

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Functions of NSSI

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INTRODUCTION

Non-suicidal Self-injury (NSSI) is the deliberate harm to bodily tissues without the intent to die (Nock, 2008). NSSI is problematic in college age students (Whitlock, Eckenrode, Silverman, 2006) as they attempt to juggle classes, jobs, social relationships, and extracurricular activities.

There are many reasons people engage in NSSI, and many are divided into inter- and intra- personal functions. These consist of intrapersonal functions such as self-punishment and self-care, and interpersonal functions such as peer-bonding and interpersonal boundaries.

Previous literature indicates that interpersonal functions are fulfilled by engaging in NSSI (Sadeh et al., 2014). Additional research suggests interpersonal functions are associated with a higher frequency of NSSI (Muehlenkamp, Brausch, Quigley, Whitlock, 2013).

HYPOTHESES

- We predicted the intrapersonal function's correlation with NSSI frequency would be stronger than that of interpersonal functions.
- We also hypothesized an interaction between interpersonal and intrapersonal functions of NSSI such that high levels of both will result in more frequent NSSI.

DISCUSSION

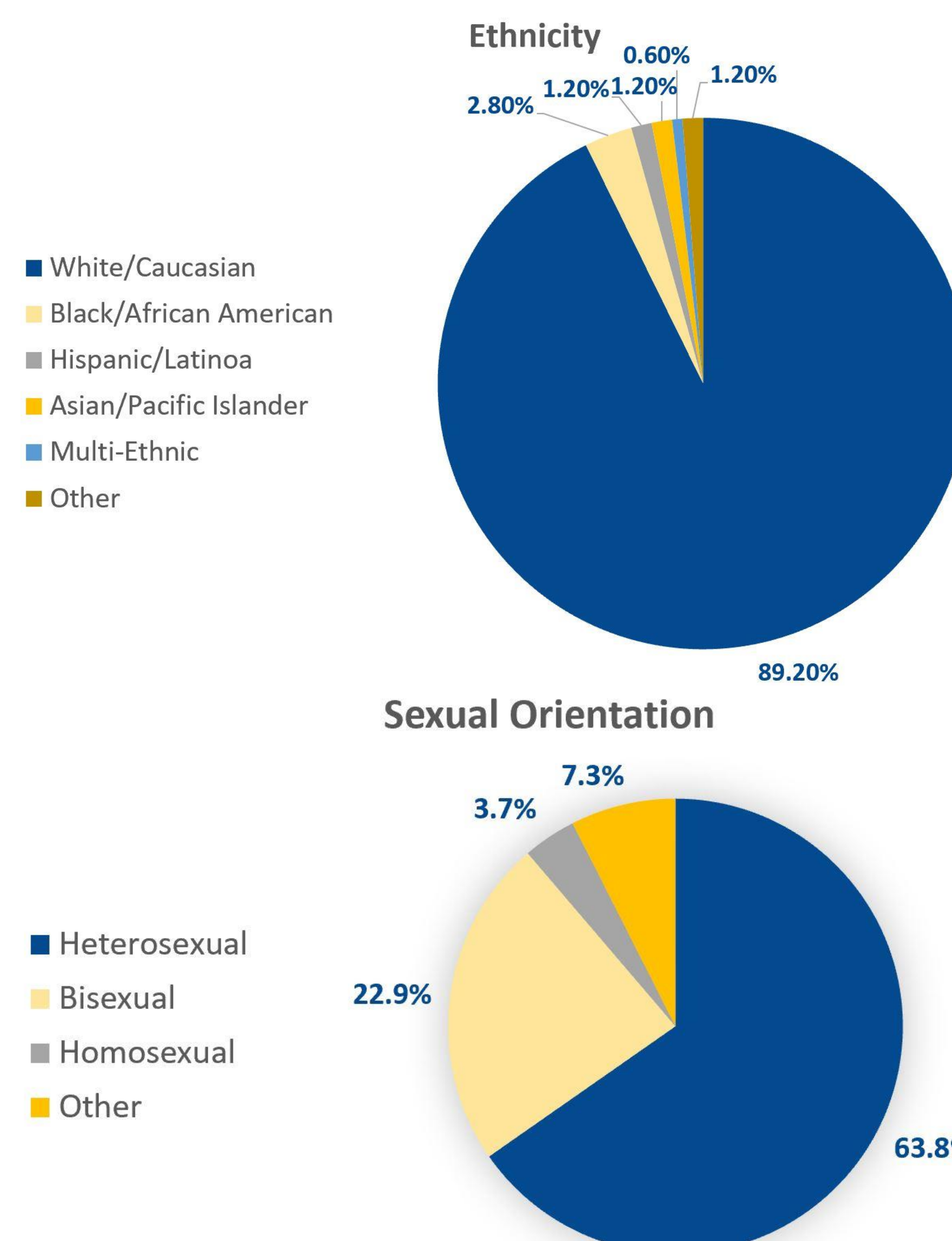
The bivariate correlation results did not support our hypotheses because neither interpersonal functions nor intrapersonal functions correlated with frequency of NSSI on their own. Significant main and interactive effects, although small, were found between interpersonal functions and intrapersonal functions and NSSI frequency in the past year. These results support our hypothesis that an interaction between high levels of interpersonal and intrapersonal functions of NSSI will result in more frequent NSSI.

