NEBRASKA CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON
CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES & SCHOOLS

Mexican-Origin Young Adult's Work Conditions and Health: The Role of Sociocultural Context

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Early Adulthood

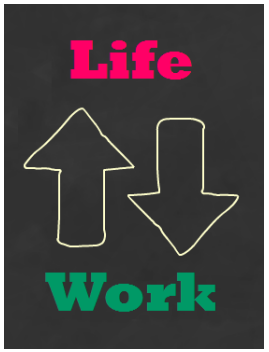
- Developmental Task Theory
  - Importance of transition to work context during early adulthood

- Paucity of Research on Work and Health
  - Evidence of an increase of psychosocial problems following the transition to early adulthood
  - Links with work context unclear

Masten et al., 2004
Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth, & Tellegen, 2004
Aseltine & Gore, 2005

Work Conditions and Health

- Work conditions have implications for individual health and well-being
  - Demanding work conditions are a risk factor
    - E.g., physical demands, hazards, pressure
  - Positive work conditions are a protective factor
    - E.g., self-direction, autonomy, leadership



- Little known about implications of <u>young adults'</u> work conditions for health

Conger, Rueter, & Conger, 2000
Schaufeli & Taris, 2014
Wadsworth & Perry-Jenkins, 2015

Wheeler et al., 2011
Wheeler et al., 2015

