

University of Mary Washington

Eagle Scholar

Research and Creativity Symposium

Research Symposia

4-5-2022

Evaluating Differences in Mental Health Outcomes in the Transgender Community

Elizabeth Wooten

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.umw.edu/rcd>



Part of the [Psychology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Wooten, Elizabeth, "Evaluating Differences in Mental Health Outcomes in the Transgender Community" (2022). *Research and Creativity Symposium*. 132.

<https://scholar.umw.edu/rcd/132>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Research Symposia at Eagle Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research and Creativity Symposium by an authorized administrator of Eagle Scholar. For more information, please contact archives@umw.edu.



Evaluating Differences in Mental Health Outcomes in the Transgender Community

Elizabeth Wooten

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Laura Wilson



INTRODUCTION

- According to the 2015 United States Transgender Survey, transgender people experience disproportionate rates of marginalization, harassment, and violence (James, 2016).
- These experiences are associated with greater risk and prevalence of negative mental health outcomes.
- In the existing literature, it has been found that there are some differences between transgender men and transgender women in mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder. These results have been mixed.
 - In international studies, trans men were found more likely to have anxiety and depression (Tan et al., 2020). However, US studies have found trans women more likely to have anxiety and depression. (Bockting et al., 2013).
 - Trans women were found more likely to have posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Reisner et al., 2016).

- I hypothesized that trans women would report higher rates of depression, anxiety, and PTSD.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

- 116 participants found and paid through Prolific
 - Average Age: 26 years old
 - 81% White/Caucasian
- Trans Women: $n = 35$
- Trans Men: $n = 81$

Procedure

- Participants were asked to answer a series of surveys on mental health, including depression, anxiety, and PTSD.
- Conducted on Qualtrics remotely; participants completed survey on their own time.

Measures

- **GAD-7** (Spitzer et al., 2006): Higher scores reflect higher symptoms of anxiety.
 - Over the last two weeks
- **PHQ-9** (Kroenke et al., 2001): Higher scores reflect higher symptoms of depression.
 - Over the last two weeks
- **PCL-5** for the DSM-V (Blevins et al., 2015): Higher scores reflect higher symptoms of PTSD.
 - In the past month

FIGURES

The following graphs compare the mean scores for trans men (orange) and trans women (green) for each measure.

- Error bars reflect standard error.

