



The Association between Pathological Gambling and Gambling Behaviors among Individuals with Generalized Anxiety



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Introduction

- Individuals with anxiety disorders tend to precede gambling disorders and appear to trigger gambling problems (Medeiros, Sampaio, Leppink, Chamberlain, & Grant, 2016).
- Evidence for a positive correlation between anxiety and gambling problems has emerged from a nationally representative sample illustrating that individuals with one or more psychiatric disorders were 17 times more likely to experience gambling disorders than those without any psychiatric disorders (Martin, Usdan, Cremeens, & Vail-Smith, 2014).
- Forecasted by a previous study, 74.3% of cases where respondents with pathological gambling met the criteria for being diagnosed with another lifetime disorder began at an earlier age in their life (Kessler, Hwang, LaBrie, Petukhova, Sampson, Winters & Shaffer, 2008).

Research Questions

- Does the analysis of the data support the previously established hypothesis from prior studies of generalized anxiety disorder influencing gambling behaviors, taking into account the complex interplay between demographic factors and co-occurring psychiatric disorders?
- Furthermore, does socio-economic status significantly influence gambling behaviors among individuals with generalized anxiety disorders?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=43,093) consist of individuals in the United States who are 18 years or older. This included individuals residing in noninstitutionalized group quarters: college dormitories, group homes, group quarters, and dormitories for workers.
- Total sample size in the analysis, 4.5% of participants responded to experiencing lifetime generalized anxiety disorder, and 0.45% reported that they have a pathological gambling disorder. The sample included 42.97% males, and 7.939% of participants were currently covered by Medicaid, which is the variable used to convey socio-economic status.

Measures

- Generalized anxiety was assessed using the DSM-5 mood and anxiety disorders assessed in the Wave 1 NESARC, including major depression, dysthymia, manic episodes, hypomanic episodes, panic disorder, agoraphobia, social phobia, specific phobia, and generalized anxiety disorder.
- Pathological gambling was assessed using questions if the participant is a pathological gambler ("Pathological Gambling - Lifetime"), or persisting moods and behaviors when gambling ("Ever gambled 5+ times in year?" or "Ever gamble to get out of bad mood?"). Respondents who answered "yes" to Lifetime Pathological Gambling were assessed by these questions.

Results

Bivariate

- Chi-Square analysis showed that Generalized Anxiety **was** significantly associated with individuals having Pathological Gambling Disorder ($p = 6.998e-13$).
- There was a greater number of individuals with both Generalized Anxiety and Pathological Gambling (Fig. 1).

Multivariate

- Logistic regression analyses showed that participants with Generalized Anxiety were significantly more likely than those without to develop a Pathological Gambling Disorder (OR 3.80, $p = 2.86e-11$).
- Using Medicaid as the variable to describe socio-economic status, participants with Medicaid were 1.42 times more likely to develop a gambling disorder (OR 1.42, $p=0.12$).
- For those with Generalized Anxiety and on Medicaid, participants are 5.39 times more likely to form a Pathological Gambling Disorder (OR 5.39, $p = 2.158e-08$).