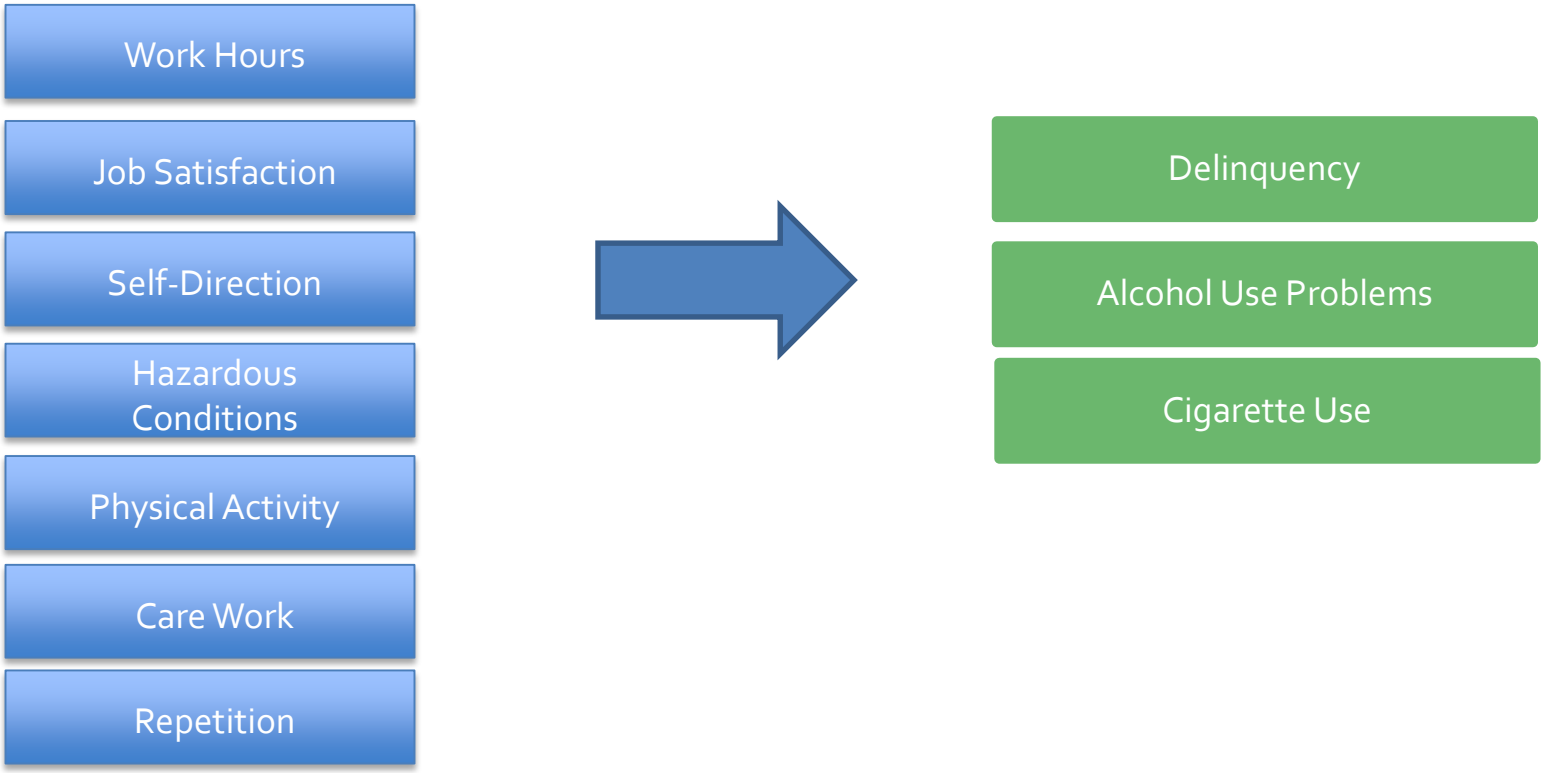
Mexican American Population

- Young population (median age = 27)
  - 67% in labor force
- At risk for low educational attainment
  - 60% receive high school diploma; 19% receive bachelors
- Overrepresented in jobs requiring little formal education
  - 51% of agricultural workers, 49% of maintenance workers, 49% of housecleaning workers, 46% of construction laborers
  - Least likely to be in professional occupations compared to other ethnic groups
- At risk for adverse health outcomes and lifetime risk for mental health problems, coronary disease, cancer, and diabetes

U.S. Census Bureau, 2016; U.S. Department of Labor, 2016
Krieger et al., 2008; Slack & Jensen, 2006
CDC, 2012

Research Question: Goal 1

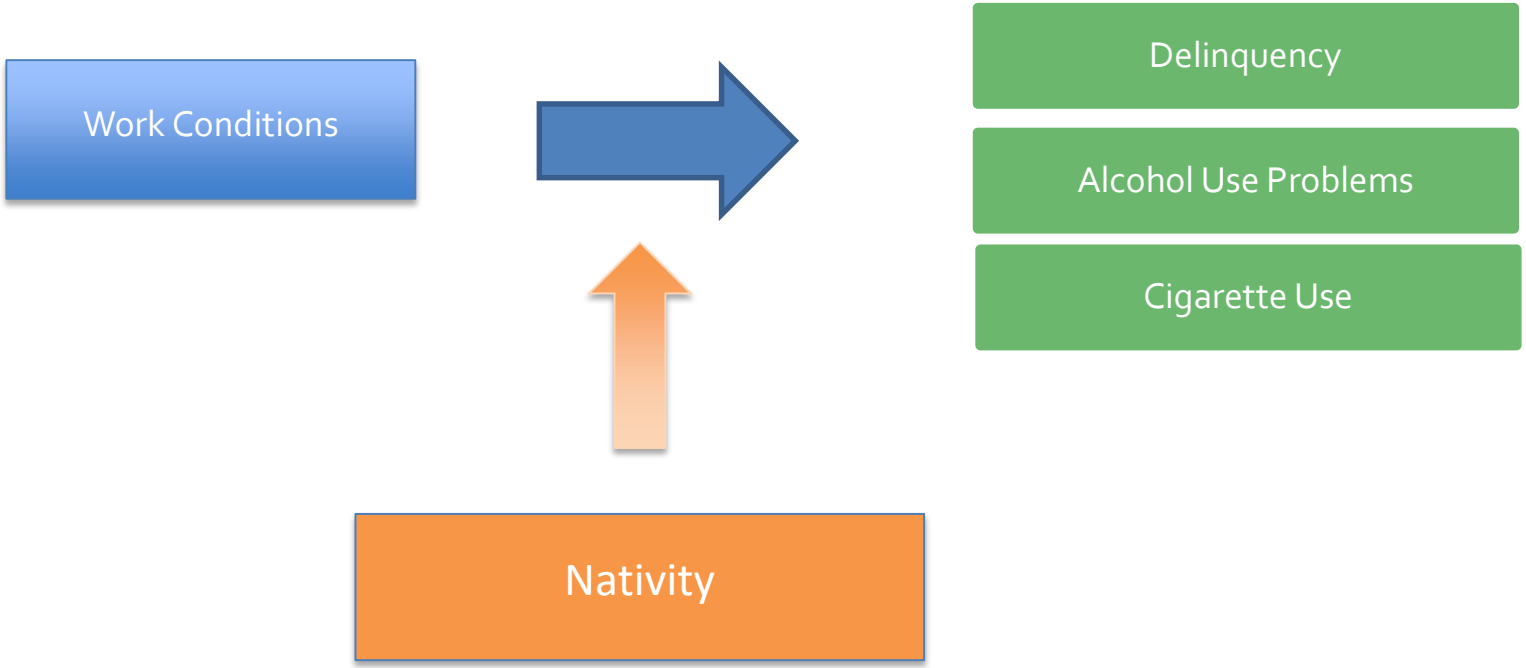
- Goal 1: Work Conditions
  - What work conditions relate to risk behavior for Mexican-origin youth during late adolescence/early adulthood?



Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982
Schaufeli & Taris, 2014

Research Question: Goal 2

- Goal 2: Moderation by Sociocultural Context
  - Do aspects of youth's sociocultural contexts moderate the relationship between work characteristics and risk behavior for Mexican-origin youth during late adolescence/early adulthood?



Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1982
Schaufeli & Taris, 2014
García Coll et al., 1996

Add Health Study

- National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Healt**h:** Nationally representative study that followed individuals from adolescence through adulthood

- Current Study: Secondary Data Analysis
  - Wave III data collected 2001-2002
  - Working youth of Mexican origin (*n* = 889)
    - 52% male
    - Ages 18-26; *M*age = 22.91 years, *SD* = 1.79
    - Most were born in the U.S. (77%)
    - Over half primarily speak English at home (54%)

Harris et al., 2009

Current Study: Youths' Work Contexts

- Study criteria: working at least 10 hours/week
  - 15% in first paid job
  - 29% currently in school

- Median income = $16,750; educational attainment = 12th grade (*SD* = 1.81)

- Mean hours working/week: 38.01 (*SD* = 10.80)
  - 68% work the day shift, 17% have rotating or irregular shifts/schedules; 15% work evening or night shifts

- The greatest percentage of youth work in sales or administrative support (31%)
  - construction, installation, production, repair (16%)
  - management, business or computer positions (10%) ; service (10%)
  - military (7%); education (7%)

Measures: Predictors

Reporter	Measure	#	Example Items/Attributes	Scale
Subjective Measures	Job Satisfaction	1	How satisfied are you with this job, as a whole?	1 = extremely dissatisfied 5 = extremely satisfied
	Work hours	1	How many hours per week do you work at this job?	
Objective Measures of Work Characteristics from O*Net Database (Crouter et al., 2006; Peterson et al., 2001)	Self-direction	16	Making decisions, solving problems	0-100 Degree of importance
	Hazardous Conditions	6	Contaminants, extremes of noise or temperature	0-100 Degree of importance
	Physical Activity	5	Running, standing	0-100 Degree of importance
	Care Work	4	Dealing with physically aggressive people; assist, care for others; exposed to disease or infections	0-100 Degree of importance
	Repetition	4	Repeating same tasks, degree of automation	0-100 Degree of importance

Measures

Outcomes

Measure	#	Example Item(s)	Scale
Delinquency	14	Damage property, illicit drugs	0 = never 3 = 5 or more times
Alcohol use problems	2	How many days did you drink five or more drinks in a row?	0 = none 6 = every day
Cigarette Use	1	Have you ever smoked at all in the past 30 days?	1 = yes 0 = no

Moderator

Nativity: US born (1) vs. Foreign born (0)

Covariates

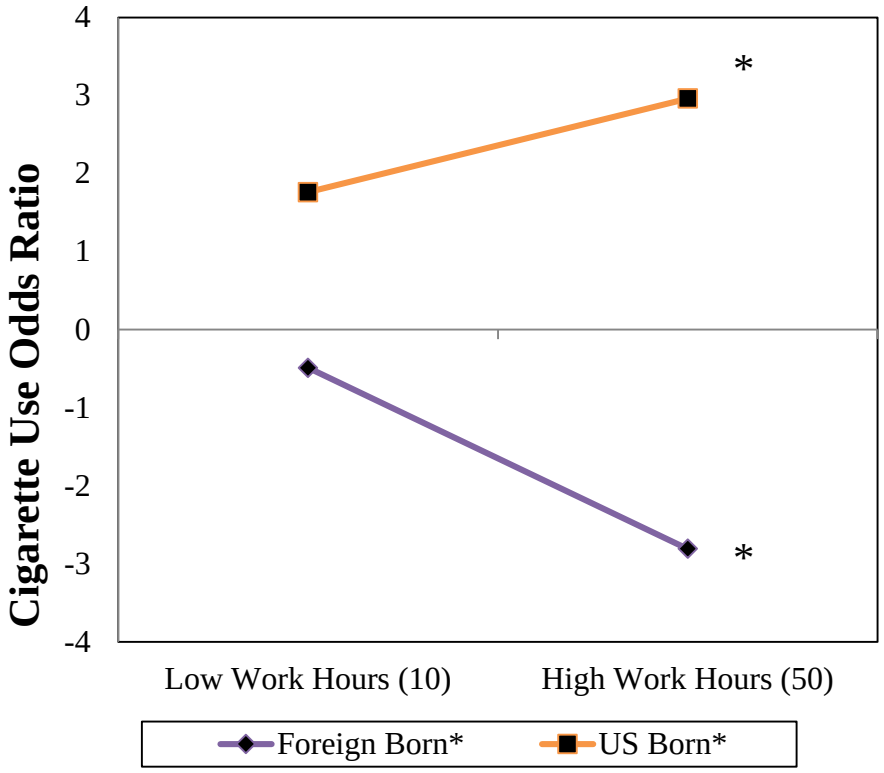
Language use: English-only (1) vs. Bilingual (0)
SES: educational attainment and income
Age

