

Do Medical Students Have Healthier Behaviors Than Aged-Matched Peers of Other Graduate Programs?

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Introduction

- The doctor-patient relationship is a pivotal component in the management of overall patient well-being.
- Medical school is a very demanding time in which students may adapt undesirable lifestyle habits in response to the stress.
- Students who establish healthy lifestyle practices early in their training are more likely to counsel their patients on proper self-care habits than those who do
- In this study we examine the lifestyle habits of preclinical osteopathic medical students.
- We compared the results to age-matched peers in other areas of study, as the rate of burnout in this group is less than medical students.

Methods

- A 50-question survey was developed by adapting the design of previous studies including a study of diet and exercise of college freshmen [1].
- The Fantastic Lifestyle questionnaire [2] and others [3,4] also provided an additional validated reference for the survey creation
- The surveys were distributed electronically via the anonymous platform RedCap (Nashville, TN) to first and second year medical students attending NYITCOM (both Long Island and Arkansas campuses) and those of other NYIT graduate programs (including the schools of physical therapy, occupational therapy, mechanical and electrical engineering, teaching, clinical nutrition, and physician assistant)
- Group I consisted of first and second year medical students, and Group II contained graduate students of the same age.
- A Pearson and a Student's 2-tailed t-test were used to evaluate for significance.

Results

- There were a total of 398 respondents to the survey
- 83.2% (N=331) from Group I and 16.9% (N=67) from group II
- 53.2% of Group I reported to studying at least 5–10 hours per day, while 20.1% reported to studying more than 10 hours.
- 37.3% of Group II reported studying 5-10 hours per day and 9.0% reported studying more than 10 hours. (Figure 1)
- Group I exercised more times per week (2–3 times) than group II (Figure 2) and for a longer duration (30–60min).
- Group I slept more than group II (6–8h), and also reported using more substances to stay awake. (Figure 3,4)

Conclusion

- In this study we found that preclinical medical students studied, exercised, and slept more than their age-matched peers
- When compared to age-matched peers, medical students reported to using more substances to stay awake.

References:

1Rodriguez J. Resident freshmen diet and exercise survey. University of North Florida. <http://www.unf.edu/~jrodrigu/survey.htm> 1999. Accessed 26 April 2018.
 2Wilson DM, Nielsen E, Ciliska D. Lifestyle assessment: testing the FANTASTIC instrument. *Can Fam Physician*. 1984;30:1863.
 3. Stanojević-Ristić Z, Stević S, Rašić J, Valjarević D, Dejanović M, Valjarević A. Influence of pharmacological education on perceptions, attitudes and use of dietary supplements by medical students. *BMC Complement Altern Med*. 2017;17(1):527.
 4. Zhou S, Van Devanter N, Fenstermaker M, Cawkwell P, Sherman S, Weitzman M. A study of the use, knowledge, and beliefs about cigarettes and alternative tobacco products among students at one US medical school. *Acad Med*. 2015;90(12):1713–9.

