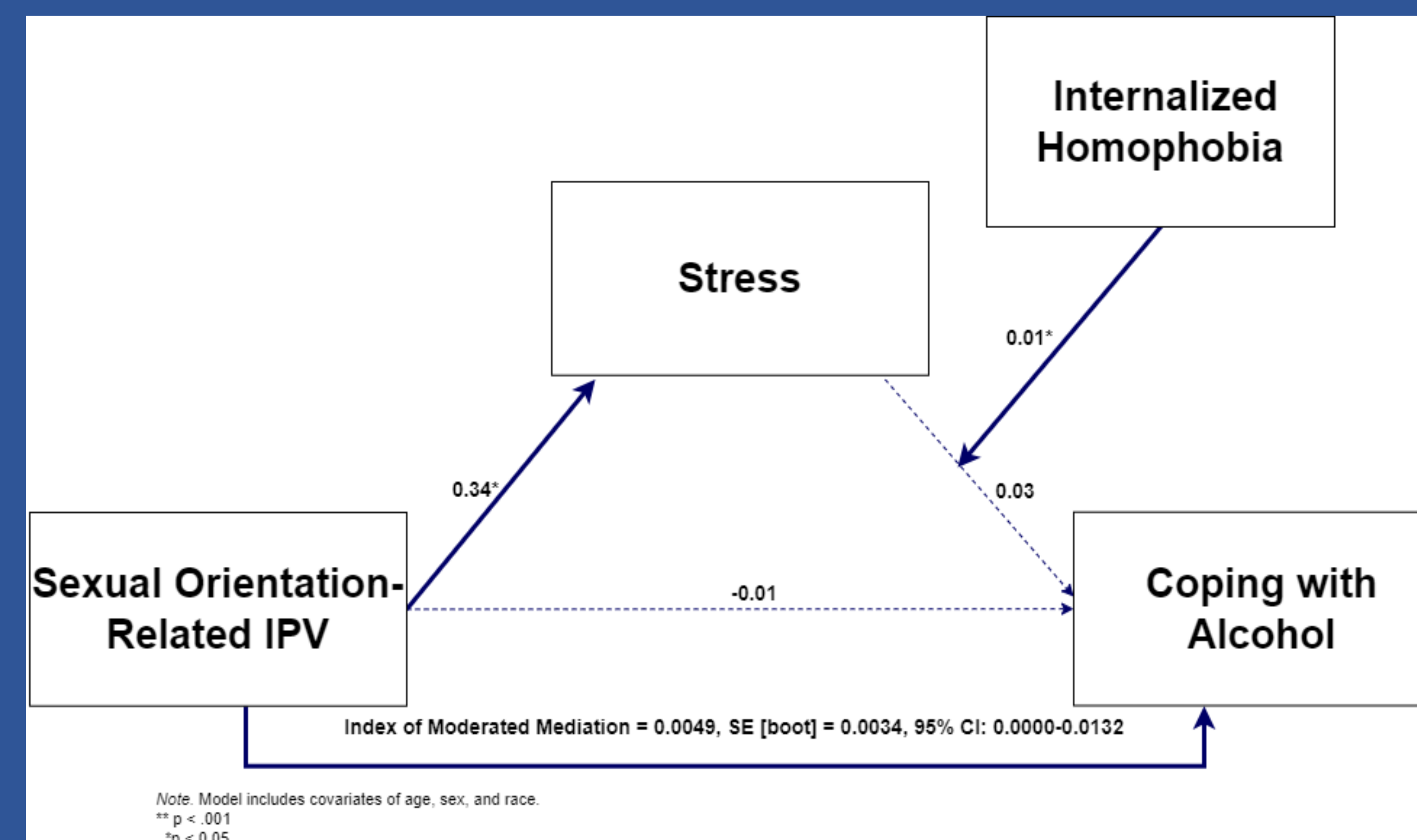


Fig 1. Path analysis of moderated (internalized homophobia) mediated (stress) link between sexual orientation-related IPV and coping with alcohol.