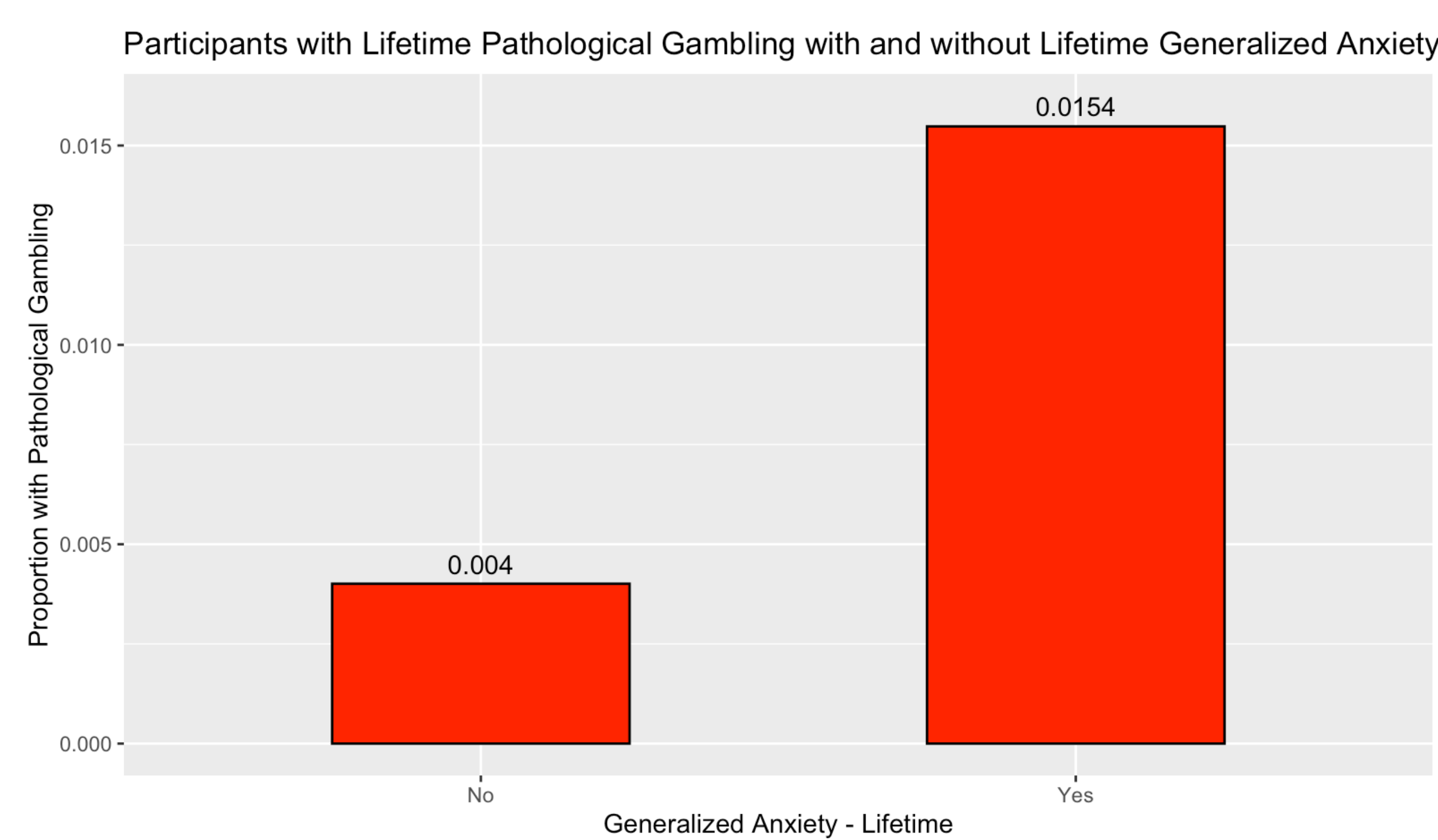


Figure 1: Participants with Lifetime Pathological Gambling with and without Lifetime Generalized Anxiety