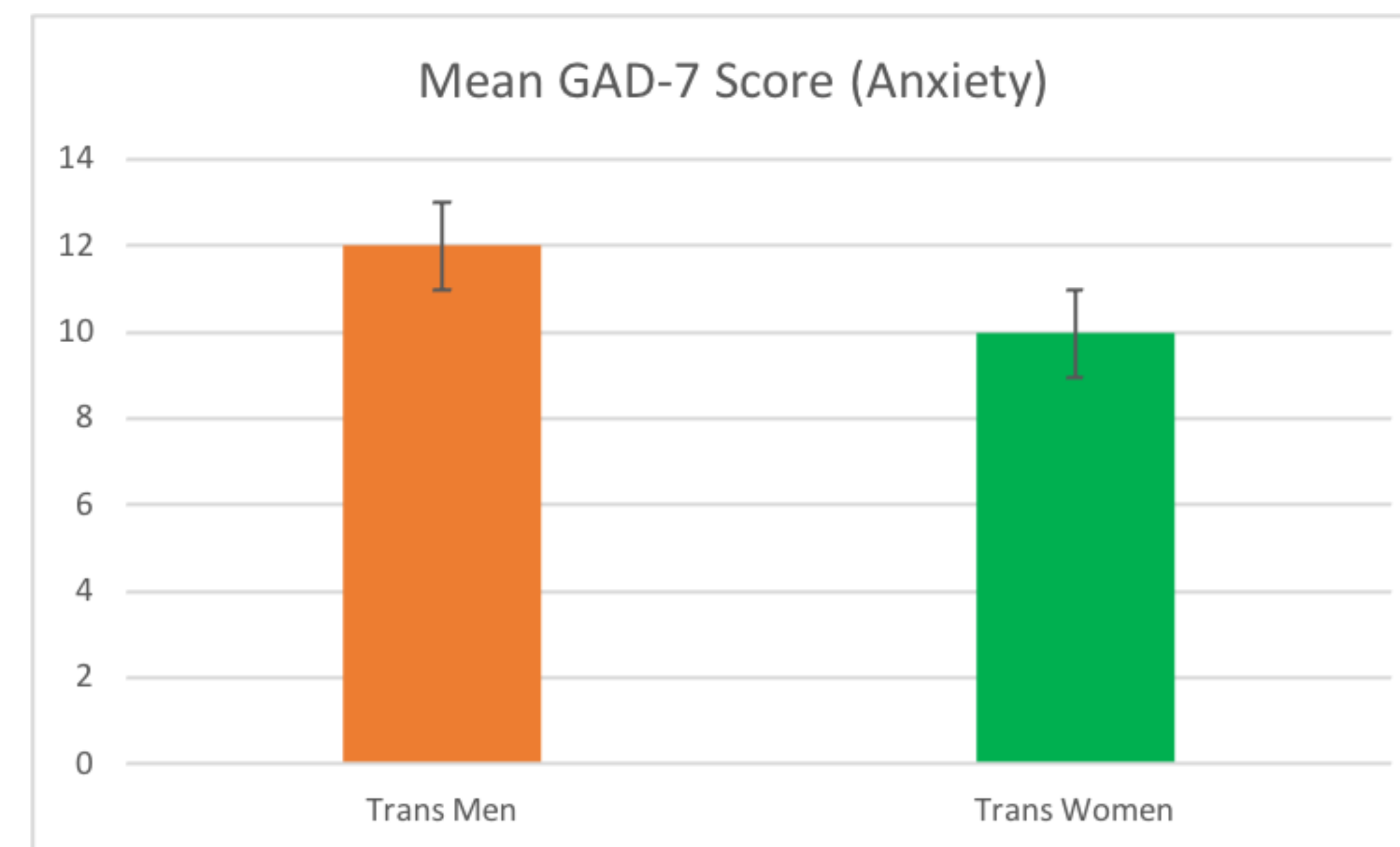


Figure 1: The average scores on the GAD-7.