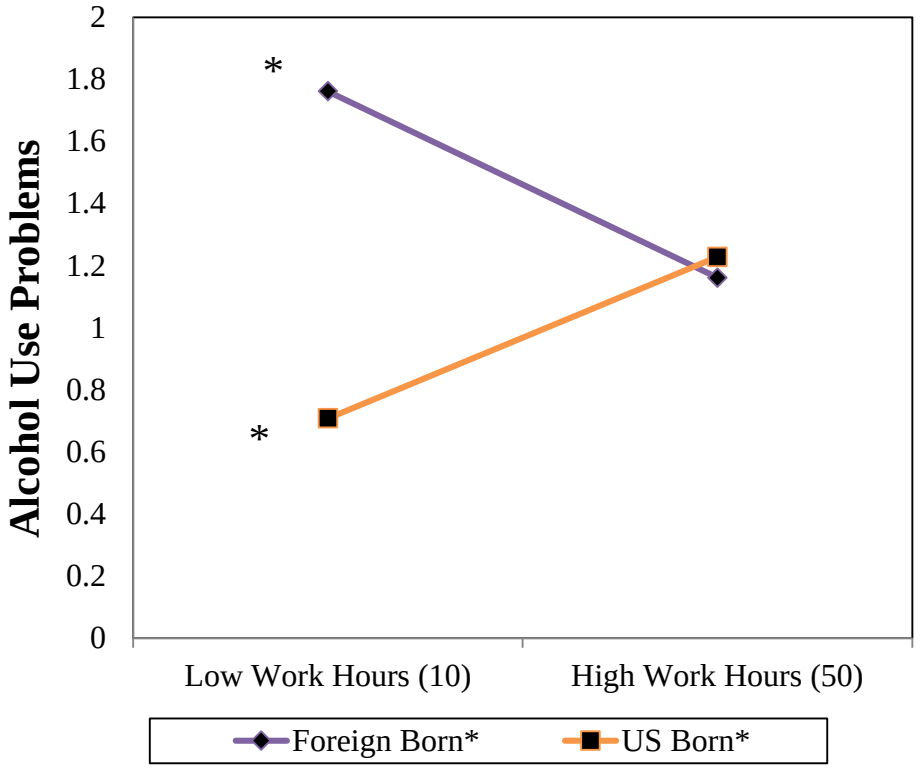
Analytic Strategy

- Path analysis in Mplus 7.4
  - Full information maximum likelihood – robust
  - Monte Carlo integration
  - Moderation tested by including interaction terms in models; Simple slopes tested

