

The Relationship Between Migraines and Mental Health In Women

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Introduction

- Worldwide, migraines affect approximately 11% of adults worldwide (World Health Organization, 2011).
- Women are three times more likely than men to experience migraines (World Health Organization, 2011).
- Anxiety, depression, trauma, and discrimination contribute to negative migraine characteristics among individuals who suffer from migraine (Chu et al., 2018; Lipton et al., 2020; Peterlin et al., 2007; Rosendale et al., 2022).

Objective

The present study was aimed at investigating the relationship between migraines characteristics, anxiety symptoms, depression symptoms, trauma symptoms, and gender-based discrimination among women.

Methods

Study Design:

- Experimental case-controlled online study design with a migraine condition and a non-migraine condition

Participants:

- Adult women with (n=110) and without migraines (n= 182)

Measures:

- Pre-Treatment Migraine Headache Questionnaire
- The Migraine Disability Assessment Test (MIDAS)
- The PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7)
- Intersectional Discrimination Index (InDI)
- Demographics Questionnaire

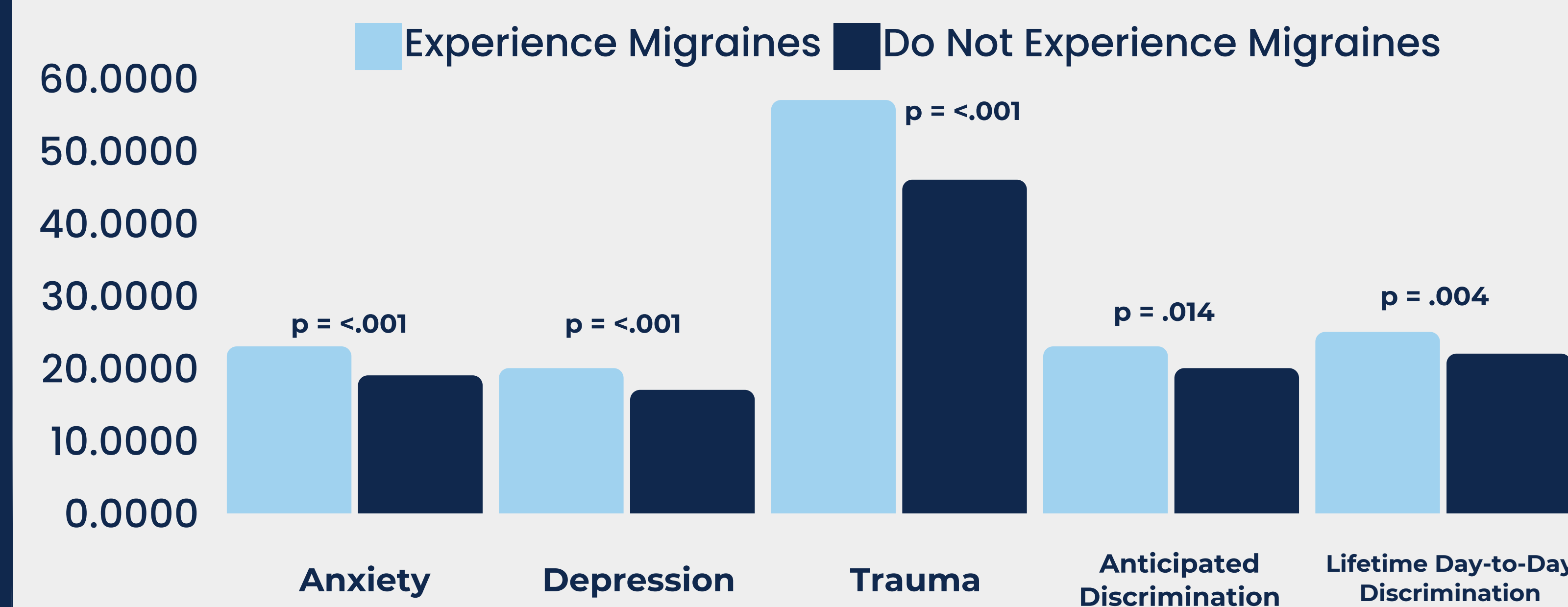
Analyses:

- Chi-square Tests, Bivariate Correlations, independent Samples t-Tests, and Hierarchal Multiple Regressions