Demographics		n = 1,454
<b>Sex</b>		
Male		48.9% (711)
Female		50.5% (734)
<b>Gender</b>		
Cisgender		92.7% (1,348)
Non-Cisgender		7.3% (106)
<b>Age</b>		
18-34		27.8% (404)
35-50		41.7% (607)
51-69		30.5% (443)
<b>Race</b>		
White		86.9% (1,263)
POC		12.8% (186)
<b>Emotional/Physical IPV</b>		
No		70.2% (1,021)
Yes		29.8% (433)
<b>SO-Related IPV</b>		
No		91.2% (1,326)
Yes		8.8% (128)

## RESULTS

- Stress did not mediate the links between both emotional/physical IPV and sexual orientation-related IPV and coping with alcohol.
- Identity concealment did not moderate the link between stress and coping with alcohol in either IPV model.
- Internalized homophobia did moderate the relationship between stress and coping with alcohol in models with emotional/physical IPV ( $b = 0.014$ ,  $SE = .007$ ,  $p = .04$ , 95% CI [.001, 0.028]) and sexual orientation-related IPV ( $b = 0.014$ ,  $SE = 0.111$ ,  $p = .04$ , 95% CI [.000, 0.028]).
- For both models, stress was positively associated with coping with alcohol when internalized homophobia was high but not moderate or low (see Figures 3 and 4 for graphs of interactions).
- The indirect effect of both forms of IPV on coping with alcohol through stress was moderated by internalized homophobia (see Figures 1 and 2 for Index of Moderated Mediation). These links were significant for sexual minority individuals with high internalized homophobia, but not moderate or low.
- There were no other moderated indirect effects.

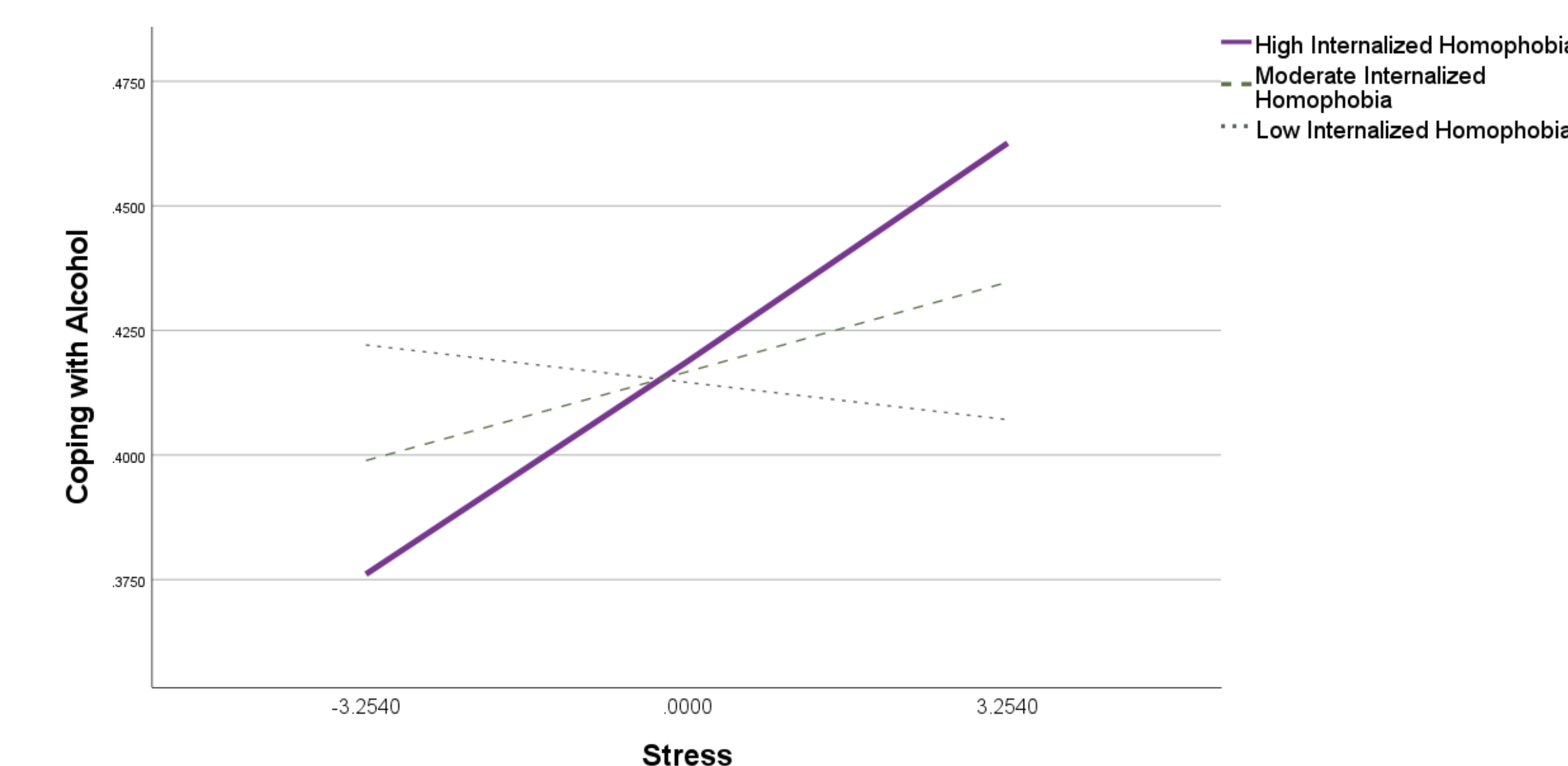


Fig 3. Change in the expected probability of coping with alcohol by stress for internalized homophobia at -1 SD from the mean, the mean, and +1 SD from the mean in model with **emotional/physical IPV**.