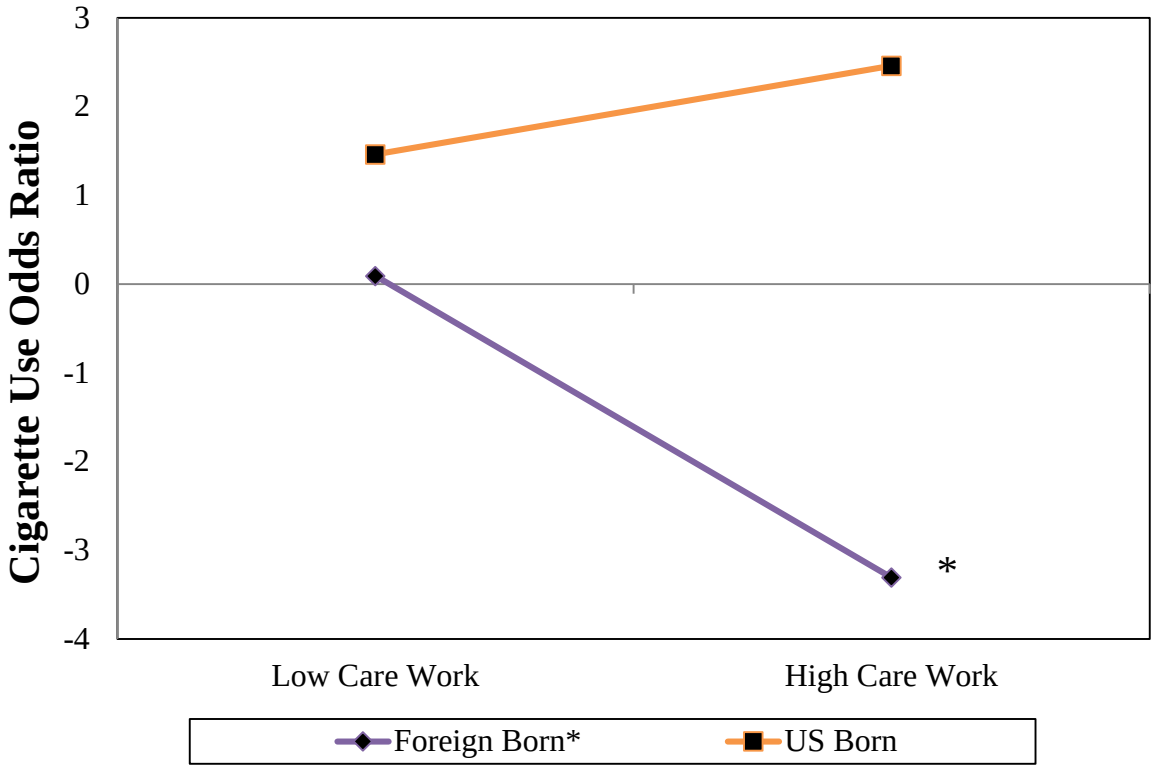
Goal 1 Results: Direct Effects

Goal 2: Nativity Work Hours

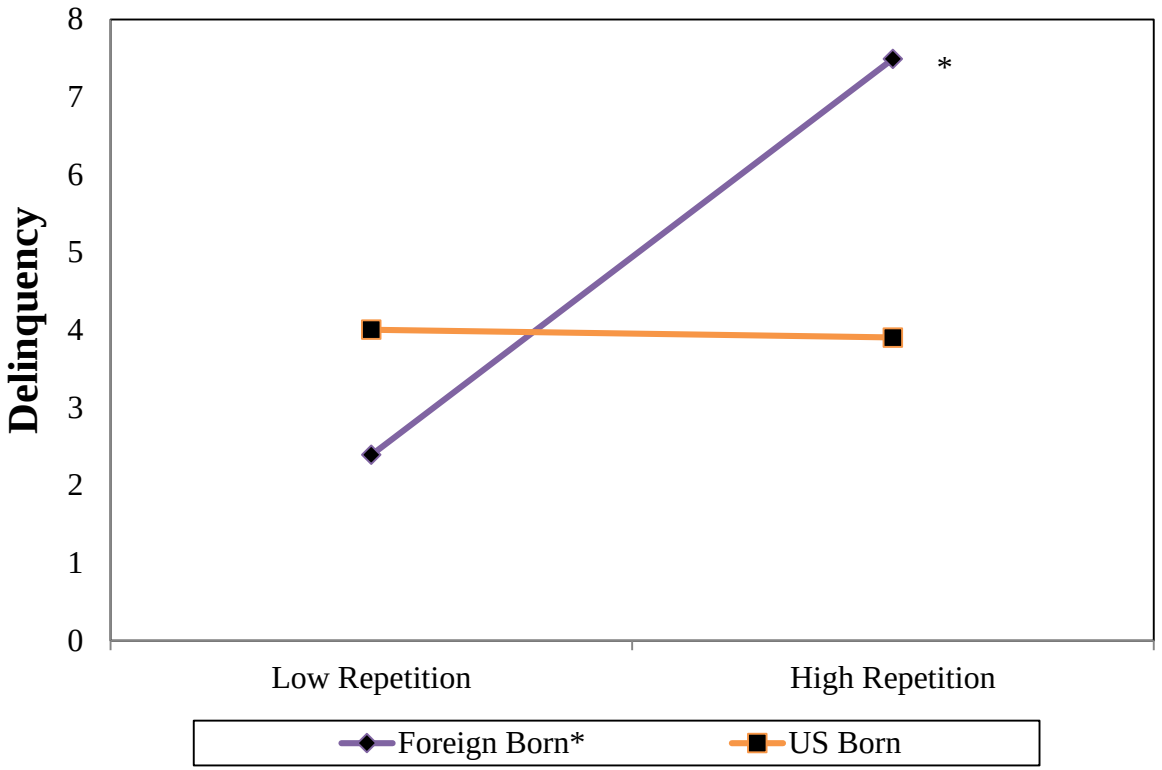




Goal 2: Nativity Care Work



Goal 2: Nativity Repetition



Discussion

- Examining positive *and* negative aspects of work can provide key insights related to supporting health among a large and growing U.S. subpopulation

  - Job satisfaction related to fewer risk behaviors
    - Delinquency (-)

Discussion

- Moderation questions highlight the importance of examining variability within the Mexican-origin population
  - Foreign-Born Youth
    - Working more hours and care work - protective factors
    - Repetitious work – risk factor
  - US-Born Youth
    - High working hours – risk factor

Limitations and Future Directions

- Add Health Limitations
  - Measurement limitations of secondary data analysis
    - Few items used to measure health and well-being constructs
  - Survey administered in English only

- Future Research
  - Mechanisms linking work context to health among youth
  - Replications with diverse samples

Thank you!

