

# Emotion-Focused Pain-Coping Moderates the Relationship Between Discrimination and HRQoL

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## INTRODUCTION

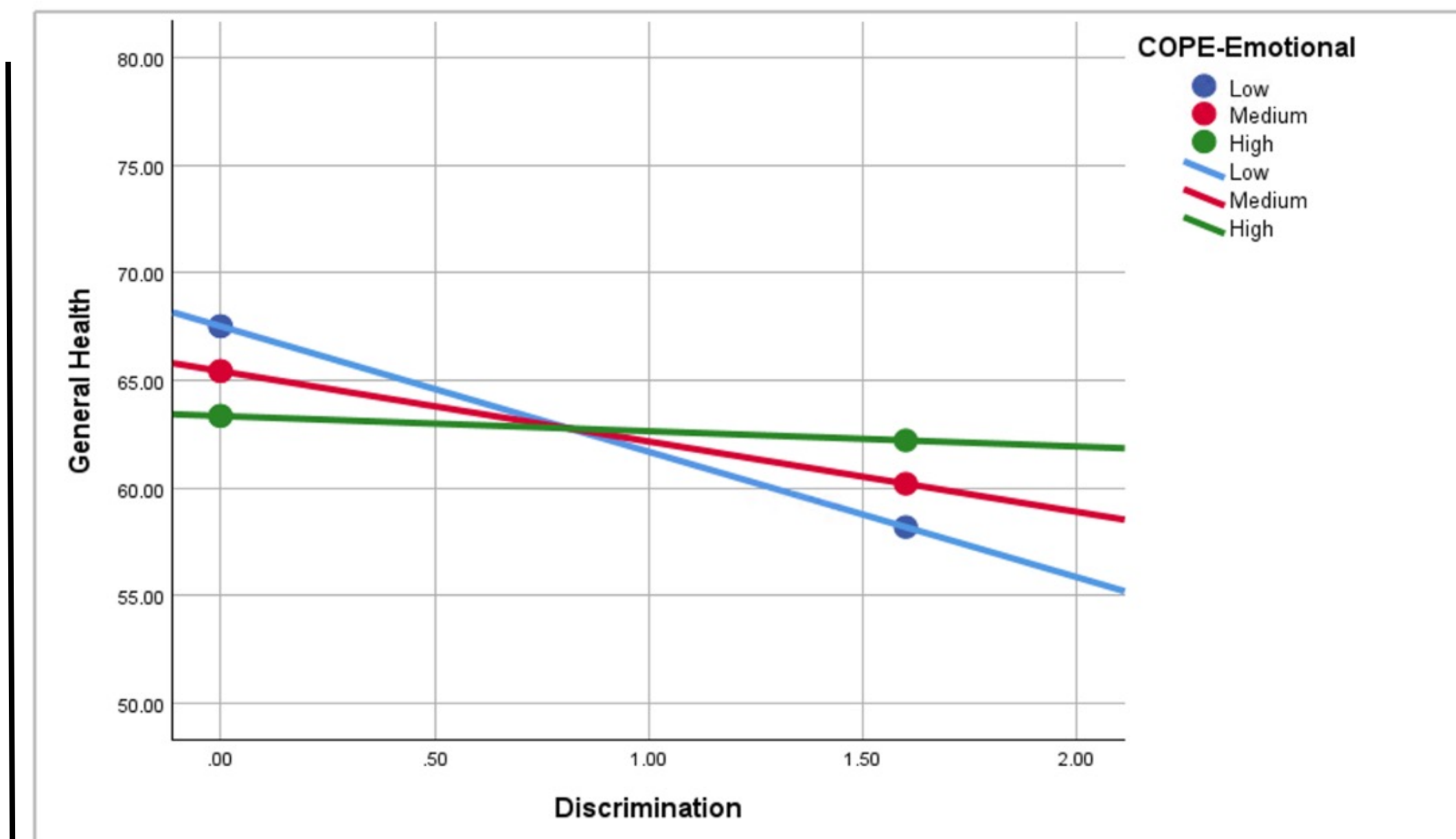
- Chronic Pain is associated with reduced health-related quality of life (HRQoL), and experiences of discrimination can further worsen these outcomes.
- Emerging adults may be particularly vulnerable to the combined effects of pain and social stressors like discrimination.
- Pain-coping strategies (approach, distraction, and emotion focused coping) are potential mechanisms that may influence health outcomes.
- Coping may buffer the negative effects of discrimination.
- We aim to examine whether pain-coping strategies moderate the relationship between discrimination and HRQoL in emerging adults with chronic pain.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

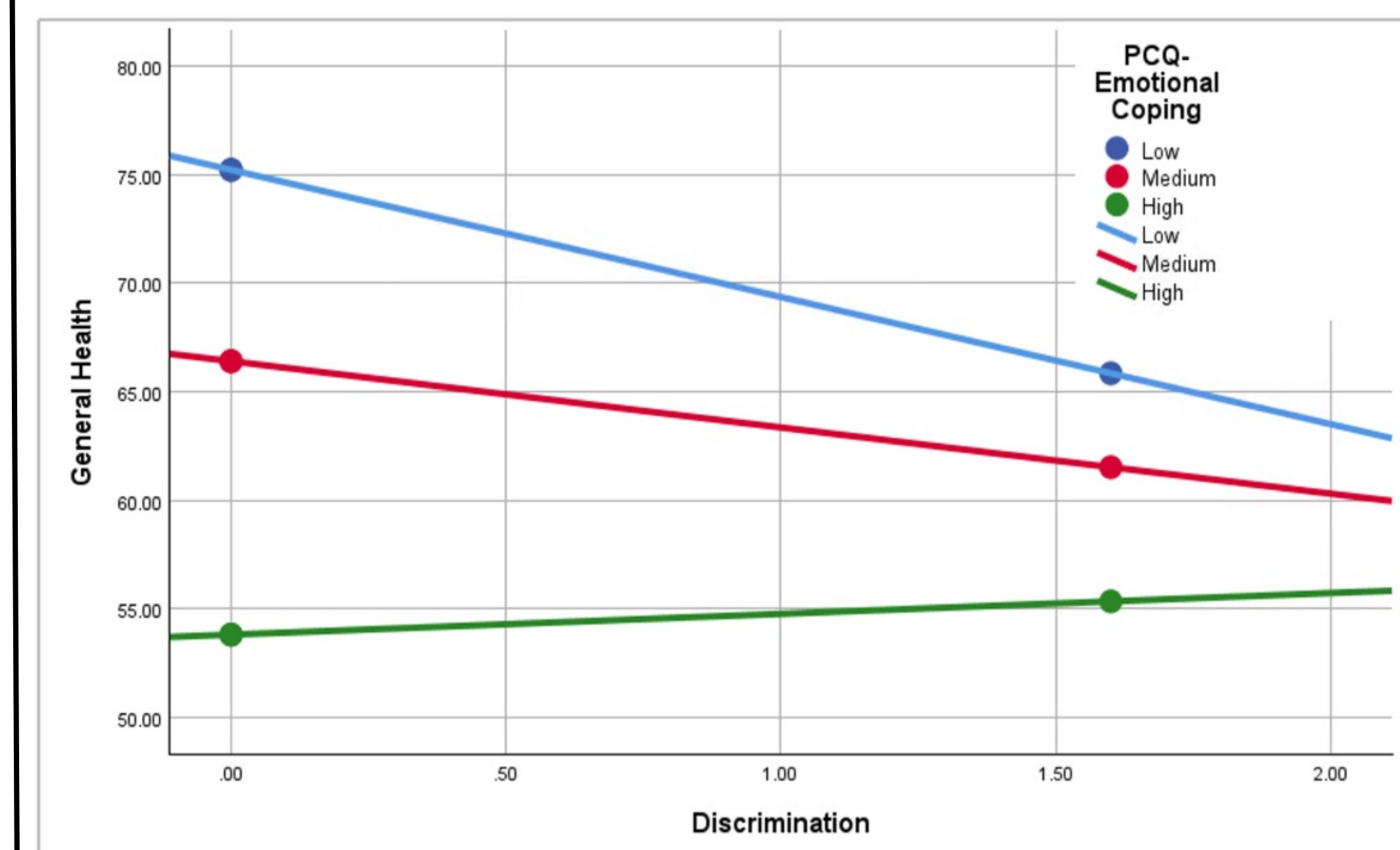
		N (%)
Sex	Females	513 (81.3)
	Males	118 (18.3)
Race	White	454 (71.9)
	Multiracial	53 (8.4)
	Black/African American	48 (7.6)
	Asian/Asian American	56 (8.9)
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	7 (1.1)
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3 (0.5)
Ethnicity	Non-Hispanic	497 (78.8)
	Hispanic	122 (19.3)

