

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS, SELF-CONTROL, AND ADVERSE OUTCOMES IN EMERGING ADULTS

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POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS IN EMERGING ADULTHOOD (EA)

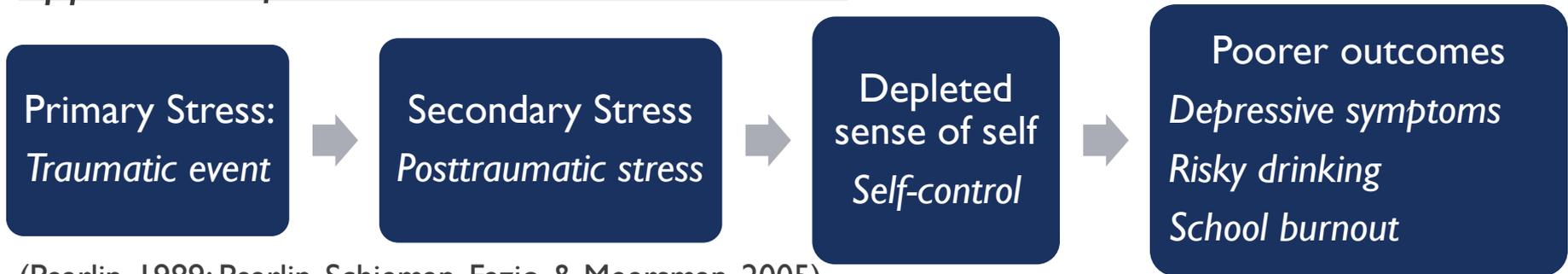
Emerging adulthood

- Exploration of possible selves in love, work, & worldviews
- Common behavioral & psychological disorders peak (Arnett, 2014; Schwartz, 2016)

Trauma is posited to increase vulnerability during this developmental stage

- 59% of college students meet the clinical criteria for trauma exposure (Elhai et al., 2012)
- Next steps: Understand how trauma exposure manifests in emerging adult outcomes

Application of the Stress Process Framework



(Pearlin, 1989; Pearlin, Schieman, Fazio, & Meersman, 2005),

STUDY DESIGN

Short-term (12 wks) longitudinal survey using online data collection

- Minimal attrition from Wave 1 ($N = 375$) to Wave 2 ($N = 354$).



Sample characteristics

- Recruited from a course that fulfills a university-wide requirement
- 91.5% female
- 74.4% white, 13.1% Latino/Hispanic, 8.5% African American/Black, 2.7% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1.3% other
- 22.7% reported *moderate* post traumatic symptomology

Variable	Wave	Measure	Examples	α
Post-traumatic stress (IV)	1	PTSD Civilian Checklist (Weathers et al., 1993)	How often do you experience various symptoms (e.g., “Repeated, disturbing memories of a stressful experience from the past”)	.88
Self-Control (mediator)	2	Brief Self-Control Scale (Tangney et al., 2004)	“I often act without thinking through all the alternatives” and “I do things that are bad for me”	.87
Depressive Symptoms (DV)	2	10-item CESD Scale (Irwin et al., 1999; Radloff, 1977)	During the previous week... “I could not ‘get going’” “I felt hopeful about the future.”	.84
Risky Drinking (DV)	2		Number of ... drinking days in the last 30 days drinks on a typical drinking day days w/5+ drinks in the last 30 days	
School burnout (DV)	2	School Burnout Inventory (Salmela-Aro et al., 2009).	“I feel overwhelmed by my school work” and “I feel a lack motivation in school work and often think of giving up”	.91

ANALYTIC PLAN

- Two structural equation models
 - Direct relationship between posttraumatic stress and negative outcomes (depressive symptoms, school burnout, risky drinking)
 - Indirect effect via self control on that relationship
- Fit indices: Tucker Lewis Index
Comparative Fit Index
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
 χ^2 to compare model 1 and 2

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Higher levels of posttraumatic stress will be associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms, risky drinking, and school burnout among college students.