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Acknowledgements

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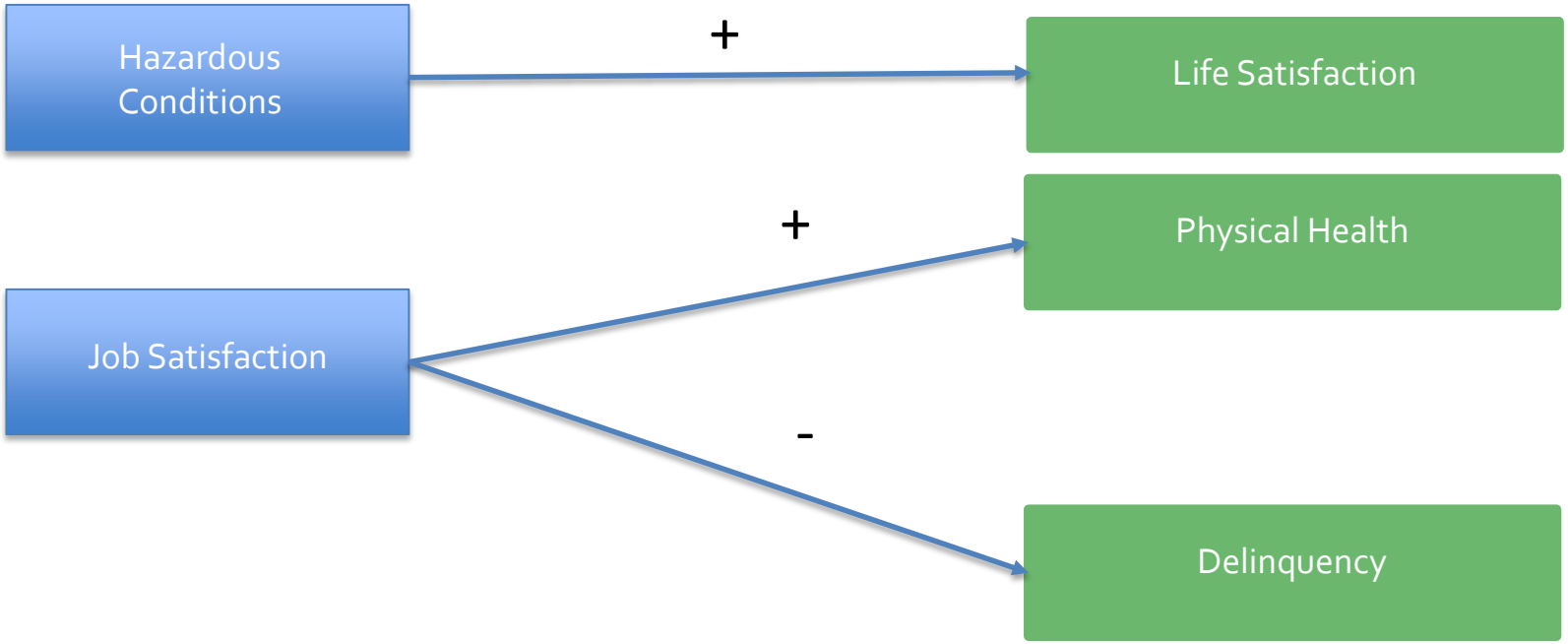
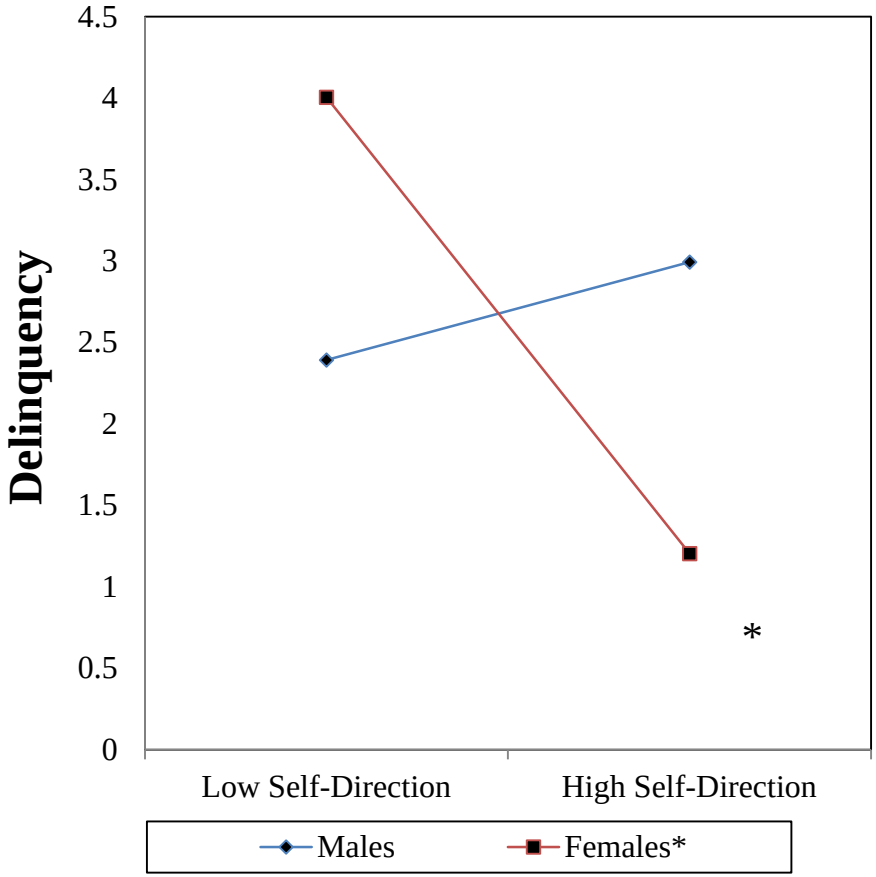
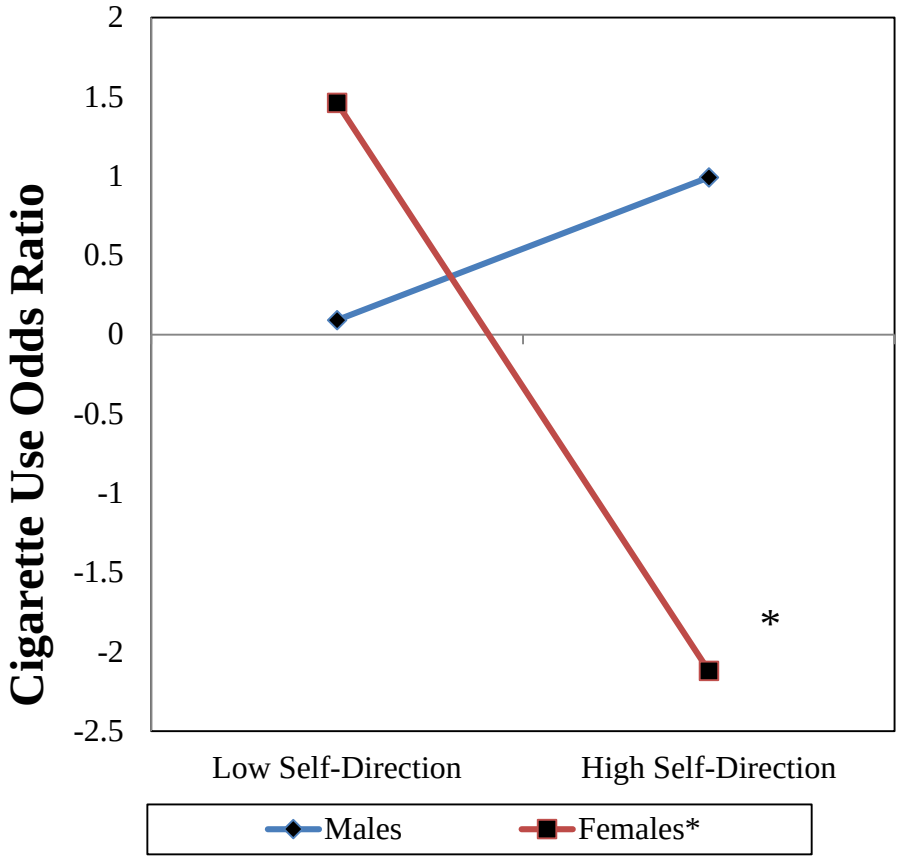
Goal 1 Results: Direct Effects

