Instagram Activism and AYA Depression

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INTRODUCTION

- Adolescent depression is an increasing public health issue with negative and severe health implications.
- Furthermore, along with the rise of social media use over the last two decades, depression and suicidal behaviors have increased.
- Social media offers opportunities to facilitate and amplify effects of activism, thus we have seen a rise in utilizing platforms such as Instagram to promote activism behaviors.
- However, it is not known how engagement with Instagram activism content affects adolescent depression.
- **The purpose of this study is to understand adolescent and young adult engagement with Instagram activism content and the effect this engagement has on their risk for depression.**

METHODS

Recruitment and Setting:
- Adolescents and Young Adults aged 13-25 were recruited to take a Google Form through social media sites and direct messaging

Data Collection:
- The Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ9) was used to identify depression risk among respondents
  - Nine questions on a Likert scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (nearly every day)
  - "In the past two weeks, how often have you had little interest or pleasure in doing things?"
- The Online Activism Scale (OAS) was used to identify engagement tendencies and frequency among respondents
  - Twenty-one questions on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)
  - "I frequently express my social and/or political views on [Instagram]."
- Respondents were also asked to self-identify daily average hours spent on Instagram as well as one to three words describing how Instagram activism content makes them feel.
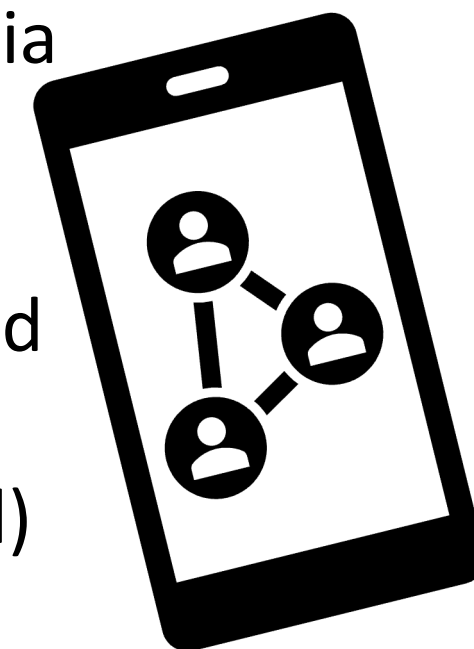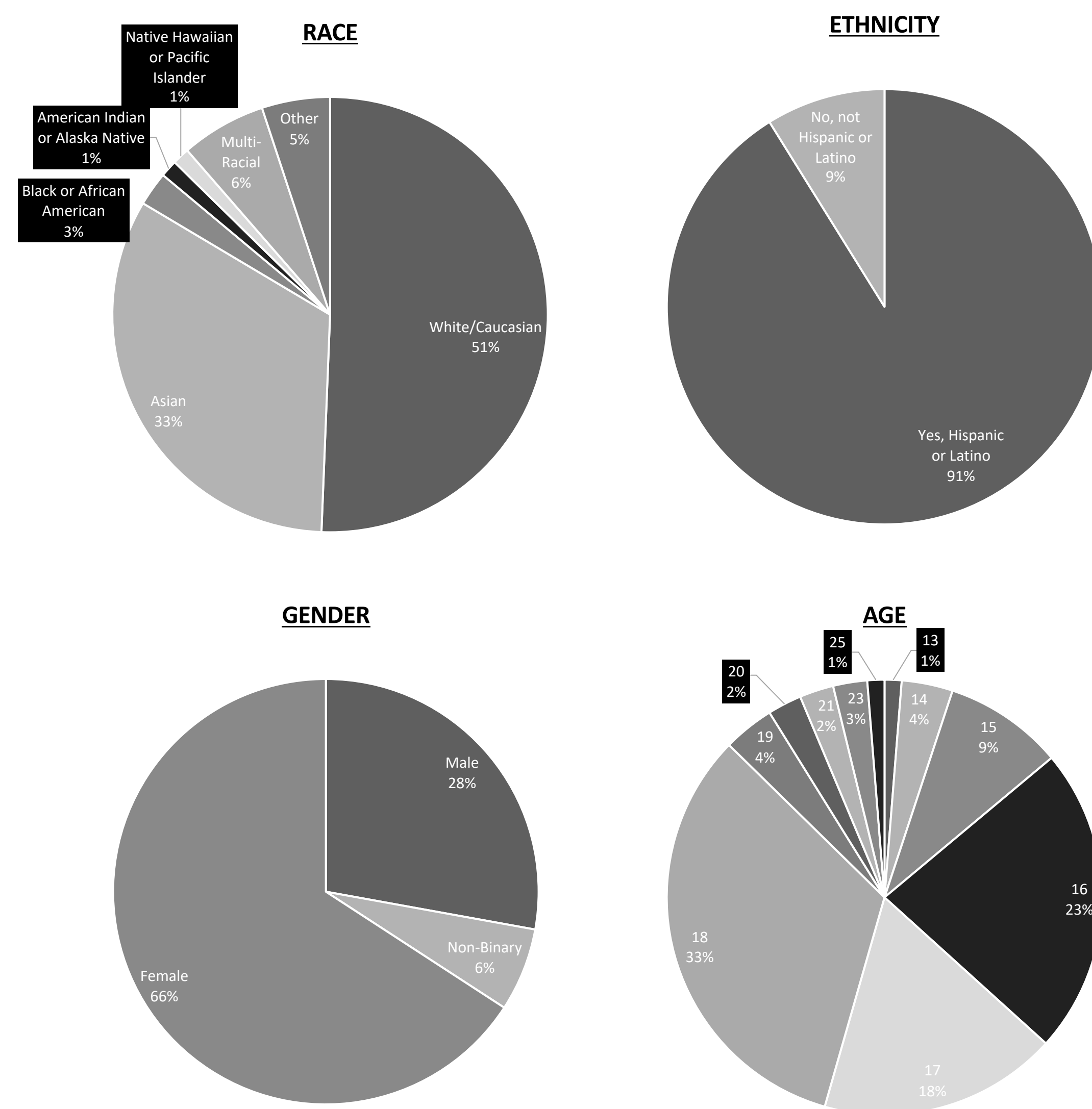
Data Analysis:
- A correlation was used to analyze the relationship between the PHQ9 scores and OAS scores.
- Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count 2015 (LIWC) was used to analyze short answer responses of respondents' attitudes and feelings
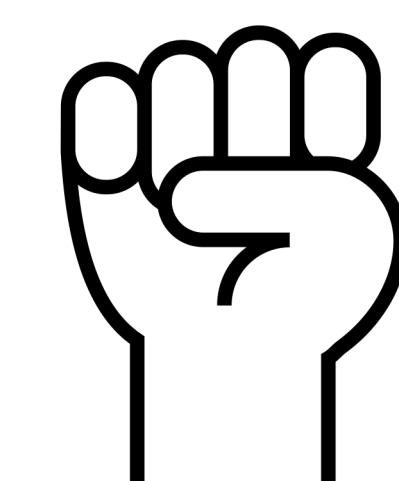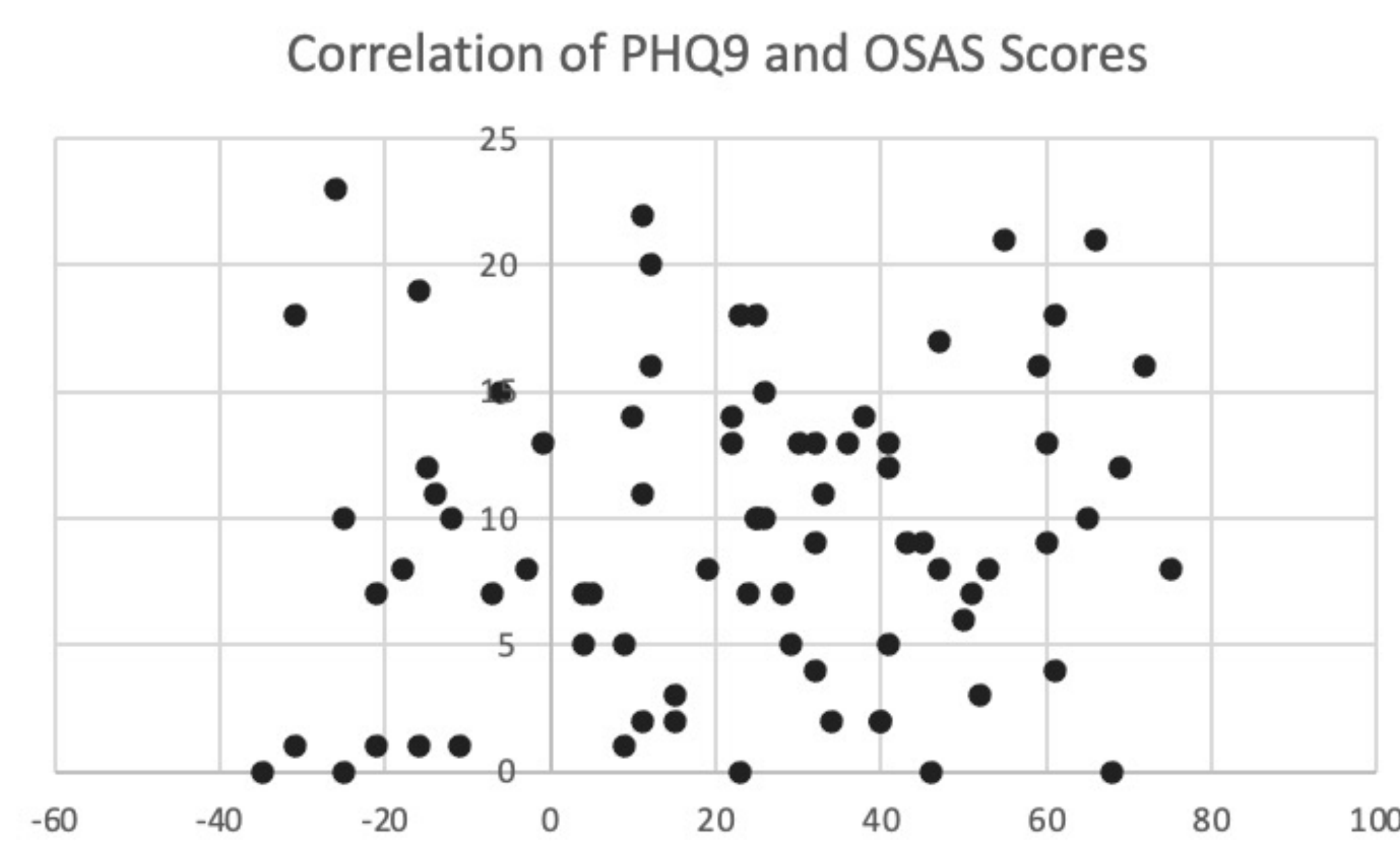
RESULTS

