

# Associations Between Mindfulness and Problematic Alcohol Use

A. Broyles, B.A.<sup>1</sup>; Y. Castro, Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>; W. Heppner, Ph.D.<sup>3</sup>; L. Strong, Ph.D.<sup>4</sup>; V. Correa-Fernandez, Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston, <sup>2</sup>University of Texas Austin, <sup>3</sup>Georgia College & State University, <sup>4</sup>University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

## Background

- Latino individuals show similar rates of alcohol use compared to Non-Latinos, but have a higher likelihood of alcohol-related injuries or fatalities.
- Latino populations have higher rates of alcohol-attributable car crash injuries, emergency room visits, and homicides.
- Understanding psychosocial factors related to alcohol use may help address disparities.
- Trait mindfulness has been identified as a protective factor against alcohol use behaviors in the general population.
- Little research has focused on this association in Latino samples.

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## Present Study

### Research Question:

- Is trait mindfulness associated with problematic alcohol use in a sample of Latino adults?

### Hypothesis:

- Low levels of trait mindfulness will be associated with high levels of problematic alcohol use

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## Methods

### Participants:

- Bilingual Latino residents of the greater Houston area (N=140). Data was obtained from Project REAL.

### Measures:

- Mindfulness*- Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) (Five Facets: Observe, Describe, Act with Awareness, Nonjudge, & Nonreact)
- Alcohol*- Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT)

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## Analyses

- Linear and logistic regressions
- Analyses adjusted by age, gender, years of education, partner status, and employment status
- Post hoc analyses examining the association of each facet of mindfulness with problematic alcohol use

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## Results

Adjusted Linear Regression Analysis for Mindfulness Predicting Problematic Alcohol Use<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
Age	.031	.036	.083
Gender	2.695	.822	0.300*
Years of Education	.183	.170	.101
Partner Status	-.314	.865	-.033
Employment Status	-.299	.815	-.034
FFMQ Total	-.053	.024	-.207*

a. Notes: R-squared: .131 (\*p < .05)

Among those who indicated prior alcohol use:

- Low trait mindfulness was significantly associated with high AUDIT scores ( $p<0.05$ ), indicating problematic alcohol use
- Low scores on “Act with Awareness” facet of mindfulness were associated with high AUDIT scores
- Other facets of mindfulness were not significantly associated with alcohol use

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## Conclusions

- Findings contribute to literature linking mindfulness and health risk behaviors, specifically alcohol.
- Low trait mindfulness may be an important factor in problematic alcohol use in Latinos.
- Mindfulness-based interventions, which focus on staying mindful and “in the present”, may help reduce problematic alcohol use.
- Interventions focused on promoting acting with awareness may be particularly effective in Latino populations.
- Future research should explore the potential efficacy of this type of intervention in a sample of Latinos who indicate problematic levels of alcohol use.

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## References

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