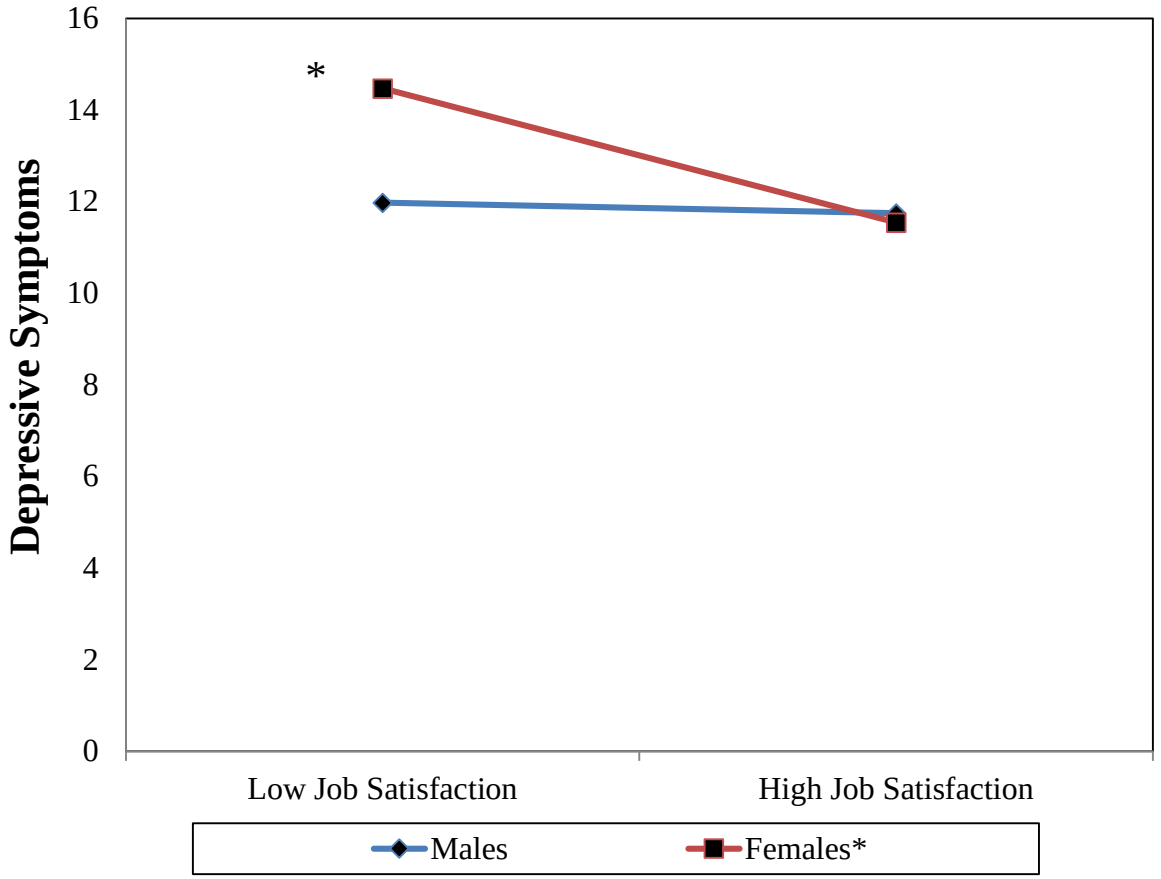
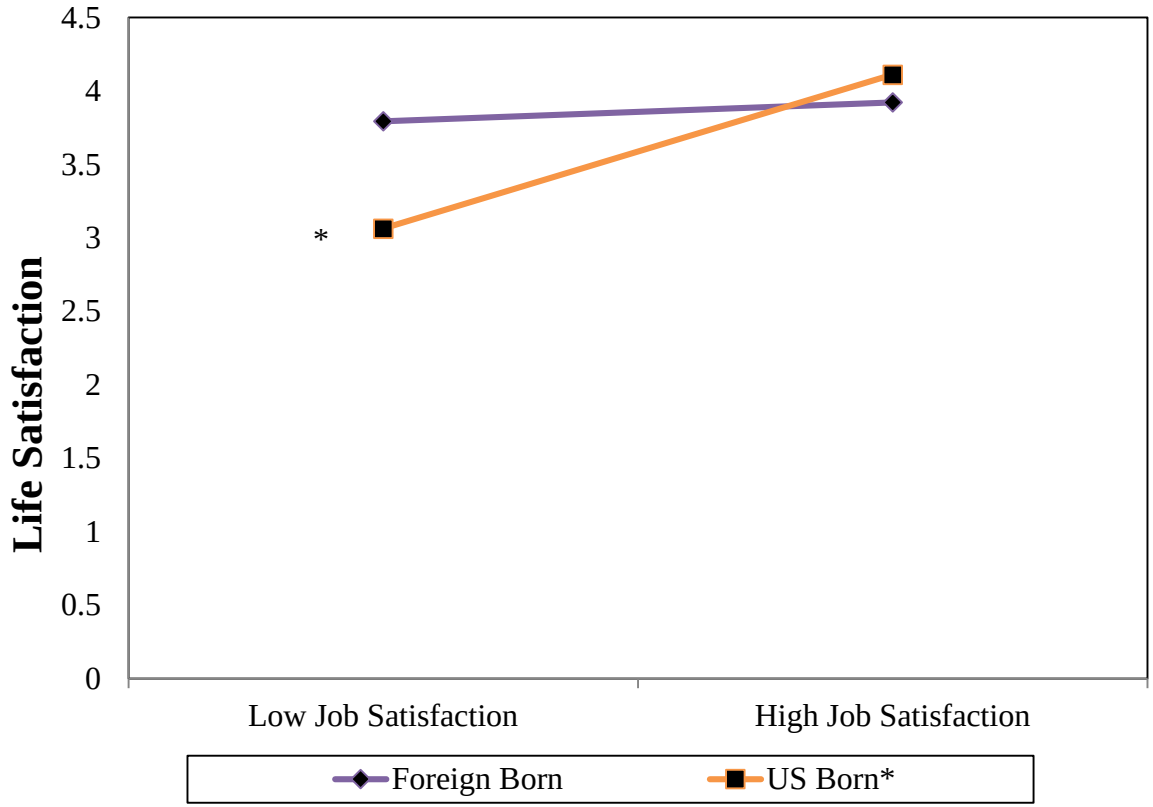


Goal 2: Gender Self-Direction





Goal 2: Gender Job Satisfaction



Goal 2: Nativity
Job Satisfaction