People who report high levels of interpersonal and intrapersonal functions of NSSI may have a higher risk of more frequent NSSI. Using this knowledge, a personalized treatment plan can be created for specific functions of NSSI reported by an individual. This could possibly consist of different coping methods targeting to fulfill the same functions that would lead to the act of NSSI.

METHOD

319 participants ($M_{age}=19.06$) who reported a history of NSSI were recruited by a screening survey. These university students, who have engaged in past NSSI and never attempted suicide, identified themselves primarily as female (83.1%), as well as male (12.5%), transgender and other (3.8 %).

They completed in-lab, computer-based surveys including the Inventory of Statements About Self-Injury (ISAS) and the Self-Injurious Thoughts and Behaviors Inventory (SITBI), consisting of self-report data on motivation for and frequency of NSSI.



RESULTS

SPEARMAN'S RHO

Neither endorsing interpersonal ($p=.106$) nor intrapersonal functions ($p=.686$) of self-injury has significant correlations with NSSI frequency in the past year.

INTERPERSONAL FUNCTIONS

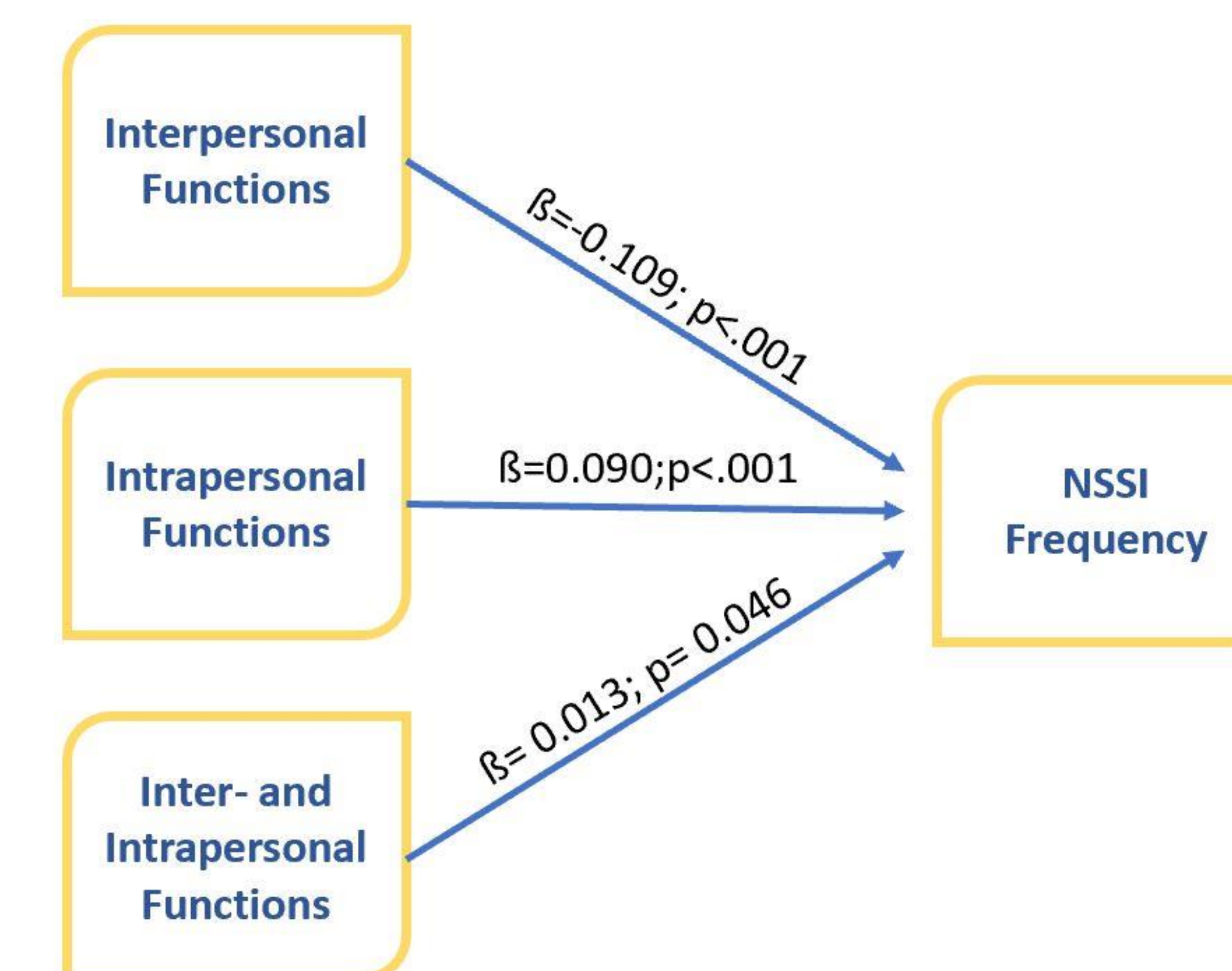
Rho	-.121
p	.106

INTRAPERSONAL FUNCTIONS

Rho	.029
p	.686

POISSON REGRESSION ANALYSES

There was a significant interaction between the endorsement of using NSSI for both interpersonal and intrapersonal functions ($B=.013$, $p=.046$) on the self-reported frequency of NSSI over the past year.



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REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST