

# Correlation between Cocaine Use, Gambling Behaviors, and Body Image

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## Introduction

- Disordered eating behavior and illicit drug use are known to be relatively common among college students compared to other demographics (Ganson et al., 2021)
- Studies have shown that problematic cocaine use is proportionally correlated to the co-occurrence of significant gambling behaviors (Ethier et al., 2020)
- Gambling behaviors are typically co-occurring with other psychiatrically significant behaviors, including binge eating, which ones study found 8.1% of gamblers engage in (Tang et al., 2020)
- One study found that of the participants with both a gambling disorder and an eating disorder, 47% had a drug use disorder (Lemón et al., 2021)
- The purpose of this study was to assess the relationships between cocaine use, body image, and gambling behaviors

## Hypothesis

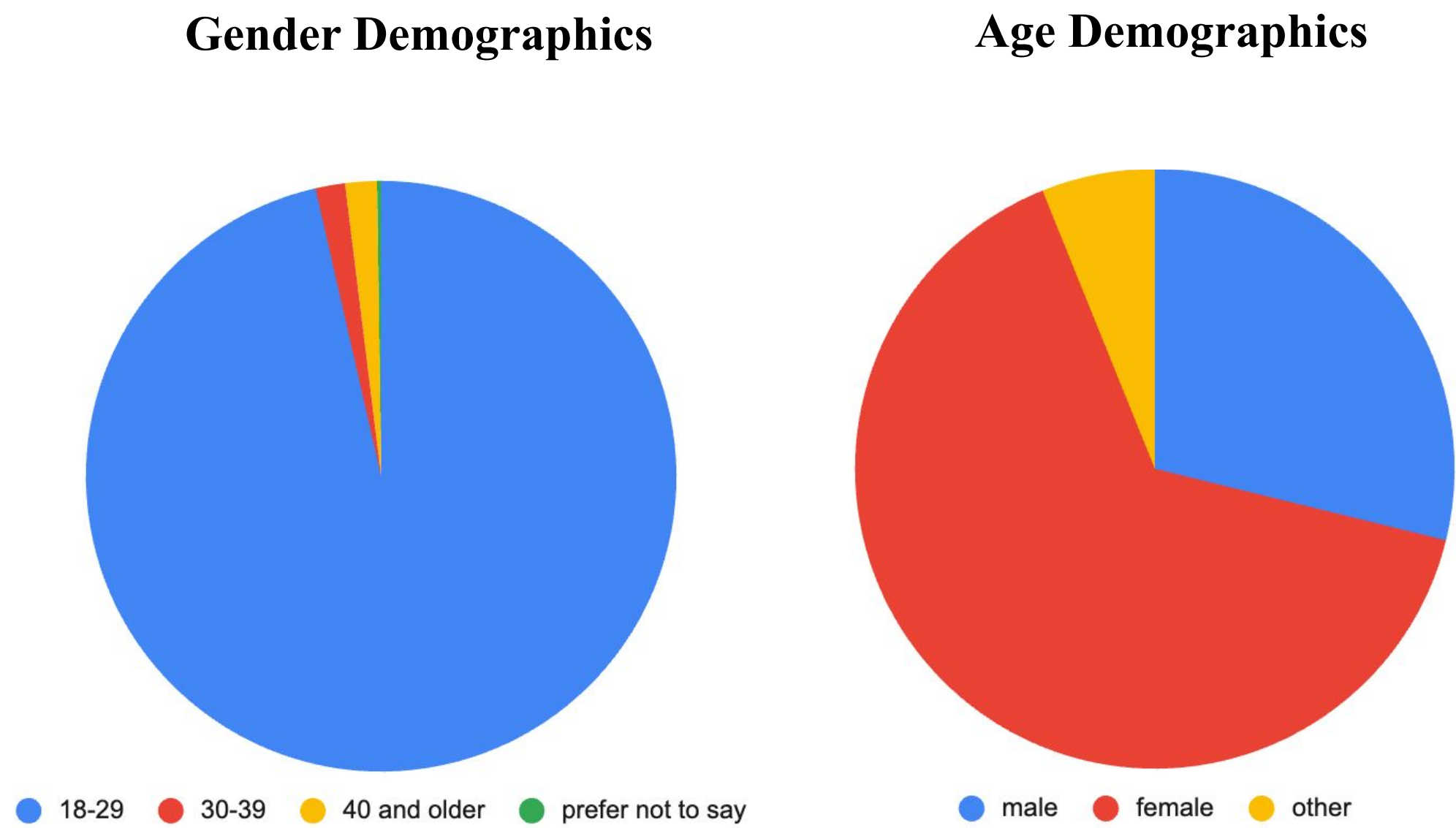
- We hypothesized that gambling behaviors would be positively correlated with cocaine usage and signs of poor body image, as well as cocaine usage being positively correlated with signs of poor body image.