Results

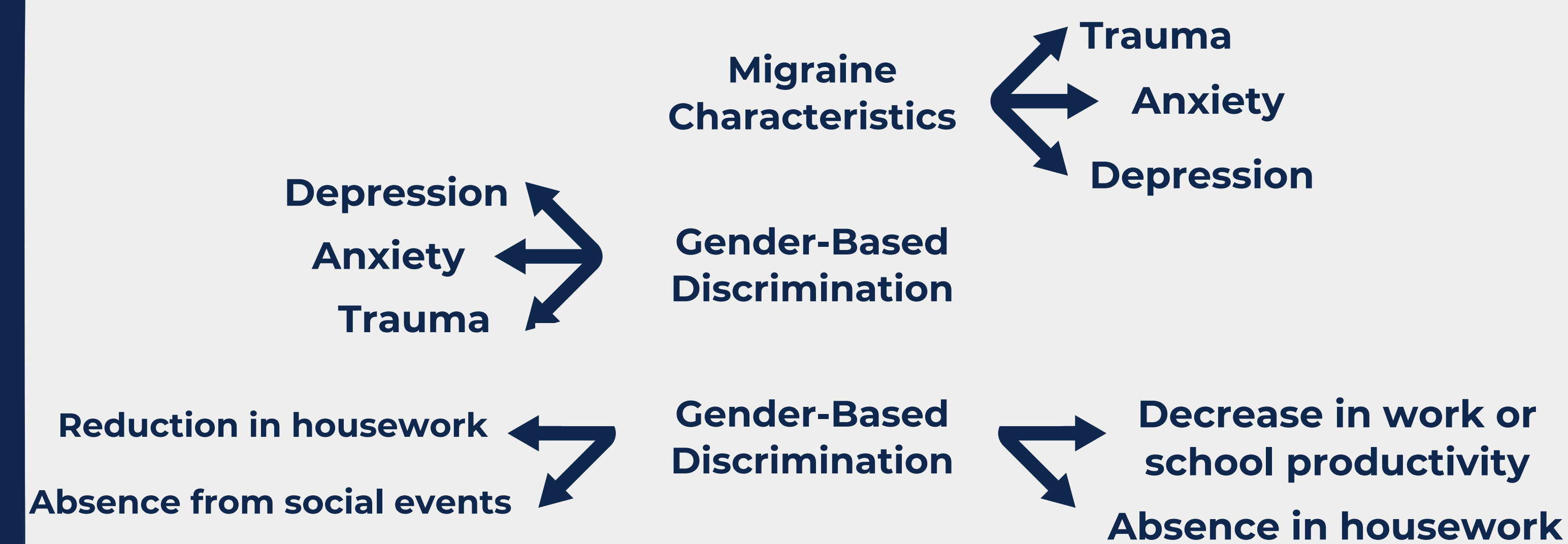
Series of Independent Samples t-tests:

- The migraine group reported significantly higher levels of anxiety, depression and trauma symptoms compared to the non-migraine group. Further, the migraine group scored significantly higher in anticipated discrimination and lifetime day-to-day discrimination compared to the non-migraine group.



Hierarchal Multiple Regressions (Migraine Group):

- Migraine characteristics significantly predicted trauma, anxiety, and depression symptoms, with migraine frequency being a significant predictor.
- Gender-based discrimination significantly predicted depression, anxiety, and trauma symptoms, with lifetime day-to-day discrimination being a significant predictor.
- Gender-based discrimination was a significant predictor of migraine-related decrease in work or school productivity, absence & reduction in housework, and absence from social events, with lifetime day-to-day discrimination being a significant predictor for all outcomes except absence from social events.
- However, gender-based discrimination was not a significant predictor of migraine-related absence from work or school.



Discussion

- In alignment with the present literature, symptoms of anxiety, depression, and trauma were higher within individuals experiencing migraine than those who do not.
- Further, in support of current literature, migraine characteristics (i.e., migraine frequency) influenced the development of symptoms of depression, anxiety, and trauma.
 - Therefore, future research should investigate the interplay between these mental health concepts among individuals living with migraine.
 - In addition, these findings suggest that an improvement of tailored therapeutic mental health interventions for women living with migraines may be needed.
- Gender-based discrimination (i.e., lifetime day-to-day discrimination) predicted mental health outcomes and migraine characteristics, contributing to an emergent field of literature.
 - Consequently, future studies should further examine the role discrimination against women plays on experiences of migraine and healthcare experiences generally.

References

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