



DISCRIMINATION AND COGNITIVE FAILURES

EXAMINING BETWEEN- AND WITHIN-PERSONS ASSOCIATIONS

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OVERVIEW

What impacts does experiencing discrimination have on cognitive health? 253 young adults from Singapore and 744 midlife adults from the US provided lifetime and daily measures to answer this question. Multilevel modelling revealed consistently that experiencing discrimination was associated with poorer cognitive health at both the within- and between-person levels.

BACKGROUND

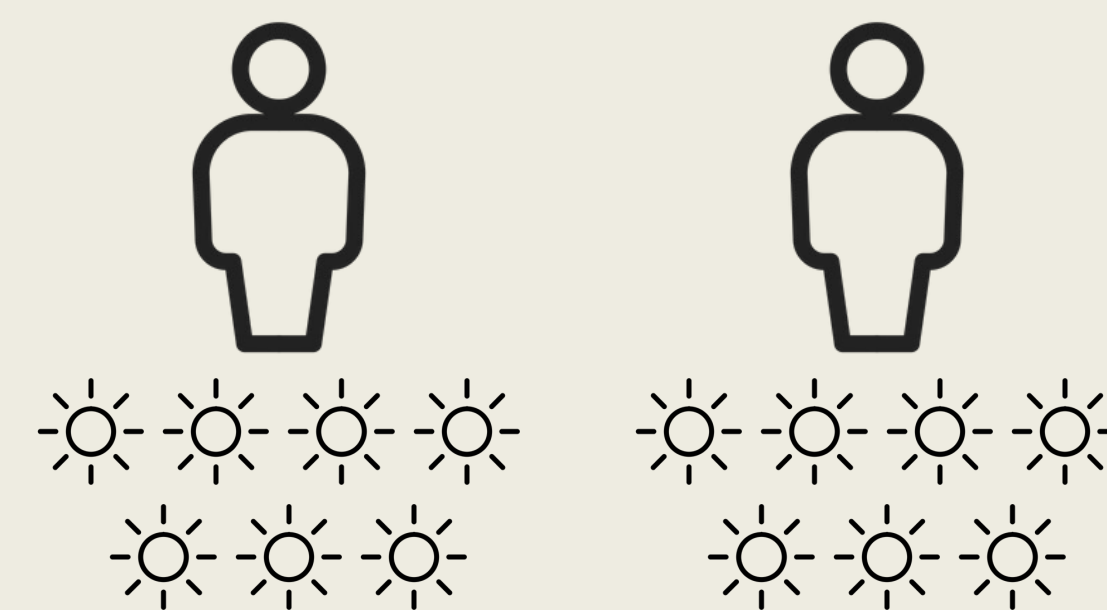
- Experiencing everyday discrimination has significant negative impacts on (physical and mental) wellbeing
- Less is known about how discrimination can affect cognitive health
- Existing works have several limitations:
 - Laboratory settings are artificial and not ecologically valid
 - Retrospective recall of variables results in recall bias during measurement
 - Cross-sectional designs prevent within-person analysis and allow for individual difference confounds

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ANALYSIS PLAN

Multilevel modelling

- Level 1: Days
- Level 2: Participants



Two models

- Unadjusted:** Daily cognitive failure predicted by discrimination
- Adjusted:** + demographic covariates

STUDY 1 IN SINGAPORE

Sample

- 253 young adults
- 19–29yo, 77% female, 75% Chinese

Key Measures

- Lifetime discrimination
 - 9 items (Williams et al., 1997)
 - “I am threatened or harassed”
- Daily cognitive failures
 - 13 items (Lange & Heinz-Martin, 2014)
 - “Did you unintentionally say something twice, at any point of time today?”