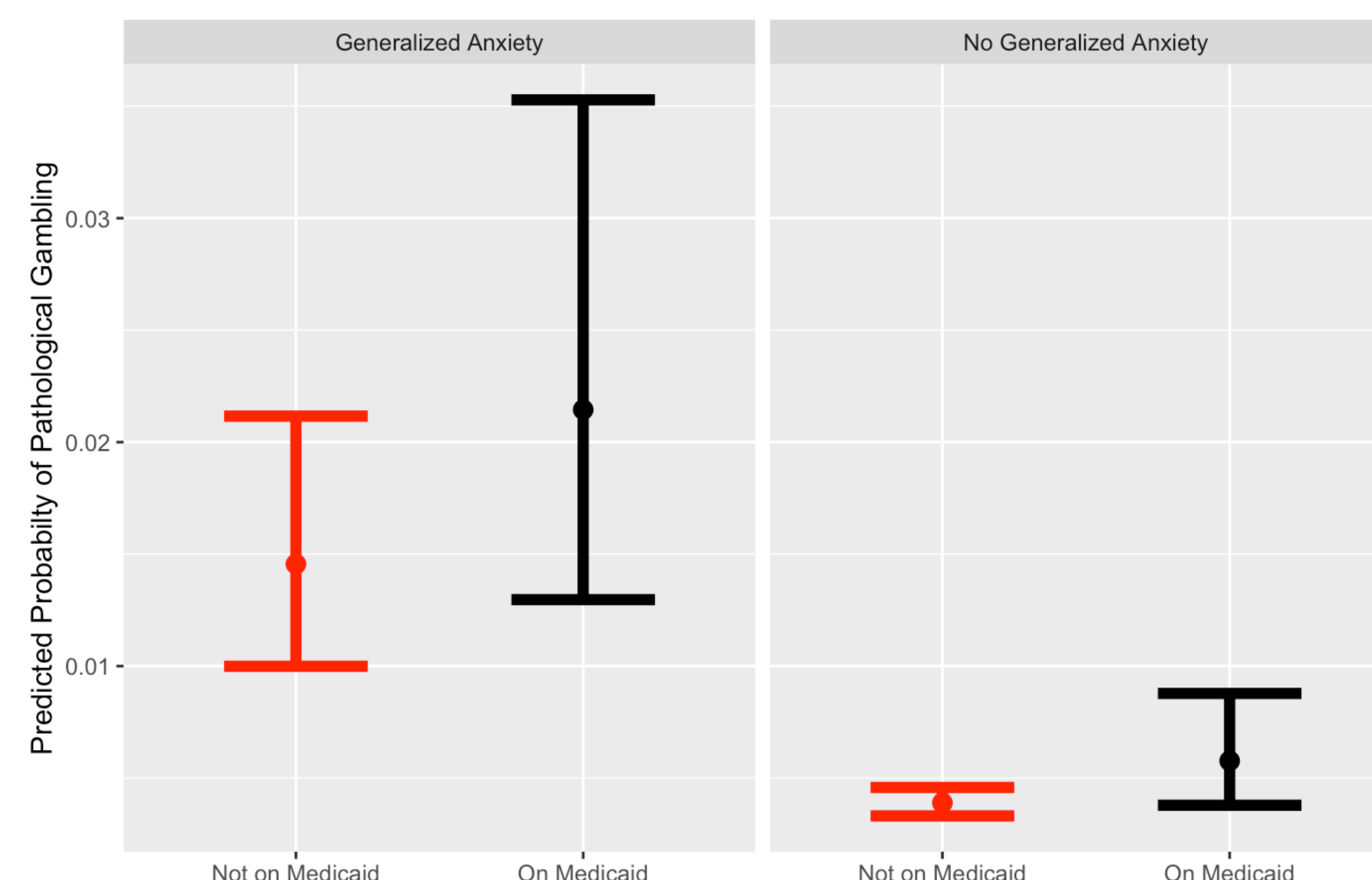


Figure 2: Likelihood of Pathological Gambling with and without Generalized Anxiety and Medicaid status

- Socio-economic status was evaluated using the response to "Currently covered by Medicaid?" with answers "yes" or "no".

Discussion

- Socio-economic status emerged as an influencing factor, with participants from lower socio-economic backgrounds being at a higher risk of developing gambling disorders.
- The analysis highlighted a significant positive correlation between individuals with Generalized Anxiety and the probability of developing gambling disorders
- Future research is necessary to understand how other factors, such as gender and ethnicity, influence the development of gambling disorders for individuals with Generalized Anxiety.

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