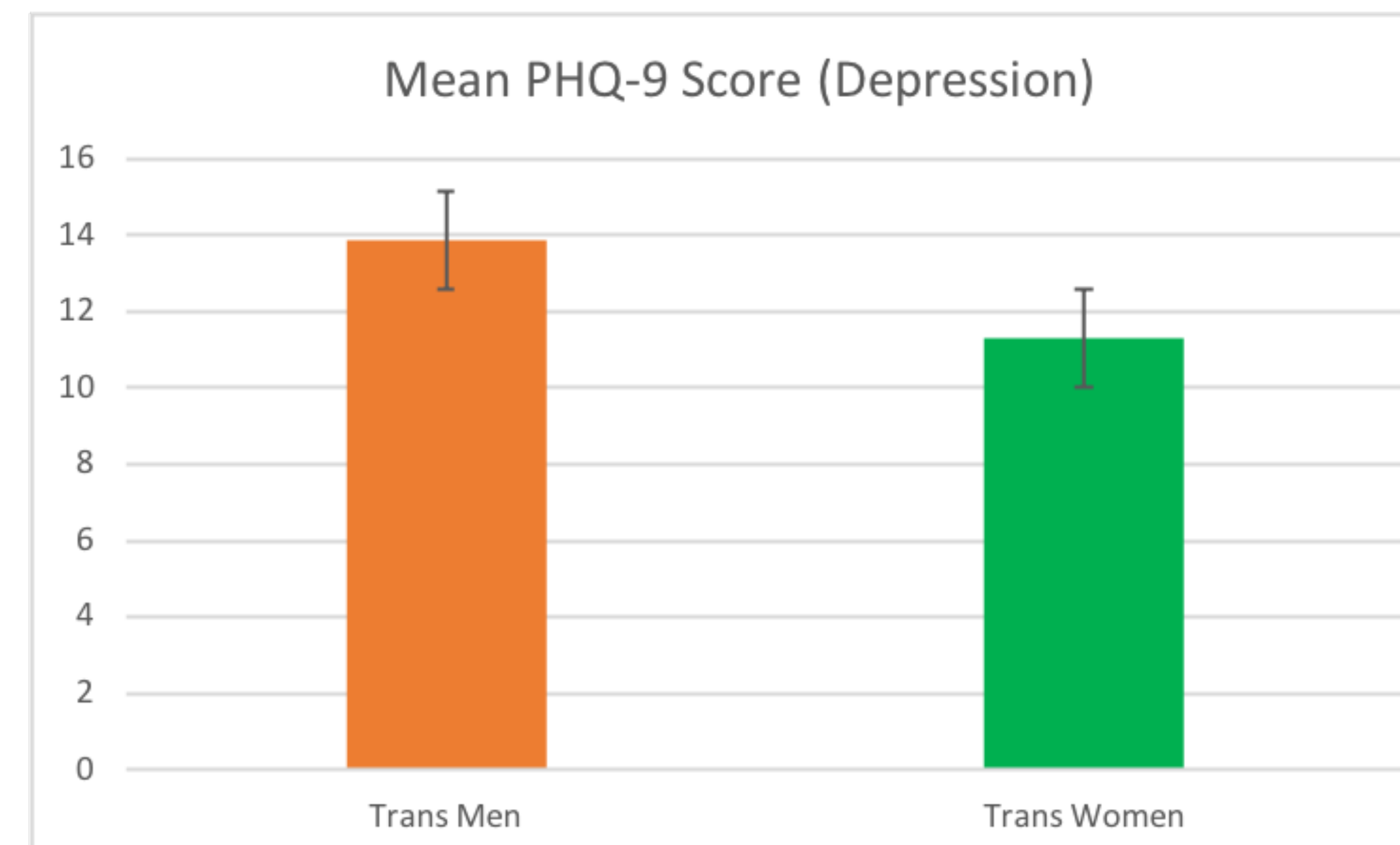


Figure 2: The average scores on the PHQ-9.