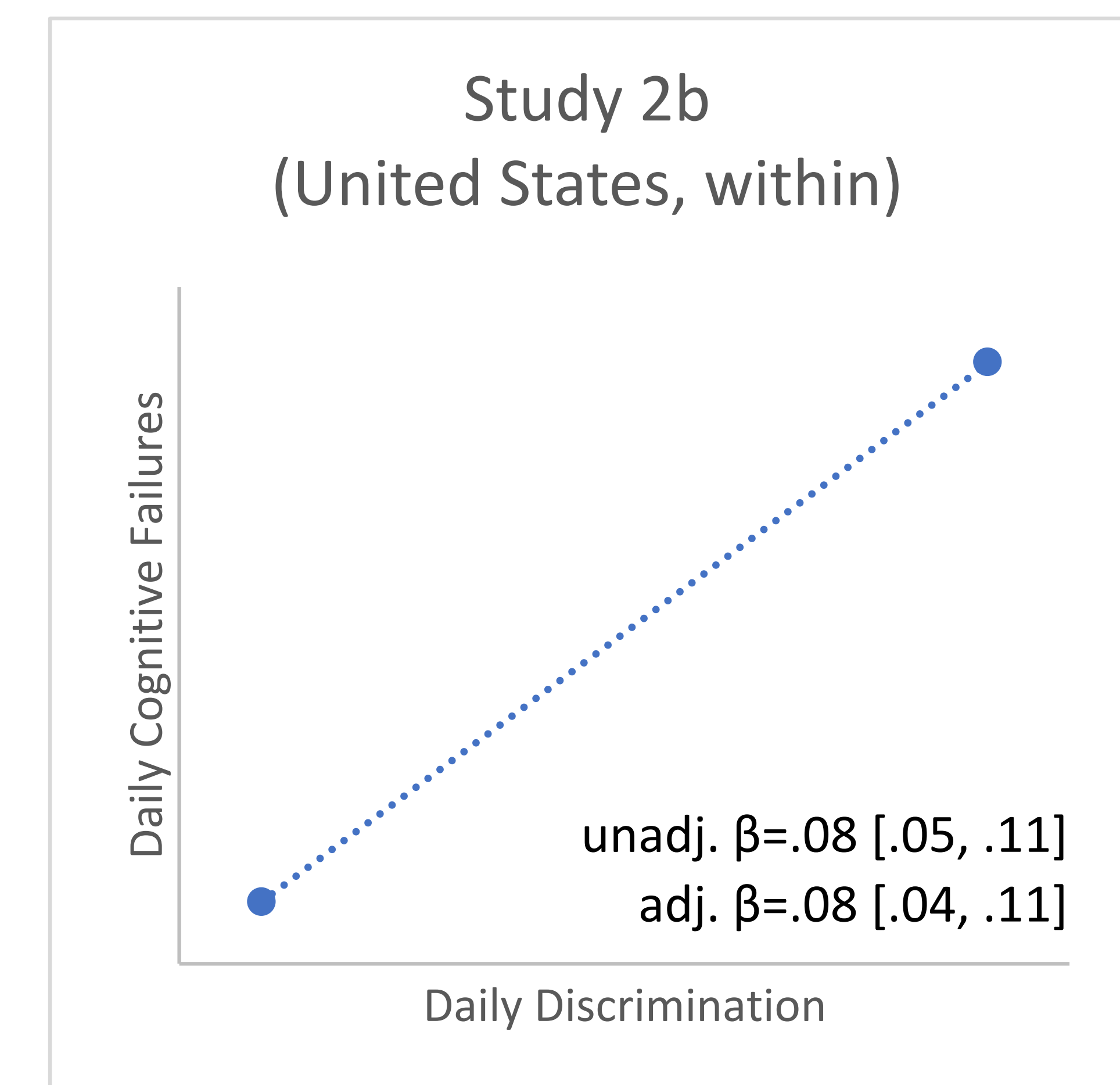
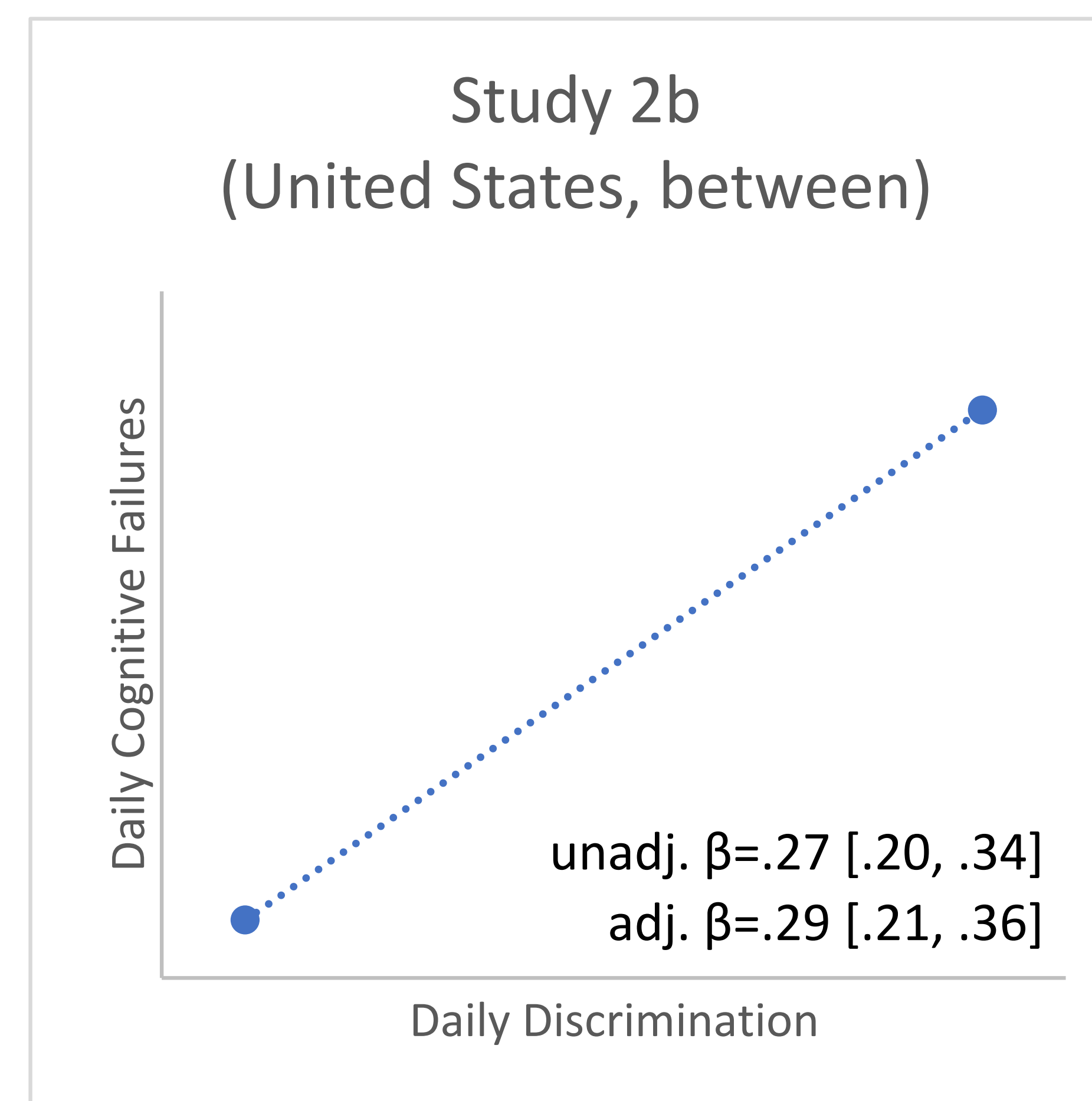
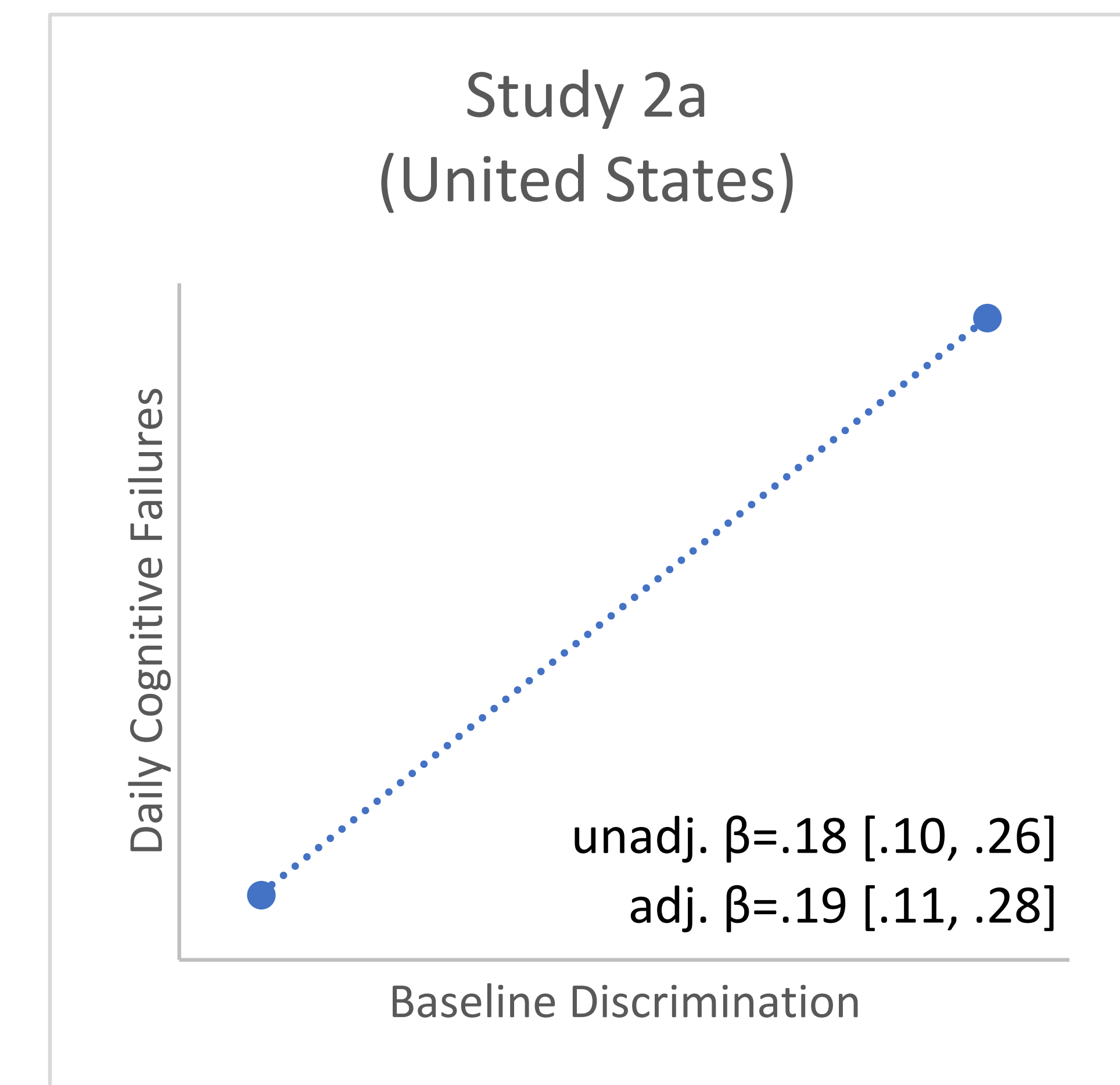
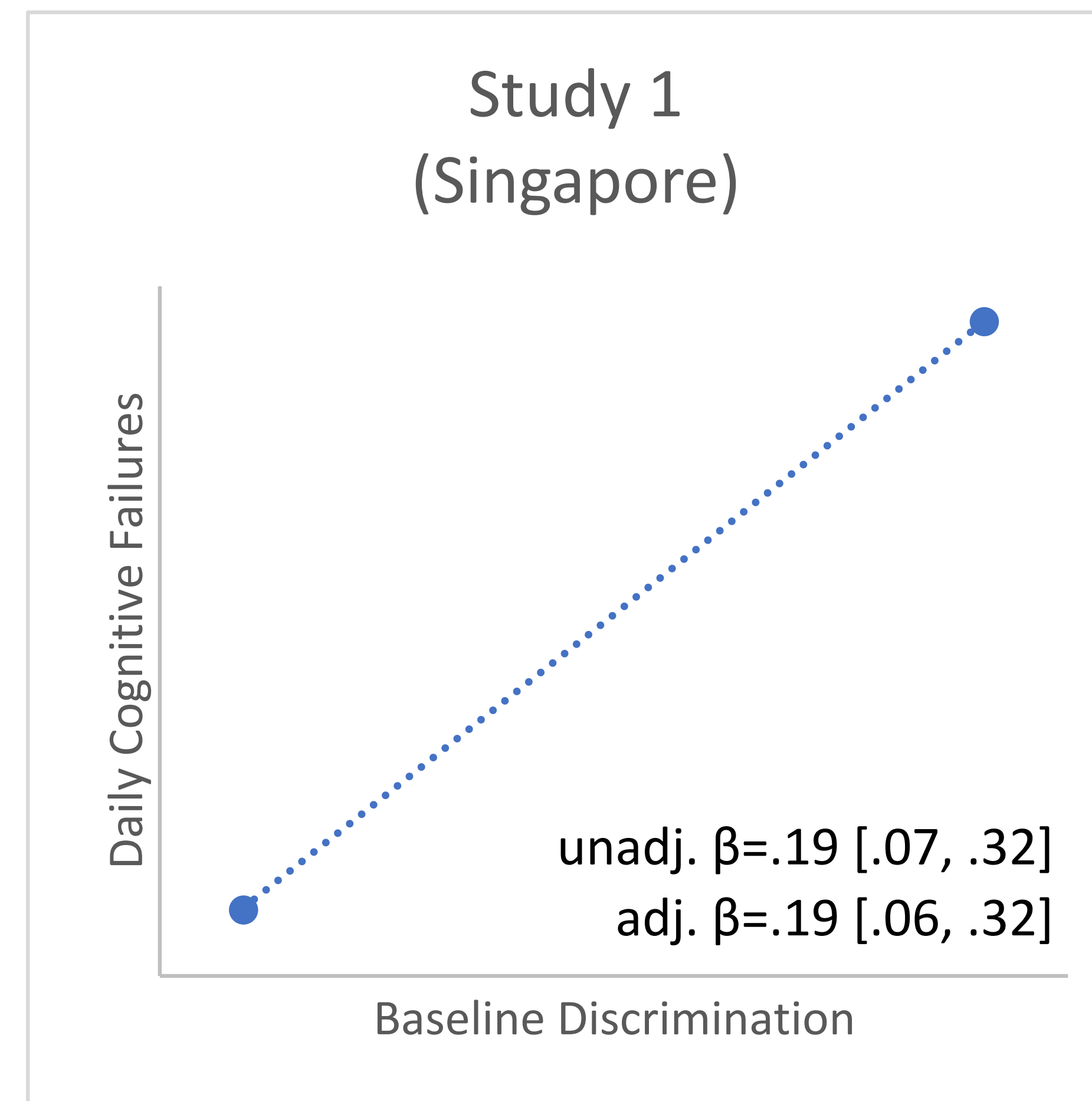
STUDY 2 IN UNITED STATES

Sample

- 744 midlife adults
- 25–75yo, 55% female, 85% White

Key Measures

- Lifetime discrimination (see Study 1)
- Daily discrimination (same as lifetime, asked in daily context)
- Daily cognitive failures
 - 9 items (Sunderland et al., 1983)
 - “Did you forget why you entered a room?”



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Multilevel modelling revealed consistent evidence that experiencing discrimination was associated with poorer cognitive health at both the within- and between-person levels
- These associations remained robust even after controlling for demographic covariates previously found to affect cognitive health
- Experiences of everyday discrimination may lead to poorer daily cognitive functioning regardless of whether discrimination was experienced in a daily context or across the lifespan