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Apr 7th, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

The Negative Relationship between Religiosity and Substance Use

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The Negative Relationship between Religiosity and Substance Use

Meredith A. Jordan, Lauren Ledford, Mary Jo Oliver, & Andrea D. Clements



Introduction

- The negative association between religiosity and substance abuse is well established in previous literature (Edlund et al., 2010).
- Scholarly research continues to find support for both intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity functioning as protective factors against substance abuse with intrinsic religiosity's negative correlation with substance use being more established in literature than extrinsic religiosity (Hang Hai, 2018).
- This study aims to provide further support for the negative relationship between religiosity and substance use.
- Hypothesis 1: There is a negative correlation between religiosity scores and substance use scores among our population.
- Hypothesis 2: Intrinsic religiosity will have a stronger relationship with substance use than extrinsic religiosity
- Exploratory Hypothesis: Personal extrinsic religiosity will have a stronger negative relationship with substance use than social extrinsic religiosity.

Method

- A cross-sectional survey was presented to 386 students during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The data included in this sample were from a larger data collection effort containing many measures on behaviors and religiosity.
- Correlational analysis was conducted to understand the relationship between religiosity and substance use.
- All students received extra credit as an incentive to voluntarily complete a battery of measures related to habits and addiction.

Measures Included:

- Intrinsic/Extrinsic Religiosity
 - Personal
 - Social (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989)
- Texas Christian University Drug Screen-5 (Peters et al., 2000)

All analyses were conducted using JASP and SPSS.

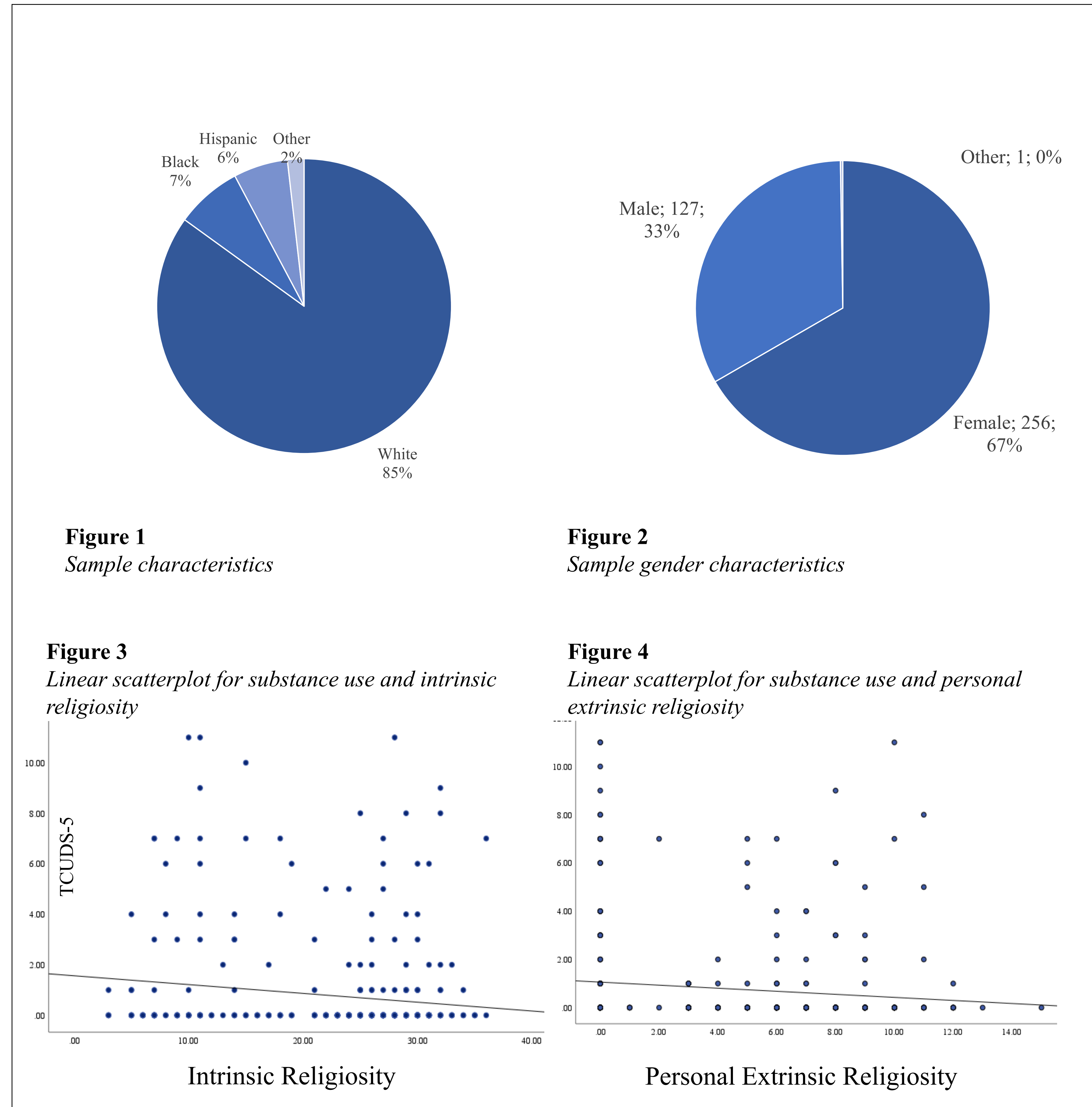


Table 1

Correlations and descriptive of study variables

Variable	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. TCUDS-5	386	.762	2.004	-			
2. Intrinsic Religiosity	386	23.016	8.149	-.142**	-		
3. Social Extrinsic	386	4.684	3.822	-.121*	.621**	-	
4. Personal Extrinsic	386	8.313	4.680	-.159**	.847**	.615**	-

* p < .05 ** p < .01

Results

- Our first hypothesis was supported with a negative correlation between intrinsic religiosity and substance use ($r = -.142, p = .005$).
- The second and exploratory hypotheses were partially supported with both social ($r = -.121, p = .018$), and personal ($r = -.159, p = .002$) extrinsic religiosity predicting less substance use.
- Personal intrinsic religiosity had the strongest negative relationship with substance use (Fig. 4).
- All measures of religiosity were positively and strongly related to each other (Table 1).
- The results of this study contribute to the converging evidence that religiosity is inversely related to substance use and could serve as a protective factor for potential problematic substance use.

Limitations

- Due to the low levels of substance use overall, it is difficult to determine whether religiosity is a true protective factor.
- The sample is homogenous making it unclear whether the negative relationship would be consistently true among different demographics.
- The survey was administered during COVID-19.

Discussion

- Those who have internalized their faith may rely on faith to cope with stress rather than use substances or may restrict use due to religious morals.
- Those that attend church for personal reasons, like comfort and protection displayed a strong negative relationship with substance use.
- This study provides potential support for the theory that religiosity is a protective factor against substance use disorders.
- Future research should investigate the longitudinal impact of religiosity on substance use in diverse populations.
- For references, please scan code here.