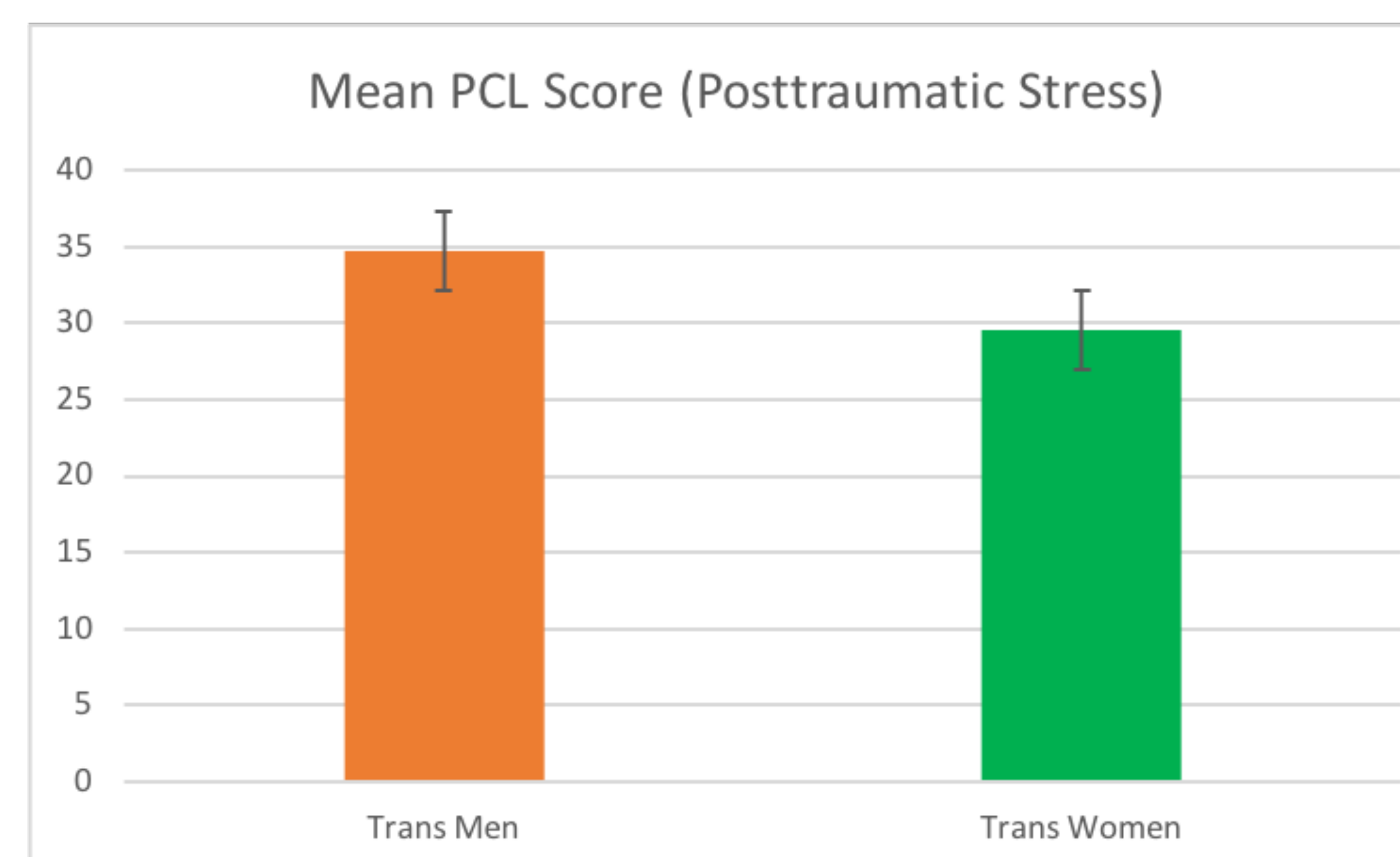


Figure 3: The average scores on the PCL.

RESULTS

- Three t tests were performed to examine the differences in mental health outcomes between transgender men and transgender women.
- The t test conducted for anxiety differences was not significant ($p = .81$). Transgender men had the higher average score by approximately 2 points.
- The t test conducted for depression differences was not significant ($p = .36$). Transgender men had the higher average score by approximately 2 points.
- The t test conducted for PTSD was not significant ($p = .97$). Transgender men had the higher average score by approximately 5 points.

DISCUSSION

- The current results do not indicate any significant differences in mental health outcomes between transgender men and transgender women, which does not match the previous literature on the subject.
- For each test, transgender men had the higher average score, albeit not significantly so.
 - The research on this difference is very limited, and most previous literature has sampled from international populations.
 - We recommend that future researchers consider potential mechanisms for this observed difference such as masculinity.
- This study utilized participants that had access to a computer and had registered to the Prolific survey website. Additionally, the sample was limited to the USA. Finally, the sample included more trans men than trans women, and may impact the results.

REFERENCES

- Blevins, C. A., Weathers, F. W., Davis, M. T., Witte, T. K., & Domino, J. L. (2015). The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5): Development and initial psychometric evaluation. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 28*(6), 489-498. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22059>
- Bockting, W. O., Miner, M. H., Swinburne Romine, R. E., Hamilton, A., & Coleman, E. (2013). Stigma, mental health, and resilience in an online sample of the US transgender population. *American journal of public health, 103*(5), 943-951. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301241>
- Kroenke, K., Spitzer, R. L., & Williams, J. B. (2001). The PHQ-9: validity of a brief depression severity measure. *Journal of General Internal Medicine, 16*(9), 606-613. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1525-1497.2001.016009606.x>
- James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality.
- Reisner, S. L., White Hughto, J. M., Gamarel, K. E., Keuroghlian, A. S., Mizock, L., & Pachankis, J. E. (2016). Discriminatory experiences associated with posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms among transgender adults. *Journal of counseling psychology, 63*(5), 509-519. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000143>
- Spitzer, R. L., Kroenke, K., Williams, J. B., & Löwe, B. (2006). A brief measure for assessing generalized anxiety disorder: the GAD-7. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 166*(10), 1092-1097. <https://doi.org/10.1001/archinte.166.10.1092>
- Tan, K., Ellis, S. J., Schmidt, J. M., Byrne, J. L., & Veale, J. F. (2020). Mental Health Inequities among Transgender People in Aotearoa New Zealand: Findings from the Counting Ourselves Survey. *International journal of environmental research and public health, 17*(8), 2862. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17082862>