

A significant link between PTSD and substance abuse has been shown in recent literature. There is an association that can be observed between PTSD and the development and severity of substance abuse disorders in those individuals who experience a traumatic event (Peirce et al., 2008). However, we aim to investigate if there is a relationship between gender and substance abuse when that individual experiences an interpersonal trauma. Prior research does suggest that women are more susceptible than men to develop PTSD in the wake of a traumatic event (Peirce et al., 2008), but does this mean they are more likely to turn to substance abuse?

Question: In presence of interpersonal trauma history (sexual assault, physical assault, physical assault with a weapon), does gender influence frequency substance abuse?

Methods: This sample was collected through an inpatient detox center for individual's presenting with a substance abuse problem. Cognitive assessments along with questionnaires about past trauma and substance abuse history were administered to the participants at the detox center. The questionnaire asked about different types of trauma, such as physical or sexual assault, and the degree of exposure (i.e. "happened to you" or if "you witnessed it").

Hypothesis: We hypothesize that there will not be a difference between gender and substance abuse for individuals that were exposed to an interpersonal trauma. Given the relationship shown between PTSD and substance use (Dansky et al., 1996), we expect to replicate this relationship for PTSD and substance use in this sample but we hypothesize that gender will not impact these variables. Understanding the potential gender differences within substance and trauma may better inform whether treatment approaches should be tailored by gender for interpersonal trauma.

Results: Data collection is ongoing at this point. Results will be provided at the poster presentation.

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- Peirce, J. M., Kindbom, K. A., Waesche, M. C., Yuscavage, A. S., & Brooner, R. K. (2008). Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Gender, and Problem Profiles in Substance Dependent Patients. *Substance Use & Misuse*, 43(5), 596-611. doi:10.1080/10826080701204623