

Asian-American and European-American college students differ in their daily experiences of depression

Cultural variability in sociobehavioral correlates of depression: A daily diary investigation

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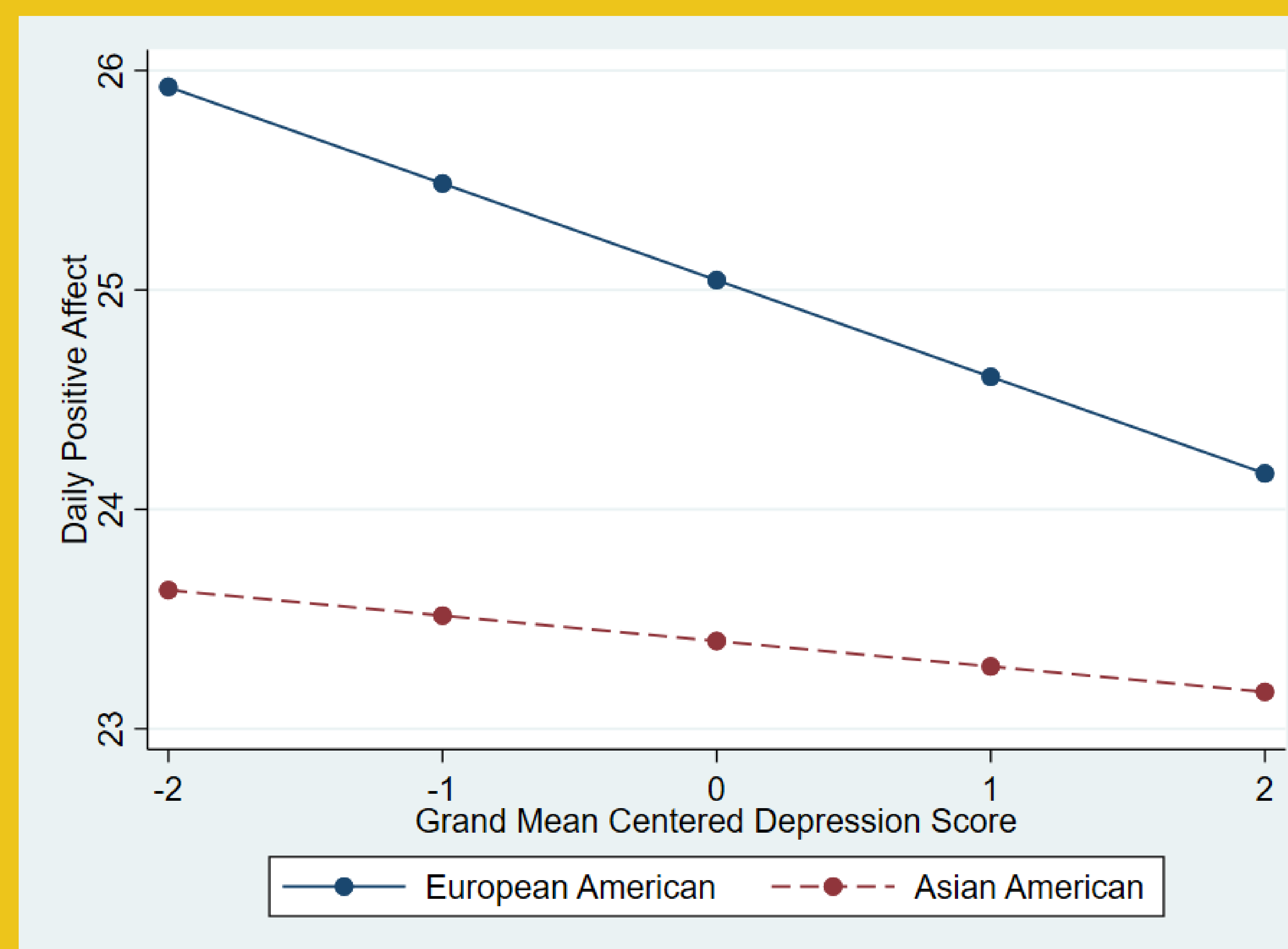
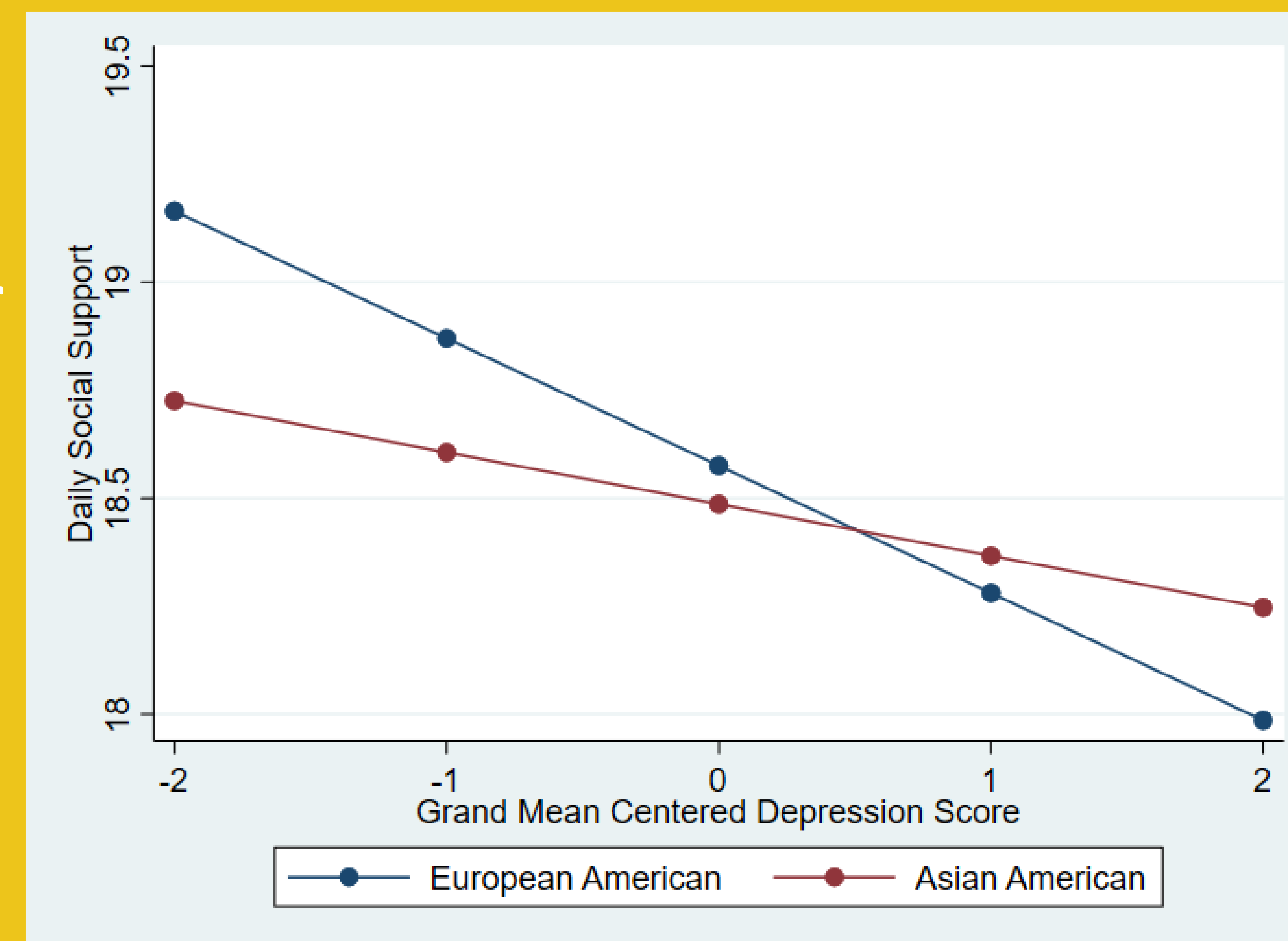
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BACKGROUND: Presentations of depressive symptoms vary across Asian versus Western cultural contexts (Kalibatseva & Leong, 2011; Ryder & Chentsova-Dutton, 2012). Correlates of depression are time-varying and context-dependent. Yet, few studies have examined variations in the sociobehavioral correlates of depression in these two groups with an ecological framework.

