The Effects of Coping Style On Illicit Substance Use In A Hispanic Young Adult Population
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Abstract
The current study investigated the relationship between coping styles (either a social support seeking or forbearance coping style) and illicit substance use in a sample of 445 Hispanic college students. The study used a structural model in Mplus to predict the relationship between coping styles and illicit substance use. Results indicated that social support seeking is influential in decreasing the probability of illicit substance use in the past month. Results were analyzed using a Multiple Indicators-Multiple Causes Procedure and the collectivistic coping styles measure. The results suggest that social support seeking is a significant predictor of reduced illicit substance use. The findings contribute to the understanding of the relationship between coping styles and substance use in the Hispanic population.

Discussion
The results of the study indicate that social support seeking is a significant predictor of reduced illicit substance use. This finding is consistent with the research of Chung, Langenbucher, Labouvie, Pandina, and Moos (2001) who found that lower levels of social support were associated with higher levels of substance use. This finding is also consistent with the research of Galaif, Sussman, Chou, and Wills (2003) who found that social support was negatively related to substance use in high risk youth. The findings suggest that interventions aimed at increasing social support may be effective in reducing illicit substance use among Hispanic college students.

Objective
The current study investigated the relationship between coping styles (either a social support seeking or forbearance coping style) and illicit substance use. In addition, we sought to determine the impact of gender, age, and acculturation level on illicit substance use.

Approach to Analyses
Discriminate the covariates of interest, namely, age, gender, and acculturation level, as well as the exogenous predictors of illicit substance use. The exogenous predictors were age, gender, and SASH acculturation level. The endogenous variables were past month illicit substance use (dichotomous), forbearance coping (CCSM factor 1), and social support seeking coping (CCSM factor 2). The model was estimated using structural equation modeling in Mplus.

Hypotheses
Individuals who report being less social and less likely to have a social support seeking coping strategy are more likely to use illicit substances.

Participants
The sample consisted of 445 Hispanic college students (n = 445). The sample was recruited from a large public university in the southwestern United States. The sample was predominantly female (59%).

Method
The Forbearance Scale for Hispanics (SASH) was used to measure social support seeking coping among Hispanic college students. The SASH scale assesses how acculturated Hispanics are to American culture. The scale consists of 12 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The results were analyzed using a Multiple Indicators-Multiple Causes Procedure and the collectivistic coping styles measure.

Results
The results of the study indicate that social support seeking is a significant predictor of reduced illicit substance use. The findings contribute to the understanding of the relationship between coping styles and substance use in the Hispanic population.

References

Conclusions
The findings of the study suggest that social support seeking is a significant predictor of reduced illicit substance use. This finding is consistent with the research of Chung, Langenbucher, Labouvie, Pandina, and Moos (2001) who found that lower levels of social support were associated with higher levels of substance use. The findings also suggest that interventions aimed at increasing social support may be effective in reducing illicit substance use among Hispanic college students. The findings contribute to the understanding of the relationship between coping styles and substance use in the Hispanic population.