

# Incremental Effects of Sexual Assault and Temperament Traits on Cognitive Characteristics of Histrionic Personality Disorder

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## INTRODUCTION

- Histrionic Personality Disorder (HPD) is characterized by beliefs that one needs to be interesting and seductive to others in order to have value.
- There is robust data on the influence of temperament traits on HPD.
- One understudied potential influence on HPD is sexual assault, which has been shown to influence other PDs.
- It may be particularly likely that sexual assault may influence cognitive characteristics of HPD given the often sexualized presentation of HPD.

## METHODS

- Participants: 1,026 college students.
- Assessed constructs of interest using a battery of well-validated measures.
- Analyzed incremental effect of sexual assault on HPD beliefs controlling for temperament traits using a Bayesian approach to Analysis of Covariance.

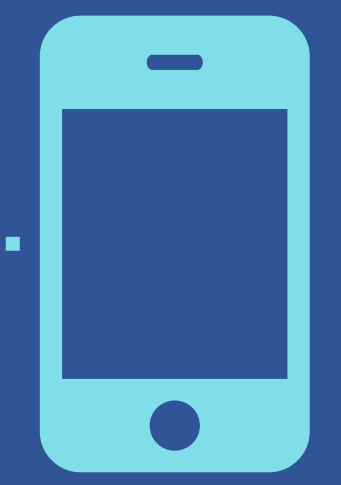
## RESULTS

- Modest effects of Negative Affect ( $\beta = .19$ ) and Positive Affect ( $\beta = -.18$ ).
- Medium-sized incremental effect of sexual assault ( $\beta = .30$ ).

## DISCUSSION

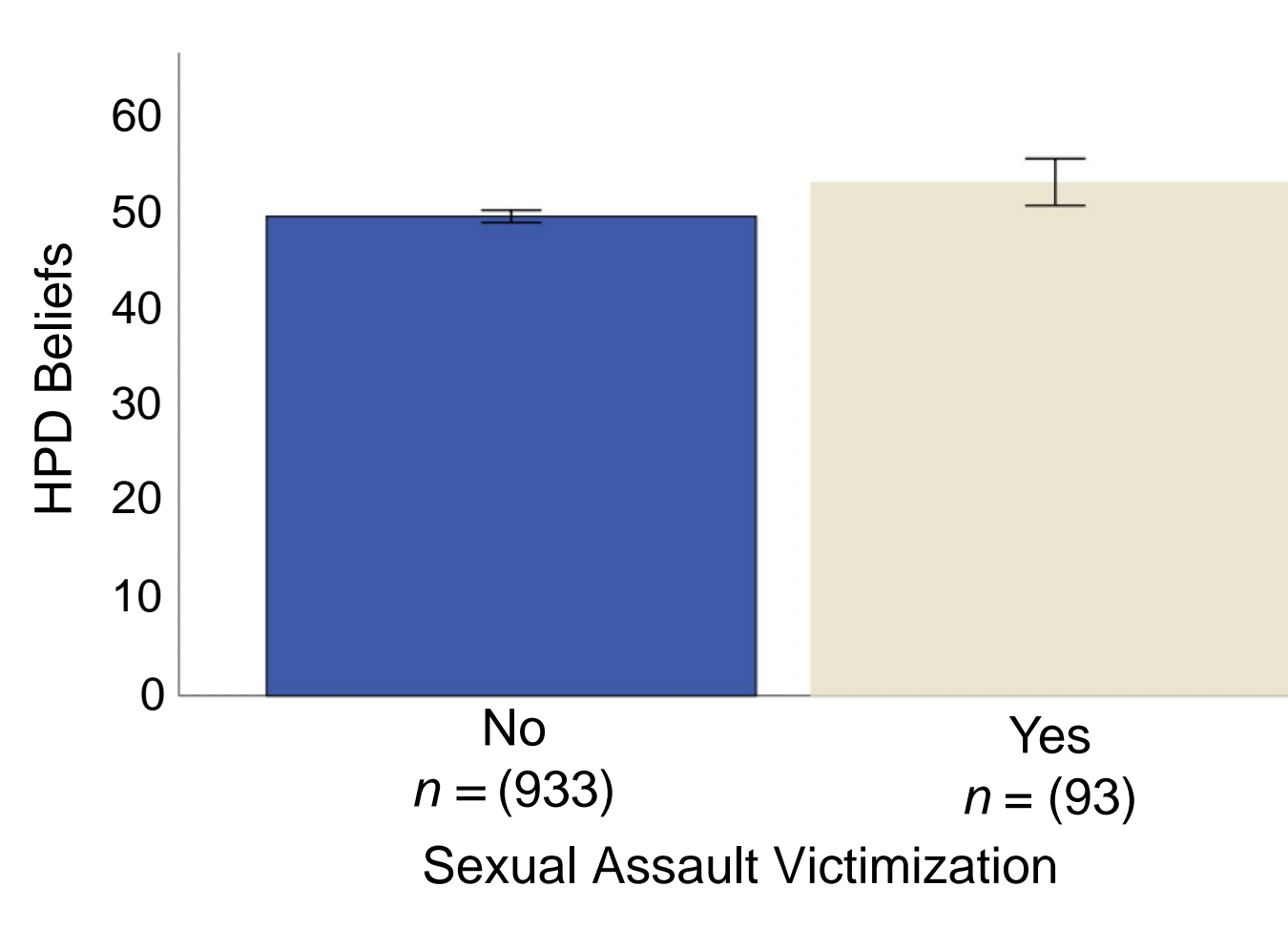
- These results provide evidence for the influence of sexual assault on cognitive characteristics of HPD.
- Findings highlight the need to assess for sexual assault history in patients espousing beliefs characteristic of HPD.
- Results also provide support for studying trauma-focused interventions in people with HPD.
- Future research should build on these findings by examining the influence of other traumatic experiences on HPD.

Sexual assault victimization predicts cognitive characteristics of Histrionic Personality Disorder over and above temperament traits.



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HPD Beliefs by History of Sexual Assault Victimization.



Note: HPD belief listed as T-scores.

Correlations between Study Variables.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. HPD Beliefs	(.77)				
2. Sexual Assault	<b>.10</b>	—			
3. Disinhibition	<b>.07</b>	-.02	(.55)		
4. Negative Affect	<b>.27</b>	.05	<b>.24</b>	(.73)	
5. Positive Affect	<b>-.20</b>	-.02	-.00	<b>-.27</b>	(.67)
Skewness	1.51	2.85	0.21	0.14	-0.21
Kurtosis	1.56	6.16	1.10	-.30	-0.38

Notes: all **bolded**  $\rho$ s were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ ; Cronbach's alpha on diagonal