METHODS

- Sample of 56 Asian-American (AA) and 38 European-American (EA) college students (Total $N = 94$).
- CES-D completed at baseline.
- Perceived social support, positive/negative mood, and withdrawal behaviors were measured daily for 14 days.
- Data analyzed with hierarchical linear modeling (HLM).

Depression had **stronger** negative effects on daily social support for EAs than for AAs



Depression had a negative effect on daily positive affect for EAs, but not for AAs

RESULTS

- Higher levels of baseline depression were associated with:
 - Lower levels of daily perceived social support ($b = -0.29$, $SE = 0.04$, $p < .001$),
 - Lower levels of daily positive affect ($b = -0.44$, $SE = 0.12$, $p < .001$),
 - Higher levels of daily negative affect ($b = 0.28$, $SE = 0.07$, $p < .001$)
 - Higher likelihood of endorsing withdrawal behaviors ($b = 0.07$, $SE = 0.03$, $p < .05$).
- Ethnicity significantly moderated the effects of depression on perceived social support ($b = 0.18$, $SE = 0.05$, $p < .001$), such that:
 - depression predicted reduced perceptions of social support **more strongly** for European Americans ($b = -0.29$, $SE = 0.04$, $p < .001$) than Asian Americans ($b = -0.11$, $SE = 0.03$, $p < .001$).
- Ethnicity also moderated the effect of depression on positive affect ($b = 0.32$, $SE = 0.15$, $p < .05$), such that:
 - depression predicted reduced positive affect for European Americans ($b = -0.44$, $SE = 0.12$, $p < .001$), but not Asian Americans ($b = -0.12$, $SE = 0.10$, $p = .24$).

IMPLICATIONS:

Results support previous findings on differences in the experience of depression in Asian-American vs European-American populations and have implications for assessment and intervention for depressed mood in Asian American populations.