## Methods

- The cross sectional study gathered data through an anonymous survey on Google Form
- Participants were recruited through social media
- There were 878 participants ages 18 and older
- The mutli-scale questionnaire contained 76 questions inquiring about demographics, substance use, and lifestyle habits, including those regarding body image, cocaine use, and gambling behaviors
- The data colluded were analyzed using Pearson’s correlation coefficient in SPSS version 28.0

## Results

878 Total Responses



**Table 1: Baseline Characteristics of Study Population**

Age	Percentage	Gender Identity	Percentage
18-29 years	96.4	Male	28.8
30-39 years	1.6	Female	65.1
40 and older/ prefer not to say	2.0	Other	6.1

**Table 2: Correlation of Cocaine Usage and Gambling Related Issue**

	Cocaine usage
Presence of financial trouble as a result of gambling	0.307**

p<0.01 = \*\* p<0.05=\*

**Table 3: Correlations of Body Image with Cocaine Usage and with Gambling Issues**

	Cocaine usage	Gambling behaviors
Food restriction to control weight/shape	0.077*	0.093*
Purposefully fasting to control weight/shape	0.165**	0.127**
Presence of a definite fear of gaining weight	0.072*	0.089*
Self-induced illness for weight control	0.163**	0.306**
Compulsive exercise for weight control	0.100**	0.163**
Sense of lost control over eating	0.095**	0.161**
Binge eating episodes	0.134**	0.256**
Weight self-judgment	0.086*	0.111**
Struggles with food noise	N/A	0.105**

p<0.01 = \*\* p<0.05=\*

## Discussion and Conclusion

- The objective of this study was to evaluate how cocaine, body image, and gambling are correlated
- Results reveal a positive correlation between cocaine usage and having financial trouble as a result of gambling. Problematic cocaine use is correlated with more severe gambling behaviors, reinforcing our findings (Ethier et al., 2020).
- A positive correlation was found across multiple questions indicating poor body image and cocaine usage, as well as many of those same questions and having financial trouble as a result of gambling.
- Taking extreme efforts to control weight, such as by inducing illness, is strongly correlated to using cocaine, and to having a gambling issue
- Cocaine use and efforts to control weight may be correlated due to the drug’s appetite suppression (Ganson et al., 2021). Similarly, dangerous efforts to control weight and gambling issues may be correlated due to coinciding psychological factors as behavioral addictions (Tang et al., 2020).
- Individuals with both an eating disorder and with a gambling disorder are more likely to have a substance use issue relative to those only with a gambling disorder (Lemón et al, 2021). Our results found that there were positive correlations between all three variables.
- With these results, it is important to be aware of the associations between issues with body image, cocaine, and gambling. Such that, each issue should be addressed with the others in mind, with preventive measures accounting for complicating coinciding issues.

## Future Work and Limitations

- Possible limitations of this study include the self-reported data
- Future research could assess brain chemistry that may explain this relationship
- Results from this study should help develop educational programs to promote awareness of the risk of substance use on behaviors and self-image.

## References

