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Religious Commitment and Depression During Pregnancy

Tifani R. Fletcher

East Tennessee State University

Andrea D. Clements

East Tennessee State University, clements@etsu.edu

Lana McGrady

East Tennessee State University

Beth A. Bailey

East Tennessee State University

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Religious Commitment and Depression During Pregnancy

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Religious Commitment and Depression during Pregnancy

Tifani Fletcher, Andrea Clements, Lana McGrady, Beth Bailey
East Tennessee State University



Background

- ❖ Increased levels of religiosity are associated with lower levels of depression; though rarely supported by research, social support is often assumed to be the mechanism.
- ❖ Few researchers have investigated religiosity's relationship to prenatal depression.
- ❖ Evidence is accumulating that religious commitment, a specific measure of intrinsic religiosity, is a possible mechanism by which religiosity positively impacts health.

Hypothesis

- ❖ It was hypothesized that pregnant women who had higher levels of religious commitment would have lower levels of depression.
- ❖ Religious commitment was also hypothesized to account for depression level above and beyond the degree of social support from others.

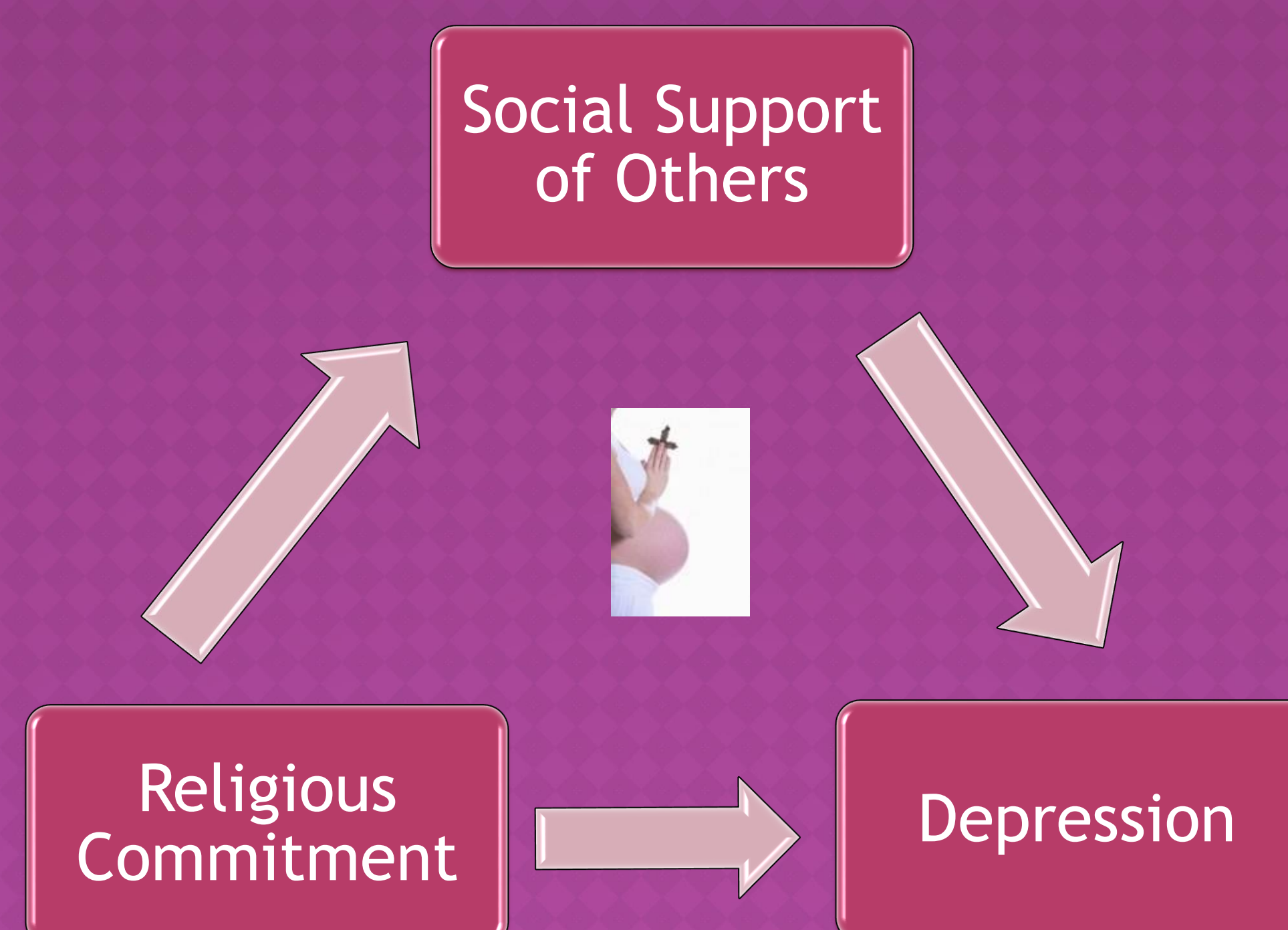
Method

- ❖ Participants included 330 pregnant women (smokers and nonsmokers) participating in the Tennessee Intervention for Pregnant Smokers Program.
- ❖ Participants met with a case manager at a prenatal appointment and completed several questionnaires in an initial interview including:
 - ❖ Religious Surrender and Attendance Scale (RSAS-3) a measure of religious commitment
 - ❖ Social support from others subscale from the Prenatal Psychosocial Profile
 - ❖ Centers for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CESD-10)

Results

- ❖ Zero order correlations revealed that religious commitment was significantly negatively related to depression levels.
- ❖ Education level, the only significant covariate, was included in the hierarchical regression model in step 1, social support from others in step 2, and religious commitment in step 3.
- ❖ The full model explained 11.4% of the variance in depression scores, with religious commitment significantly contributing to the model above and beyond social support from others after controlling for education.

Religious Commitment and Depression	R	R ² Δ	p	B	p
Step 1	.183	.033	.010		
Education				-.183	.010
Step 2	.287	.082	<.001		
Social Support of Others				-.127	<.001
Step 3	.338	.114	.009		
Religious Commitment				-.184	.009



Discussion

- ❖ Results support the hypothesis that religiously committed individuals report lower levels of depression during pregnancy.
- ❖ These findings are also in contrast to previous speculations that social support is the driving force behind lower levels of depression in religious individuals.
- ❖ Finding factors, such as religious commitment, that are linked to levels of prenatal depression, is important given that early treatment of depression symptoms can assuage negative health consequences for the mother and child.

Acknowledgements

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