Population Sample
- Total Survey Respondents: 83 individuals
- Survey Responses Analyzed: 79 individuals
- Respondents were excluded due to being over the age demographic (2) or having repeated the survey (1)
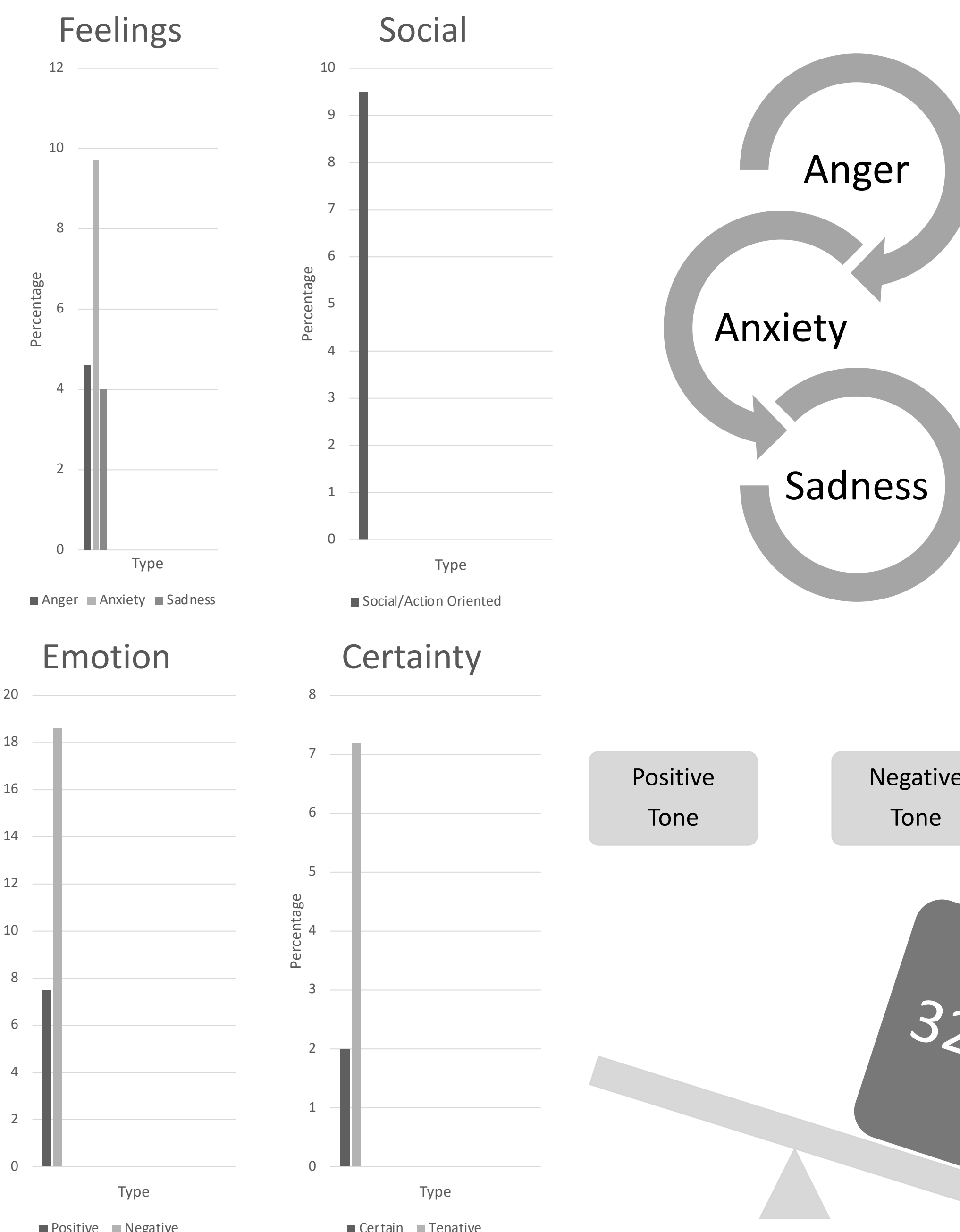