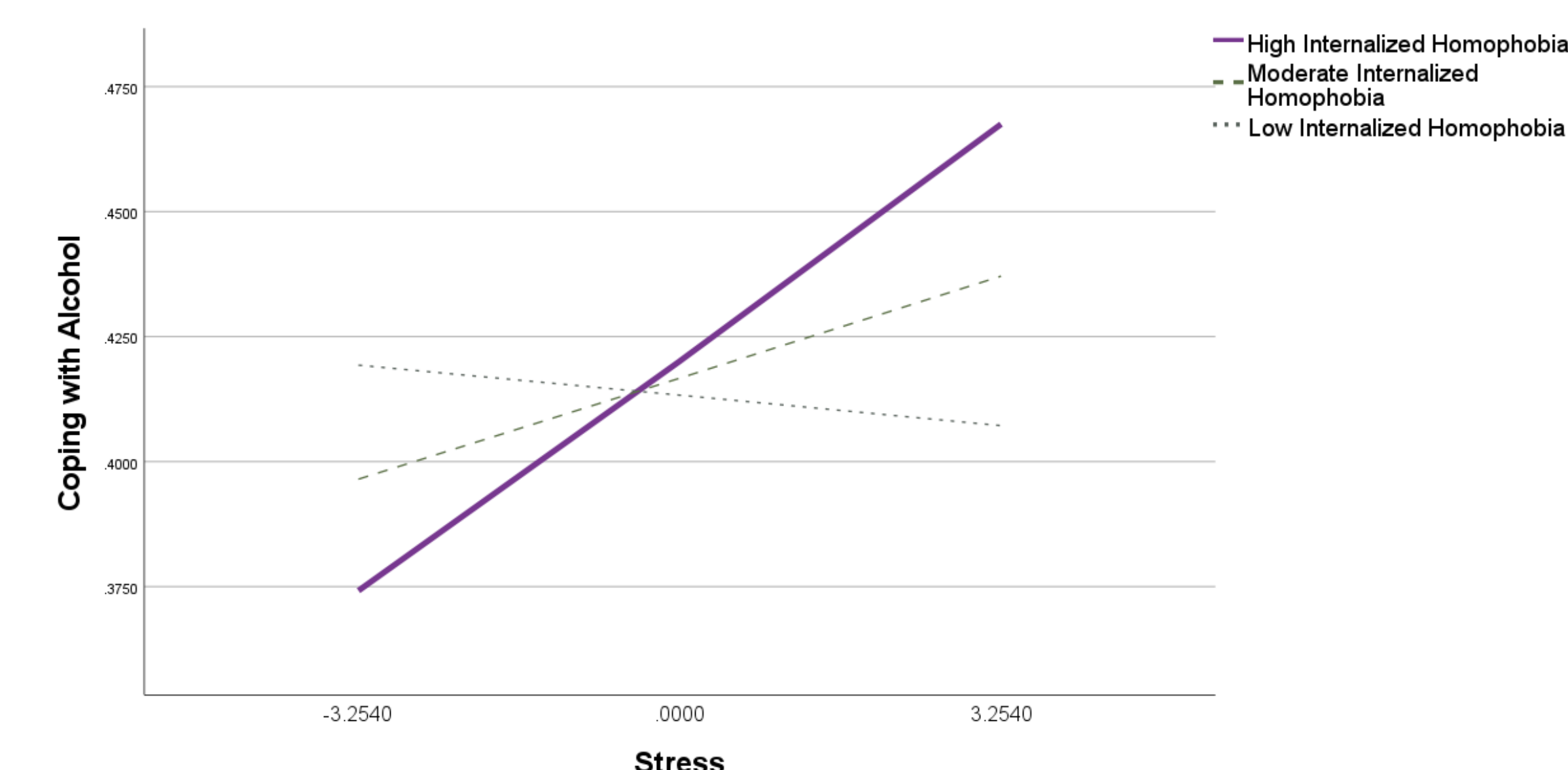


Fig 4. Change in the expected probability of coping with alcohol by stress for internalized homophobia at -1 SD from the mean, the mean, and +1 SD from the mean in model with **sexual orientation-related IPV**.