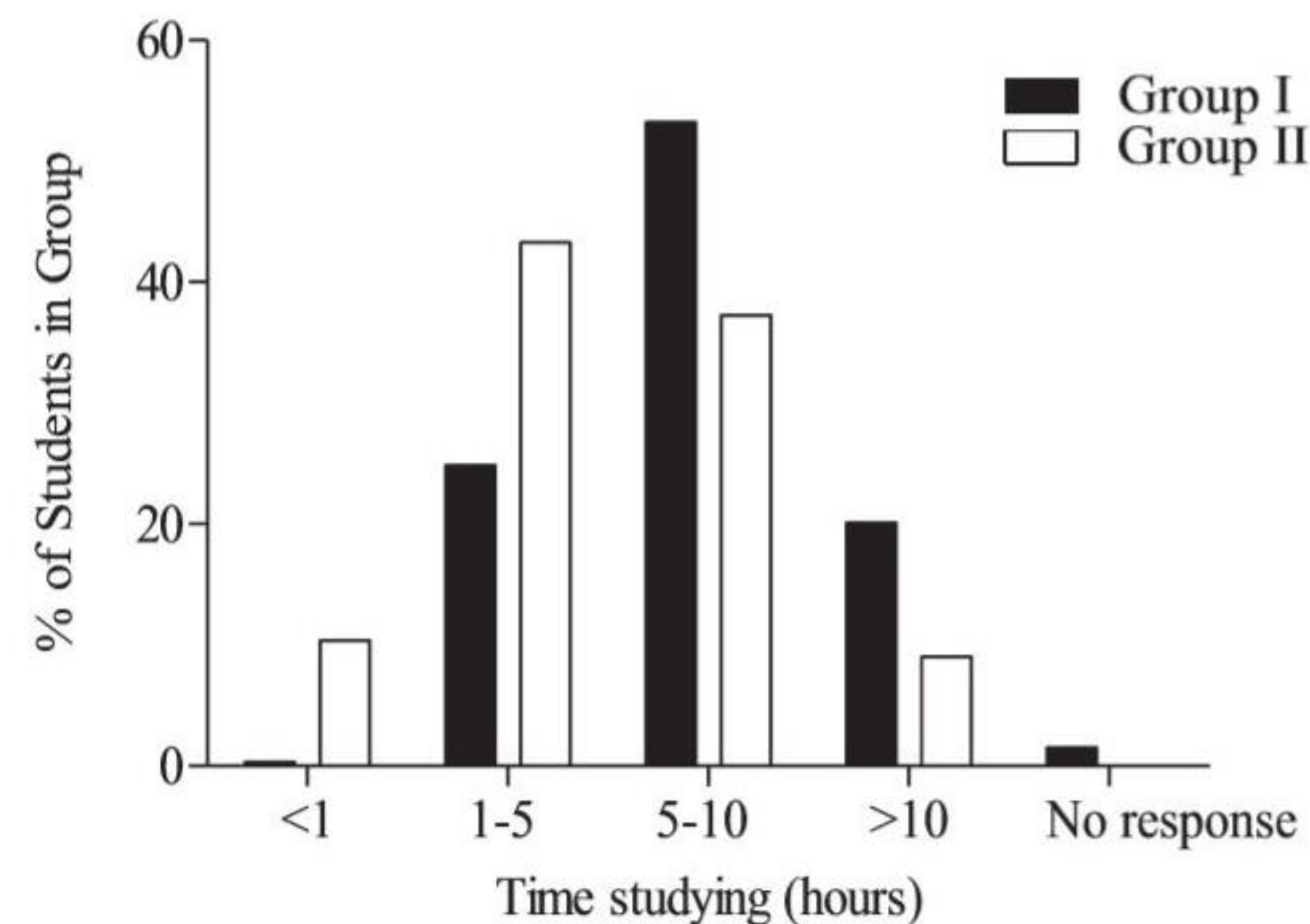


Fig. 1 Comparing study time (hours) between groups I and II

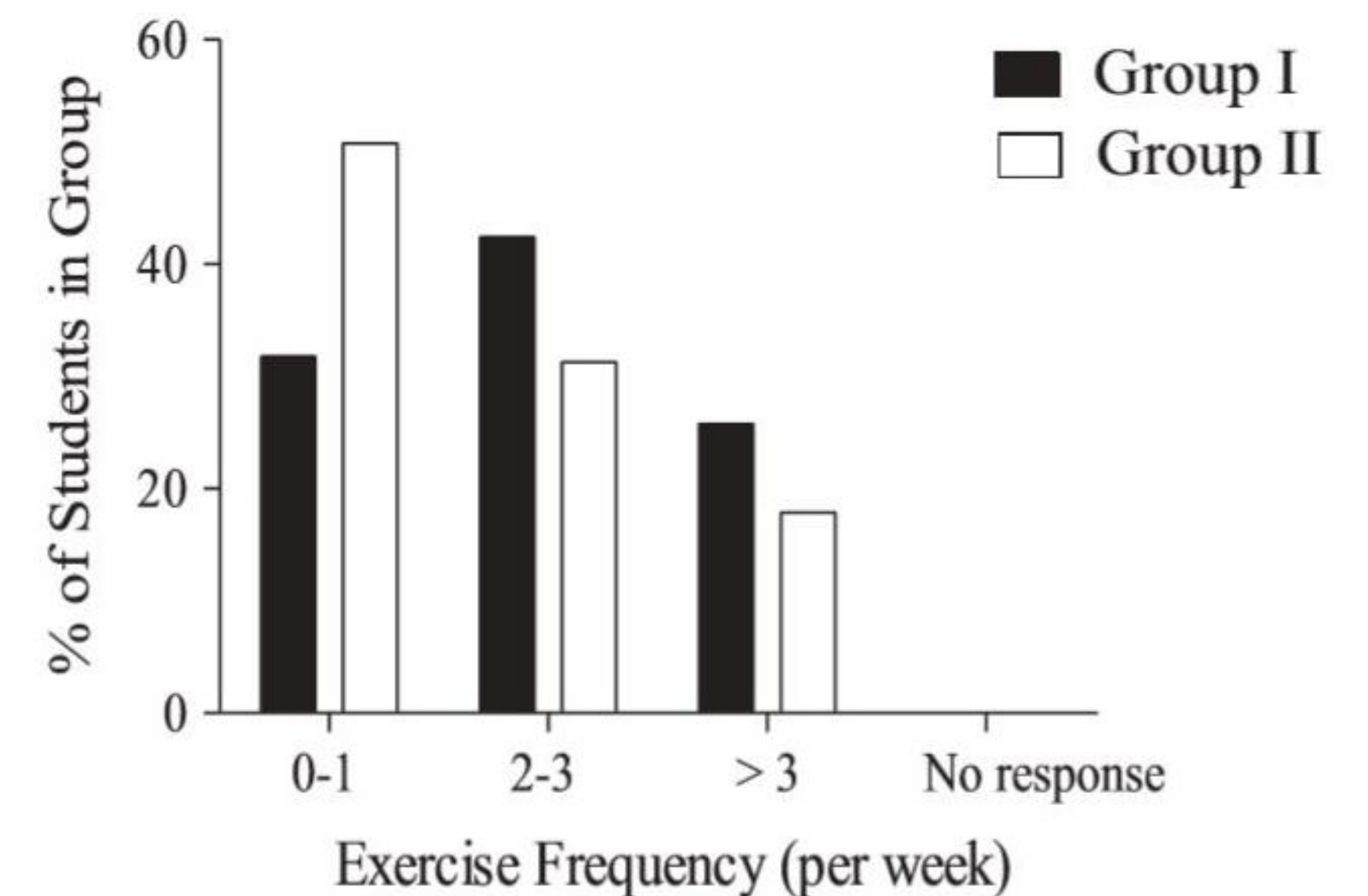