## HYPOTHESES

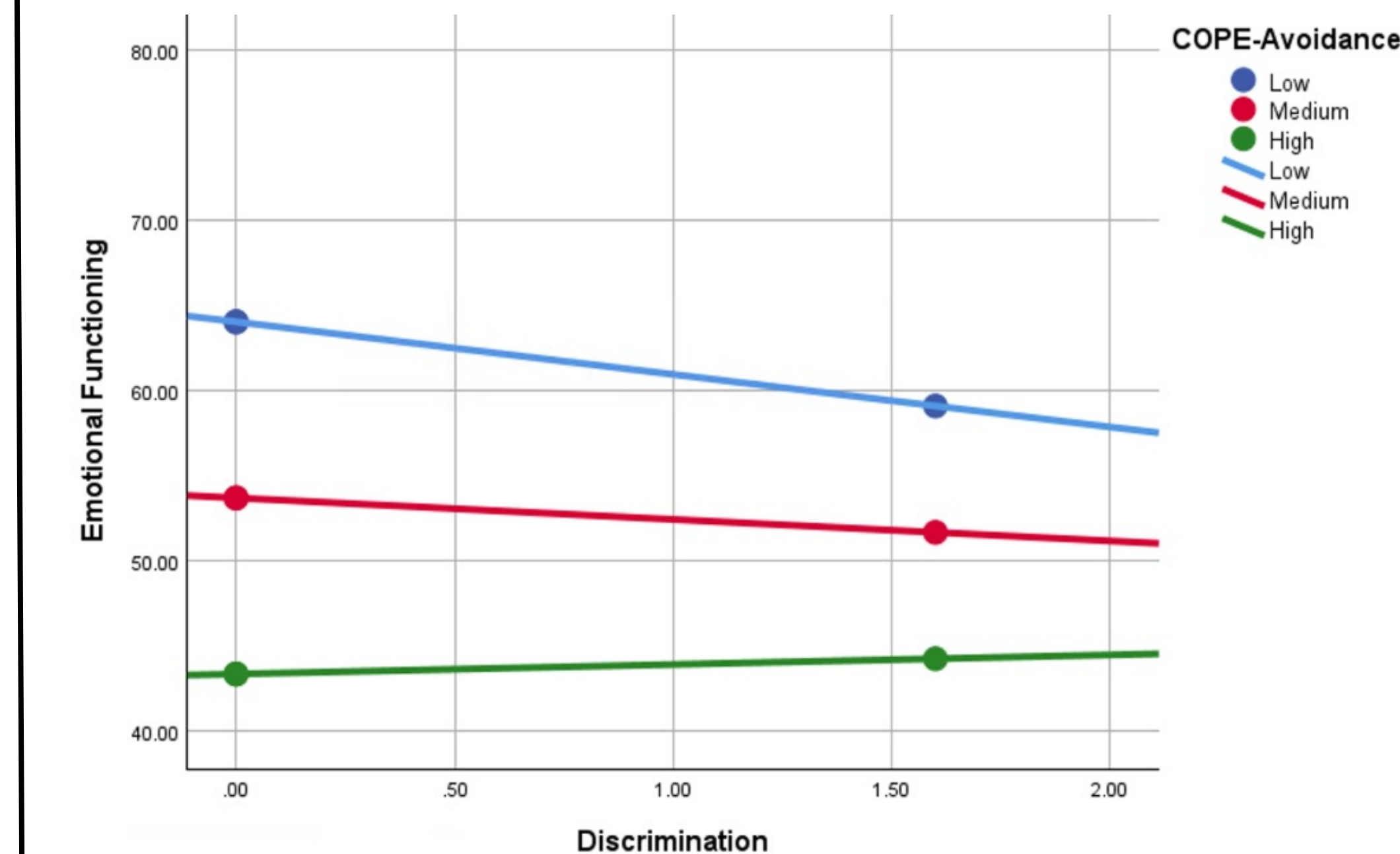
- Individuals living with pain who experience higher levels of discrimination would report poorer HRQoL.
- Individuals who frequently use coping strategies would report better HRQoL, buffering the negative effects of discrimination.