RACE — White/Caucasian 51%, Asian 33%, Black or African American 3%, American Indian or Alaska Native 1%, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 1%, Multi-Racial 6%, Other 5%

ETHNICITY — Yes, Hispanic or Latino 91%, No, not Hispanic or Latino 9%

GENDER — Female 66%, Male 28%, Non-Binary 6%

AGE — 13 3%, 15 9%, 16 23%, 17 16%, 18 33%, 4%, 2%, 4%, 22 1%, 25 1%

Correlation between PHQ-9 and OSAS scores
- Pearson correlation: 0.114
- p-value= 0.319

Correlation of PHQ9 and OSAS Scores

RESULTS

Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count Analysis of Instagram Activism Attitudes & Feelings

Feelings — Anger, Anxiety, Sadness

Social — Social/Action Oriented

Anger → Anxiety → Sadness

Emotion — Positive, Negative

Certainty — Certain, Tentative

Positive Tone / Negative Tone

32%

CONCLUSIONS

Key Findings
- The Pearson's correlation test did not find a significant association between OSAS scores and PHQ-9 scores (p = .319)
- 18.6% of words were associated with negative emotions followed by 7.5% of words associated with positive emotions
- 9.7% of words were associated with anxiety followed by 4.6% associated with anger and 4% associated with sadness
- 9.5% of words were associated with social processes and action-oriented words
- 7.3% of words were associated with tentative feelings followed by 2% of words associated with certain feelings
- Average tone was 32% (negative)

Limitations
- Majority White/Caucasian & Non-Hispanic/Latino
- Majority females between the ages of 16-18
- No transgender representation
- Sample size not representative of population: too small/niche

Application
- Run a study to see if there is a correlation between Instagram Activism and anxiety
- Conduct a study with a larger sample population
- Identify another possible corollary for depression

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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