Fig. 2 Comparing exercise frequency (per week) between groups I and II

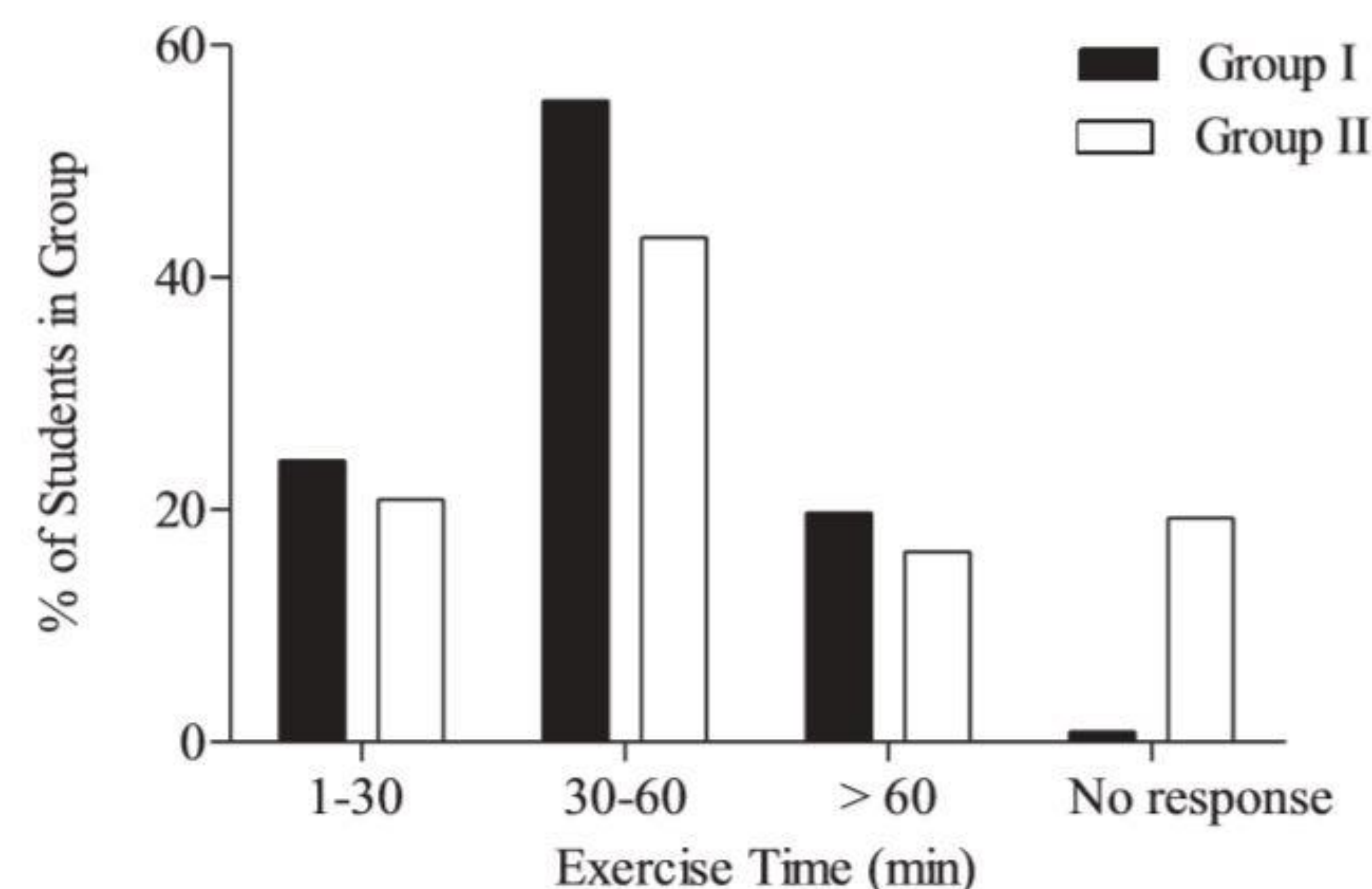


Fig. 3 Comparing exercise time (minutes) between groups I and II

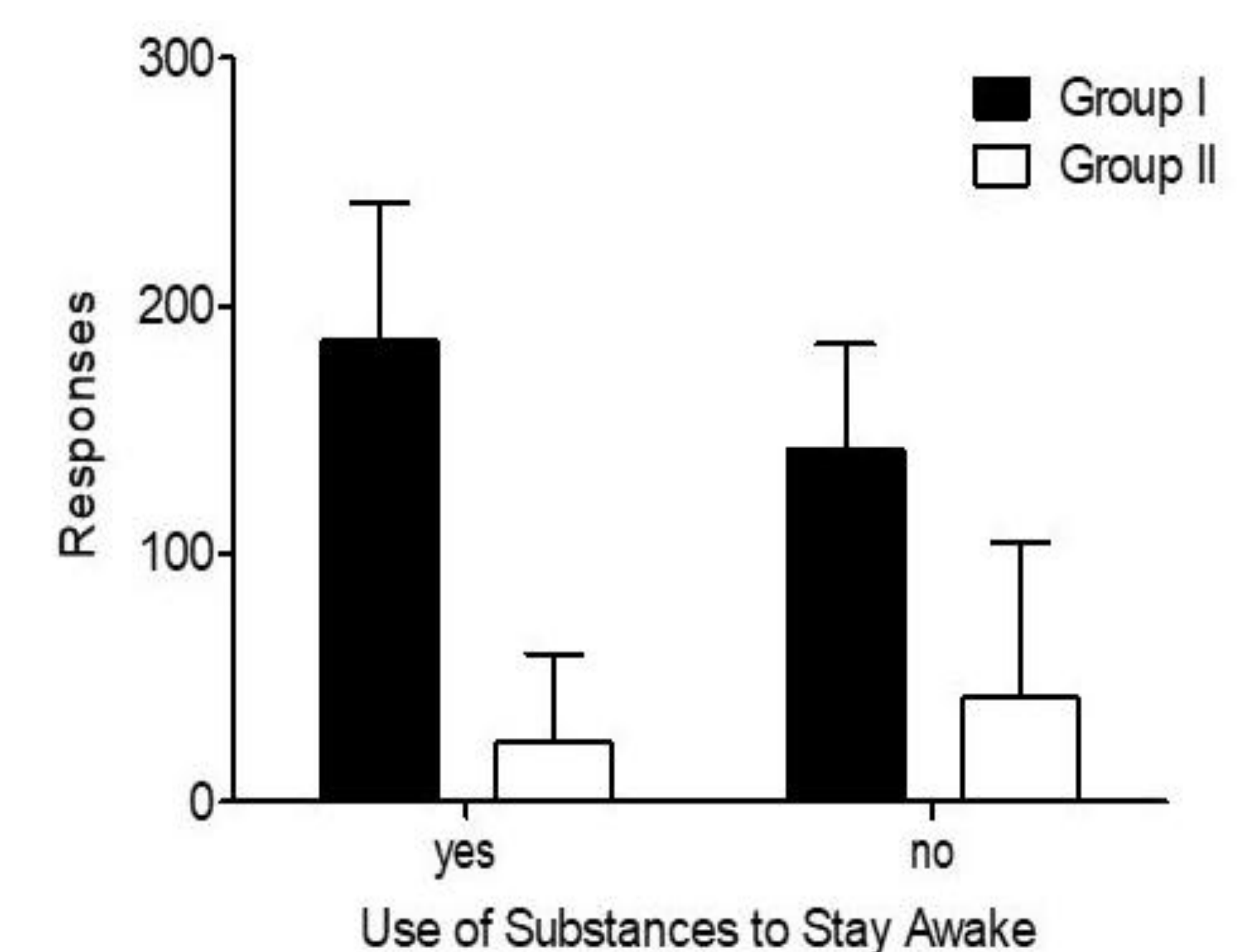


Figure 4: Comparing the use of substances to stay awake between Group I and II.