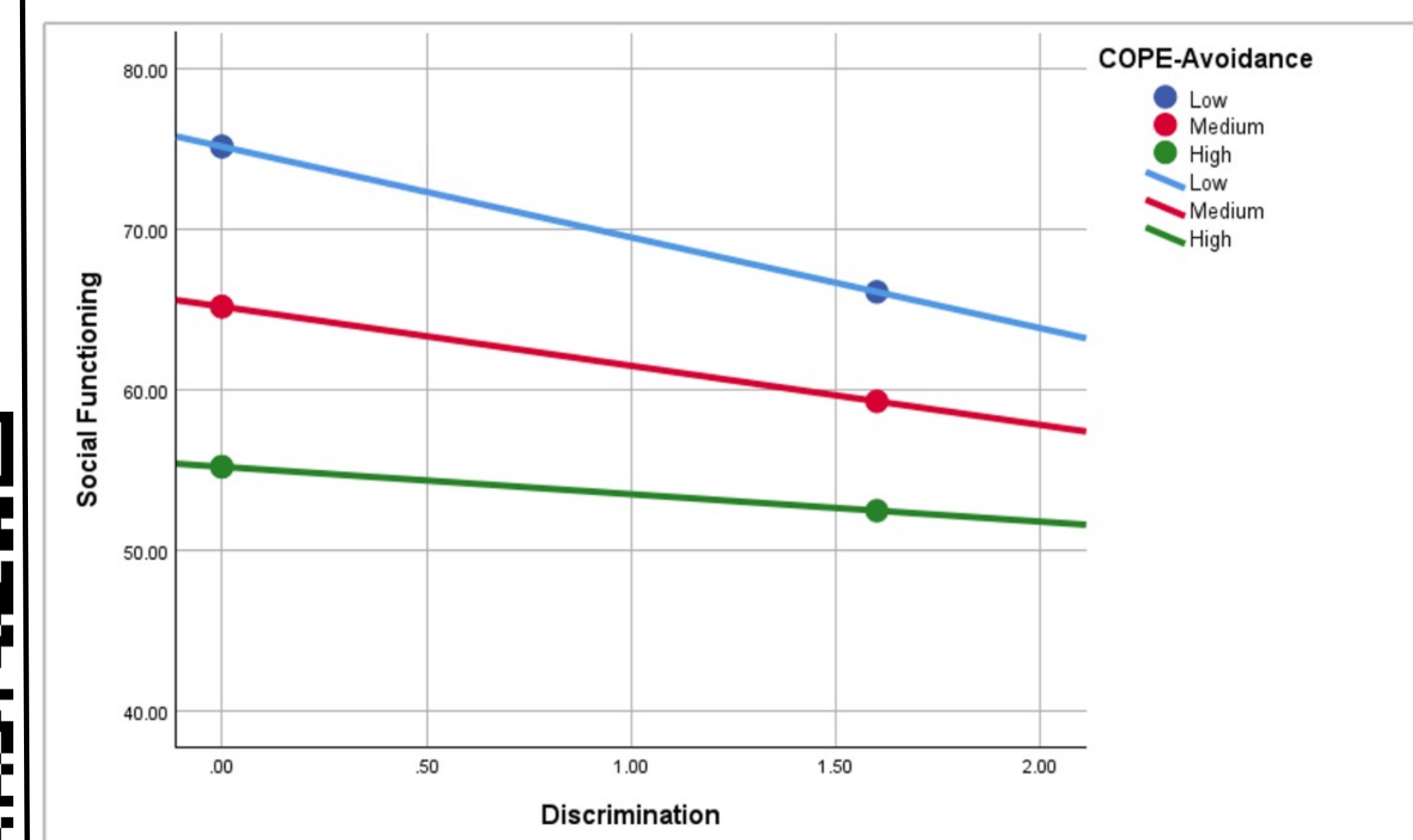
General emotion-focused coping is not itself related to general health, but it seems to buffer the negative effects of discrimination on health



