

# Barriers to Health Care Mediate the Relationship between Trauma and Health Related Quality of Life in Native Americans

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## Introduction

- Overall, Native Americans experience higher mental health disparities compared to other ethnicities (Marrone, 2007).
- Healthcare access and utilization rates are significantly lower in Native Americans compared to the general population.
- Previous research has shown that Native Americans exhibit less trust of modern physicians compared to general public, with 70% reporting use of traditional healers (Guadagnolo et al., 2009; Buchwald et al., 2000).
- It was hypothesized that there is a correlation between severity of trauma and the quantity of barriers to healthcare. Furthermore, we hypothesized that the number of barriers to healthcare mediated the relationship between trauma and health related quality of life.

## Method

### Participants/Procedures

- 83 participants who identified as Native American were recruited for the study through Facebook Advertisements.
- Participants filled out a questionnaire completely online that assessed for life experiences, mental health, and ease of healthcare.
- 77% of participants were female, 95.2% identified with tribes located in the Great Lakes region.

## Method (cont.)

### Measures

**Life Events Checklist (LEC-5; Weathers et al., 2013)** is a self-report questionnaire used to screen for potentially traumatic experiences in a person's lifetime.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist (PCL-5; Weathers et al., 2013)** is a self-report questionnaire to assess for known symptoms of PTSD.

**Barriers to Healthcare Checklist (BHC; Raymaker et al., 2017)** is a self-report questionnaire used to identify and quantify known obstacles to accessing healthcare.

**Health related Quality of Life (HRQOL; adapted from CDC)** is a self-report questionnaire used to assess perceived overall physical and mental health.

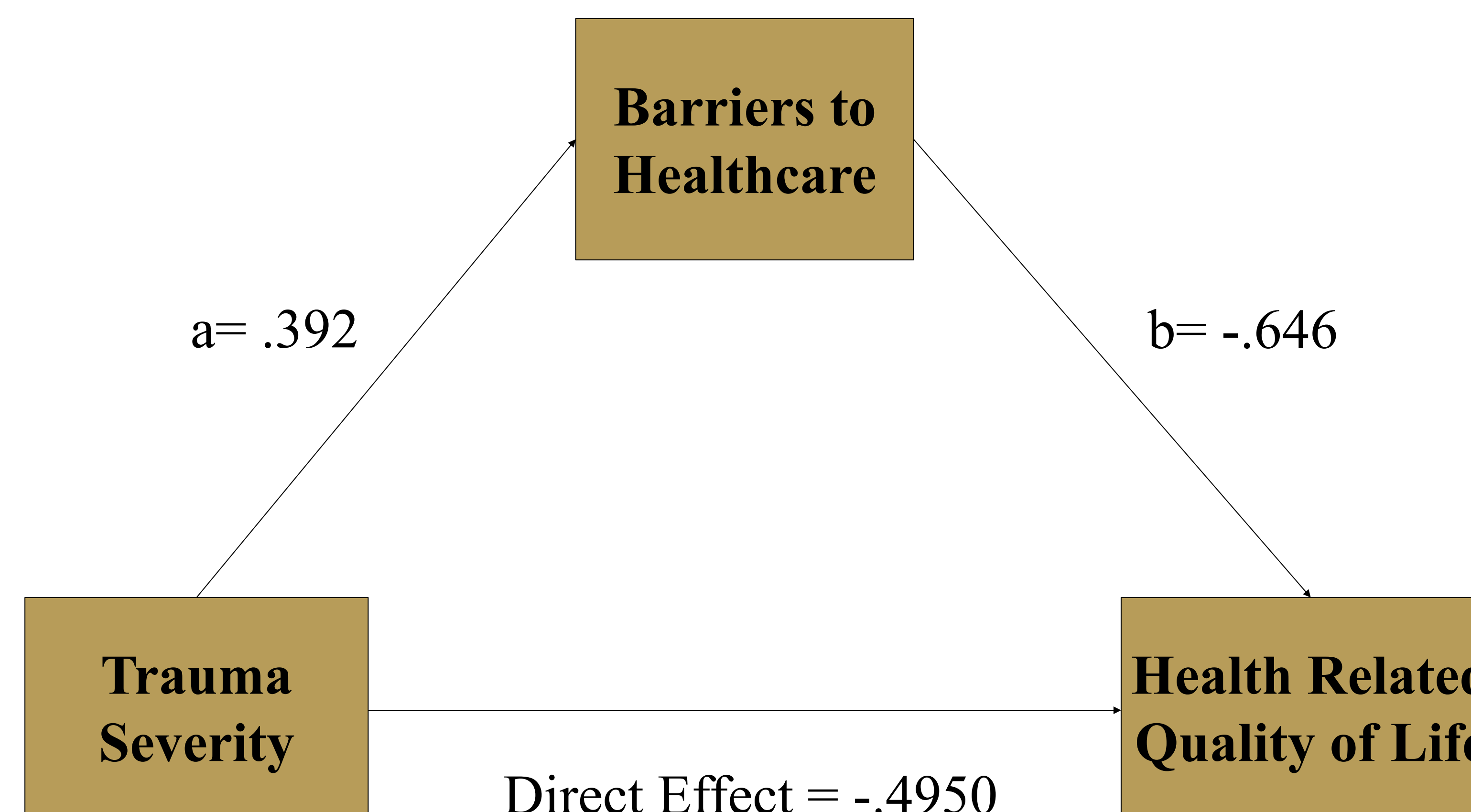
## Aims & Objectives

- Aim I: Assess for prevalence and severity of trauma within a given Native American population.  
 Aim II: Assess for a relative number of barriers to healthcare within the sample.  
 Aim III: Compare severity of trauma to the number of barriers to healthcare experienced by participants within the sample.

## Results (cont.)

Mediation was conducted using PROCESS macro for SPSS.  
 Evaluation of data revealed that trauma was positively associated with healthcare barriers ( $a = .392$ ,  $p = .002$ ).  
 Healthcare barriers were found to be negatively associated with HRQOL ( $b = -.646$ ,  $p = .000$ ).  
 The confidence interval for the indirect effect ( $ab = -.253$ ; CI:  $-.511$  to  $-.062$ ) indicated that healthcare barriers mediate the relationship between trauma and HRQOL.

## Results



## Discussion

- The results of this study suggest that increased severity of mental health symptoms related to trauma are influenced by a greater amount of hardship accessing healthcare services.
- Greater consideration should be had for the number of barriers to healthcare when regarding patient outcomes in Native American populations.
- Practitioners should anticipate traditional healing practices in Native American patient populations.
- Future studies should be done in how to reduce barriers to healthcare to improve health related quality of life.