



The Association Between Familial History of Drug Dependence and Treatment Seeking Behaviors



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Introduction

- Evidence shows that having a family member that has suffered from drug dependence is a major risk factor to falling into drug dependence. (Hatoum, 2023).
- Familial history of drug issues can also create stigma in someone's life about seeking help for drug treatment. Having family members who have had unsuccessful treatments including detox or inpatient rehab, can cause people to have less trust that their treatments are going to have a positive outcome on their lives (NIH, 1970).
- The research is lacking in that there is little to no data on whether or not an addicted adult's likelihood to seek treatment is affected by if they have family members with a dependency issue. Thus, there is uncertainty on whether or not treatment seeking behaviors are affected by familial history of drug dependence.

Research Questions

- Is there an association between familial history of drug dependence and treatment seeking behaviors?
- Does this association differ between males and females?

Methods

Sample

- Respondents (n=43093) were drawn from the National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Condition (NESARC), a nationally representative sample of non-institutionalized adults in the U.S.
- In this study only participants who have or had a drug dependency issue were included. There were 5166 participants with valid data for this research.

Measures

- Family Sum was created by adding the number of drug dependent family members for each drug dependent individual. The family members who were asked about for this study include Mother, Father, Aunts, Uncles, Grandparents, and Siblings.
- The population of this study was focused on participants who have or had drug dependency issues. Any participant who answers "Yes" to a question on whether or not they have ever had a drug dependency problem was kept in the study
- The participants treatment seeking behavior was identified by their answer to a question "Have you ever sought treatment for drugs". If they answered yes, they showed treatment seeking behaviors and if they answered no, they did not show treatment seeking behaviors.

Results

Bivariate

- Number of Family Members with Drug Dependence (O.R. 1.37316, CI 1.289-1.461 $p < 2 \times 10^{-16}$) is significantly associated with treatment seeking behaviors in Drug Dependent adults. In particular, the odds of treatment seeking is expected to increase by a factor of 1.37 for each additional family member with a drug dependence issue.

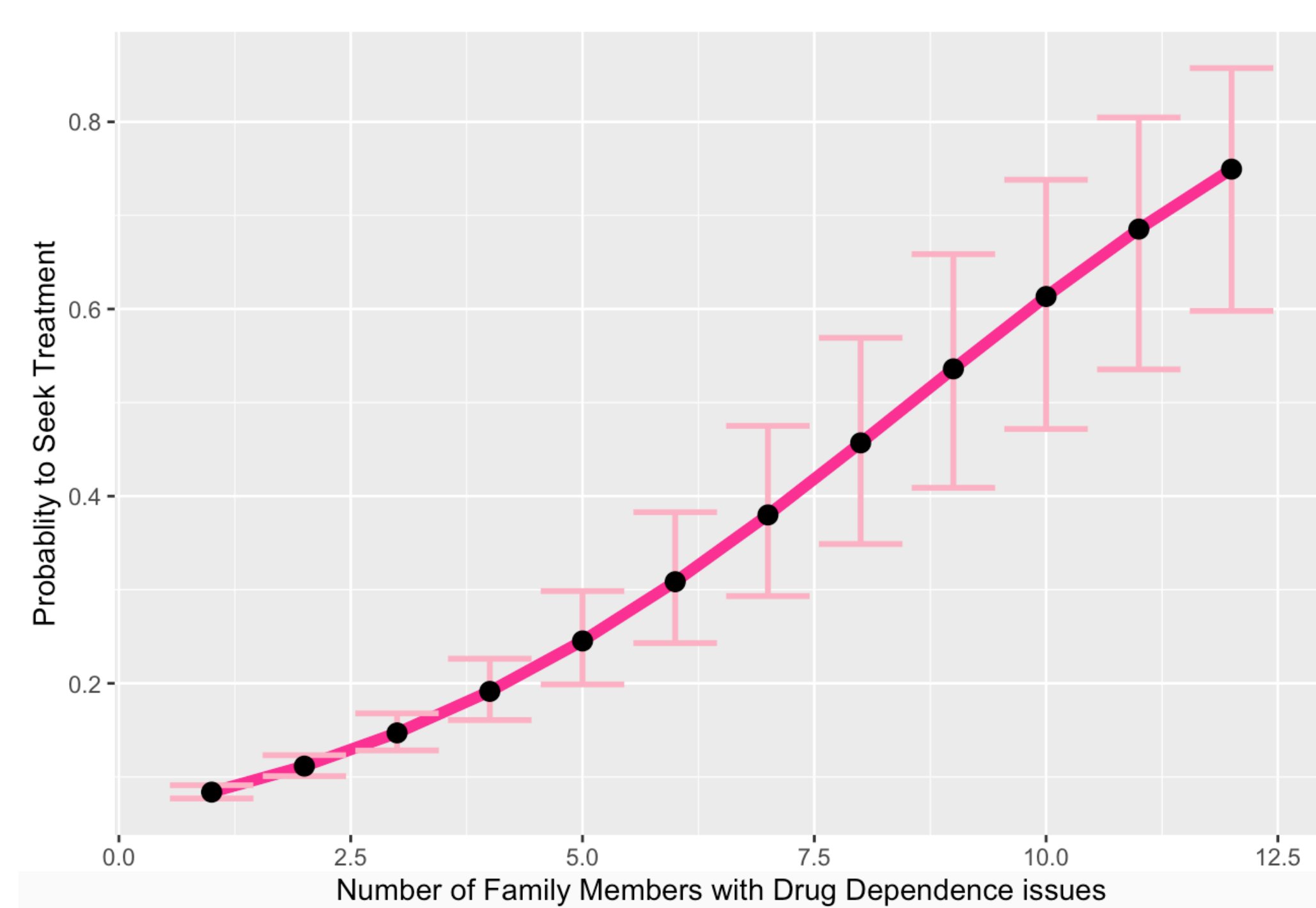


Figure 1: The Probability to Seek Treatment and the Number of Family Members with Drug Dependence