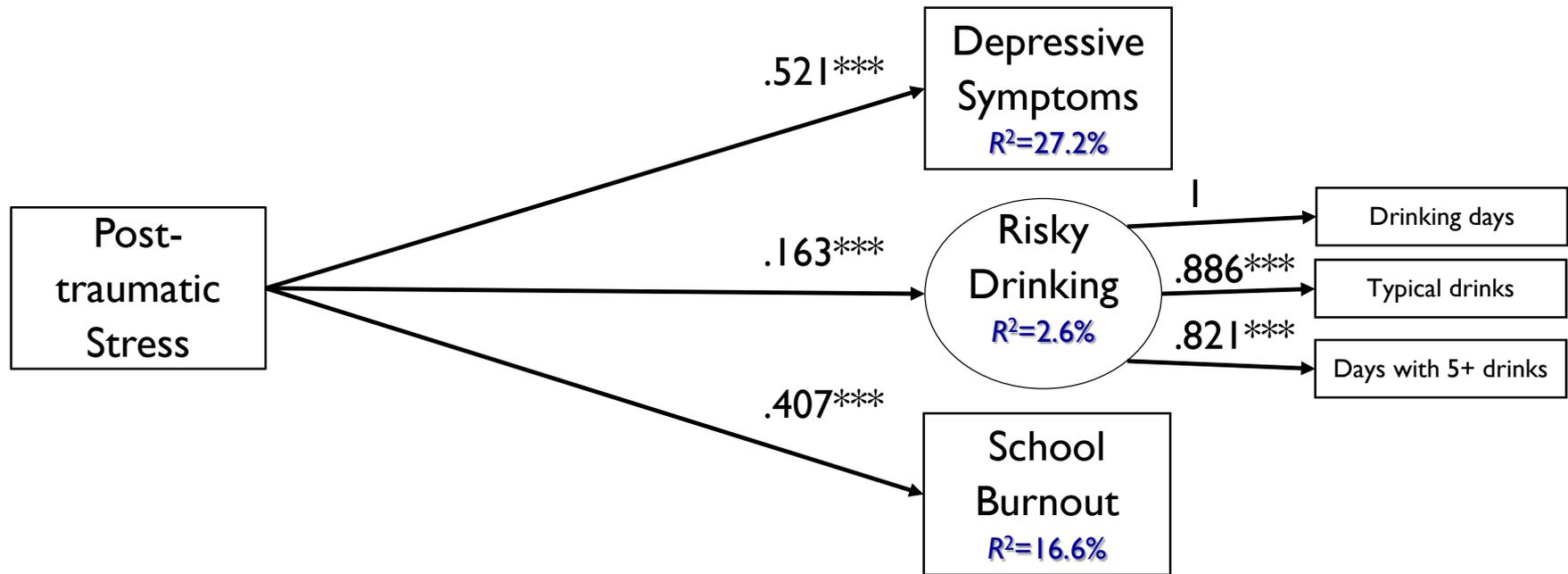


Figure 1. Path model of emerging adult college students ($N = 373$).

Notes. *** $p < .001$, TLI = .737, CFI = .887, and RMSEA = .16, $p < .001$

Standardized estimates are presented. The dashed line represents a non-significant pathway.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Self-control will mediate the relationship between posttraumatic stress and deleterious outcomes.

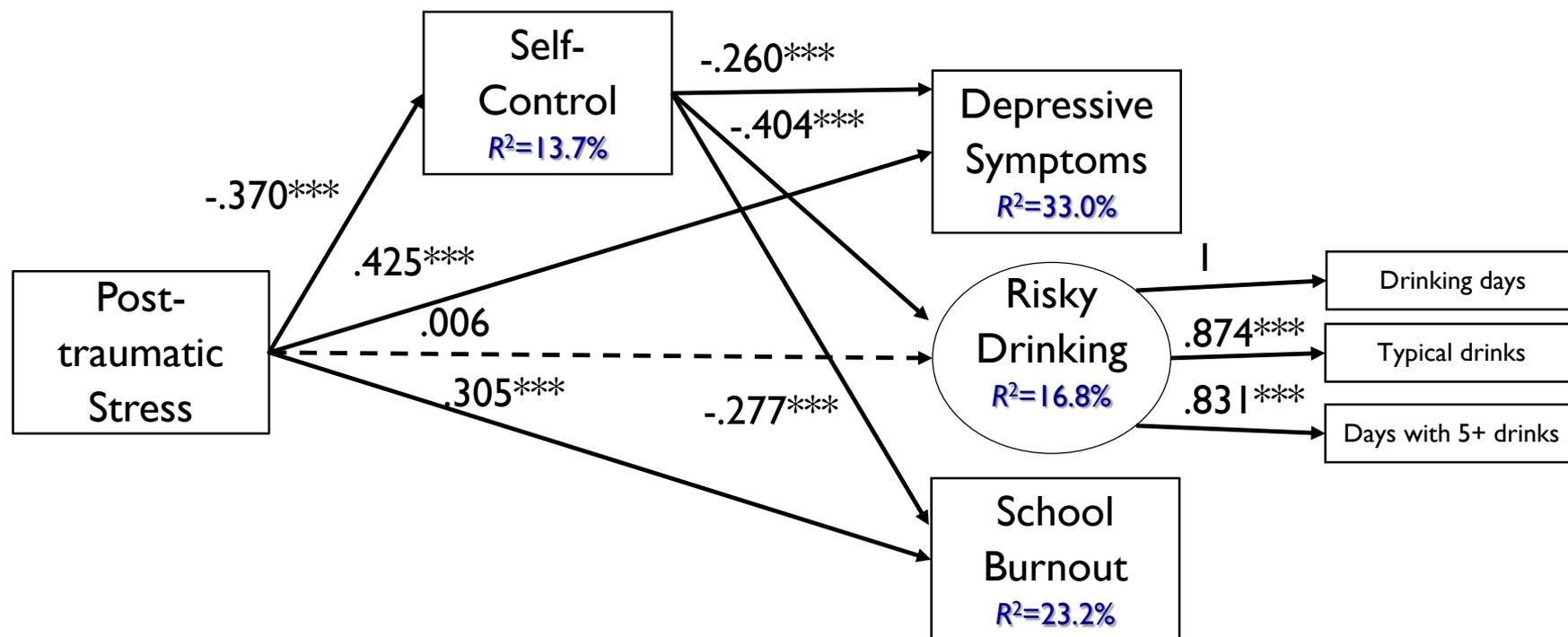


Figure 2. Structural equation model of emerging adult college students ($N = 373$)
 Notes. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$, TLI = .968, CFI = .989, RMSEA = .05, $p = .404$.
 Standardized estimates are presented. The dashed line represents a non-significant pathway.

DISCUSSION

Overall Findings

- The influence of trauma
- Support for stress-process framework

Limitations

- Sample population

Literature Contributions

- Novelty of exploring self control specifically
- Examination of a non clinical sample of emerging adults

IMPLICATIONS

Prevalence Findings

- 93.1% of the sample reported *some level* of symptomology
- 22.7% would be considered to have *moderate* symptomology

Intervention Efforts

- Early intervention is important in this developmental period
- Potential ways to identify needs on college campuses
- Appropriate intervention services

Thank you for your time!

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