

# **Exposure to Traumatic Stress and Healthcare Experiences**

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# INTRODUCTION

- Exposure to interpersonal trauma is associated with
  - many negative health outcomes (e.g., Edwards et al., 2012)
  - less trust in individuals and institutions (Gobin & Freyd, 2013).

# INTRODUCTION

- Seems logical that trauma survivors might have less trust in physicians
- Trust in physicians is associated with
  - better adherence to recommended care (Lee & Lin, 2009)

# INTRODUCTION

- Health behavior, such as adherence to recommended care, is one mechanism explaining the association between trauma and poor health (Davis et al., 2004)
  - Might also help explain mediating role of PTSD symptoms
- However, a direct relationship between trauma exposure and mistrust of healthcare providers/systems has not been established.

# INTRODUCTION

- The current study examined associations between
  - history of betrayal trauma
  - trust in physicians
  - posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms
  - healthcare adherence
  
- in a sample of Canadian adults

# METHODS

- Participants
  - demographically representative sample of 293 Canadian adults
  - recruited using Qualtrics panels
  - completed an online survey

# METHODS

- Measures:
  - Brief Betrayal Trauma Survey
  - PCL-5
  - Trust in Physician Scale
  - Healthcare Adherence
  
  - Demographics

# RESULTS

- All analyses conducted controlling for income
- A series of multiple regression analyses was run to examine associations between all variables of interest

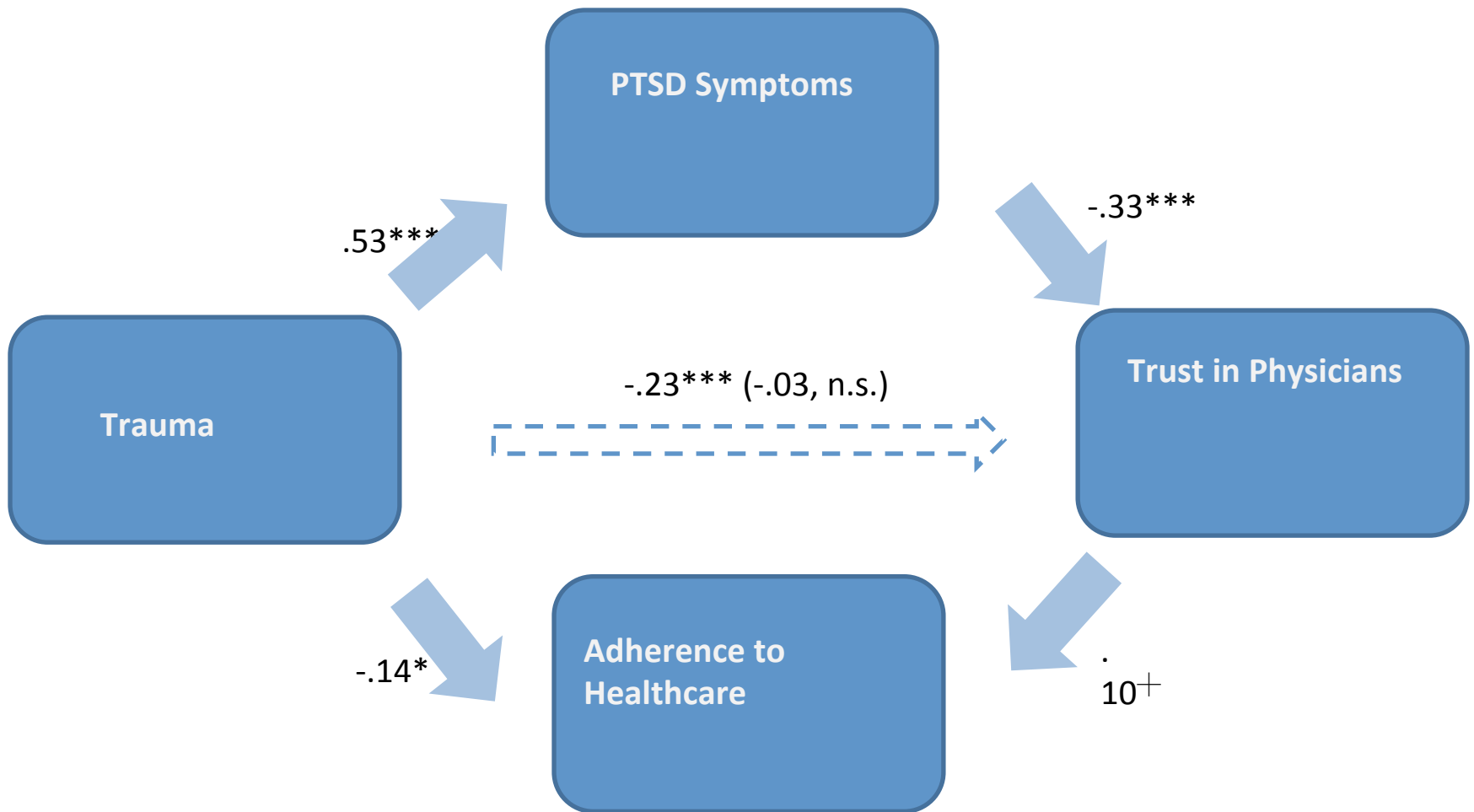


# Table 1. Summary of multiple regression analyses

Outcome			Predictors			
			Income	Betrayal Trauma	PTSD Symptoms	Trust in Physician
	R	F	Semi-partial correlations			
PTSD Symptoms	.53	57.42***	.04	.53***		
Trust in Physician	.23	8.01***	-.03	-.23***		
Trust in Physician	.39	17.52***	-.02	-.03	-.33***	
Healthcare Adherence	.22	3.75**	-.02	-.15*	.00	.10 <sup>+</sup>

\*\*\*p<.001, \*\*p<.01, \*p<.05, +p<.10

**Figure 1.** Visual representation of regression findings, with hypothesized directionality of associations. The association between trauma and physician trust controlling for PTSD symptoms is in parentheses.



# DISCUSSION

- Betrayal trauma impacts trust in physicians through posttraumatic distress
- Trust in physicians *may* be associated with healthcare adherence controlling for trauma and PTSD

# DISCUSSION

- Betrayal trauma exposure is associated with healthcare adherence above and beyond effects of PTSD symptoms and trust in physicians

# DISCUSSION

- Regardless of the cause, the fact that exposure to trauma affects adherence to healthcare points to the importance of trauma-informed medical practice.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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<http://uregina.ca/~schtlab/>

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