Multivariate

- Number of family members with Drug Dependence (O.R. 1.4, CI 1.31- 1.49) is significantly associated with the likelihood of treatment seeking behavior after controlling for biological sex. In particular, the odds of treatment seeking behavior is expected to increase by a factor of 1.4 for each additional family member with a drug dependence issue
- Sex (O.R. 1.472, CI: 1.22-1.782, $p < 0.0000066$) is significantly and positively associated with odds of seeking treatment. In particular, the odds of treatment seeking is expected to be 1.472 times higher if the participant is a male compared to if the participant is female, controlling for the number of family members with drug dependency issues.

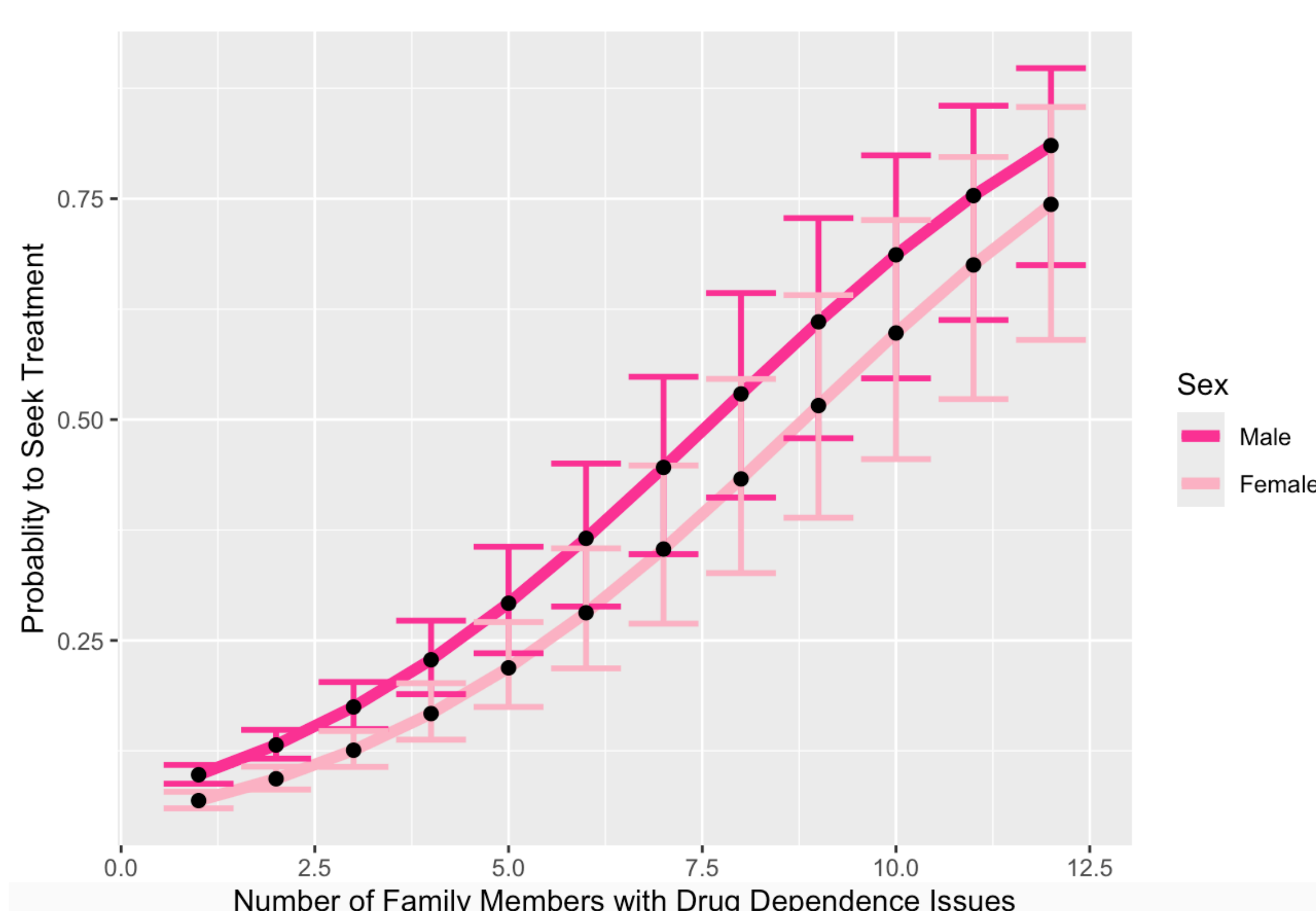


Figure 2: The Probability to Seek Treatment and the Number of Family Members with Drug Dependence separated by sex.

Discussion

- As the number of family members with drug dependency issues increases, the higher the odds that the addicted individual will show treatment seeking behaviors
- Men portray slightly higher treatment seeking behaviors than women.
- Future research is needed to determine the role of other covariates (e.g. treatment type, race, age).
- There is a strong relationship between familial history of drug dependence and treatment seeking behaviors in addicted individuals, for future research this can help to put in place additional support systems to help those whose family stigma and dependence is affecting their ability to seek help.

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