Pain specific emotional coping is not itself related to general health, but it seems to buffer the negative effects of discrimination on health



Lower avoidance coping was associated with better emotional functioning, but showed steeper declines as discrimination increased



Lower avoidance coping was associated with better initial social functioning, but showed steeper declines as discrimination increased

## METHODS

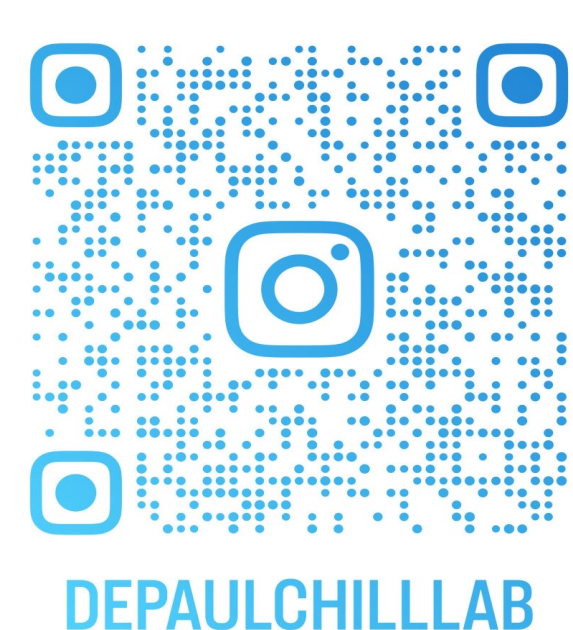
- 631 undergraduate students who self-reported chronic and acute pain
- Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index (ADDI) to measure experiences and impact of discrimination
- Brief COPE to assess strategies to cope with stressors
- Pain Coping Questionnaire (PCQ) to measure pain-specific coping
- Rand SF-36 Health Survey to assess health-related quality of life and general health status

## RESULTS

- Pain-specific emotion-focused coping (PCQ) moderated the relationship between discrimination and general health.
- The greatest negative impact of discrimination on health outcomes was for individuals who demonstrated low-emotion focused pain coping ( $b = 4.01$ ,  $SE = 1.24$ ,  $p = 0.0014$ ).
- Emotion-focused coping for general stressors seemed to buffer the negative effects of discrimination, while lower coping was related to steeper declines in general health with discrimination ( $b = 5.12$ ,  $SE = 2.57$ ,  $p = 0.0473$ ).
- Avoidance-coping moderated the relationship between discrimination and emotional and social functioning, where more avoidance coping was related to worse emotional and social functioning, and less avoidance coping seemed to buffer the effect of discrimination ( $b = 3.65$ ,  $SE = 1.72$ ,  $p = 0.0342$  and  $b = 3.95$ ,  $SE = 2.15$ ,  $p = 0.067$ , respectively).

## DISCUSSION

- Emotion focused coping itself was not associated with general health, but it buffered the negative impact of discrimination.
- None of the coping strategies completely eliminated the impact of discrimination, but emotion-focused coping buffered more of the impact compared to avoidance coping.
- Findings demonstrate that the use of coping strategies can mitigate the negative impacts of discrimination, but there is a complex relationship between discrimination, coping, and HRQoL in this population.
- Findings highlight the complexity of coping, demonstrating that multiple and/or tailored coping strategies are likely needed to support well-being.
- Future work is needed to further unravel this complex relationship to better support improved HRQoL.



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