



Defiance, Compliance, and Gender as Predictors of Disordered Eating in Adolescence

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Introduction

- **Defiance presents differently in adolescents depending on gender**, with boys more likely to present with external, rule-breaking behavior (Smiragdi et al., 2020).
- **Compliance includes** resisting tempting impulses, controlling frustrations, and delaying gratification (Kochanska, 1998).
- **Disordered Eating** is related to issues of control, both loss of control and using food to exert control (Sarra & Abar, 2022), implicating both defiance and compliance as possible predictors.
- **Self-Determination Theory:** The reaction to loss of choice or freedom will either be rebellious and defiant, or submissive and compliant (Weinstein et al., 2020).

Hypothesis: High defiance, high compliance, and gender will predict high disordered eating scores.

Method

Measures:

- **Disordered Eating: TFEQ**
Three-Factor Eating Questionnaire Score (Duarte et al., 2020)
- **Defiance: YSR**
Youth Self Report, Rule-Breaking Subscale Score (Evans et al., 2020).
- **Compliance: NEO**
NEO Five Factor Inventory:
Conscientiousness Subscale Score + Agreeableness Subscale Score (Gilmartin et al., 2022).

Sample:

- $N = 96$, 56 males and 40 females
- Age Range: 13 – 16, ($M = 14.57$, $SD = 1.06$)
- Ethnicity: 59.4% White, 27.1% African American, 10.4% Asian, 1% American Indian, 2.1% Other.

Results

Table 1

Pearson's Product-Moment Correlations among Variables of Interest (N=96)

Variable	<i>M(SD)</i>	1	2
1. TFEQ	38.40(10.18)	.	.
2. YSR	3.33(2.80)	0.21*	.
3. NEO	29.84(9.82)	-0.04	-0.26**

Note. ** $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$.

Defiance and Gender were both significant predictors of disordered eating. Compliance was not.

Multiple linear regression indicated 16.9% of the variance in disordered eating in adolescence was accounted for by the three predictors.

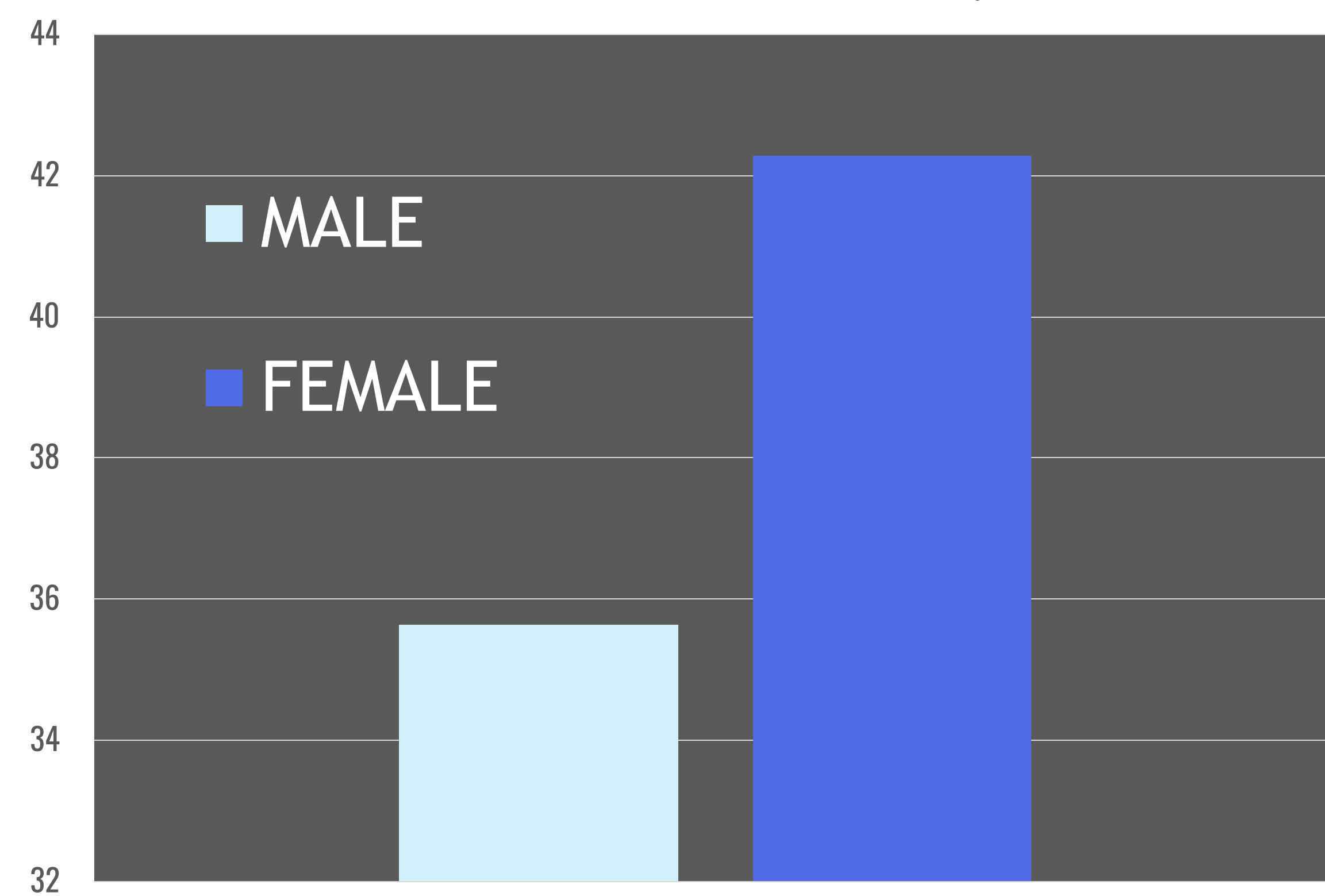
$$F(3,92) = 7.43, p < .001$$

Defiance - significant predictor ($\beta = 0.28$, $t = 2.91$, $p = .005$).

Gender - significant predictor ($\beta = 0.40$, $t = 4.10$, $p < .001$).

Figure 1

Mean TFEQ Scores by Gender



Males scored significantly lower on disordered eating
Males ($M= 35.64, SD= 10.04$)

Females ($M= 42.28, SD= 9.18$)

$t(94)= -3.30, p=.001,$
 $d= -.68, 95\% CI [-1.09,-0.26]$

Discussion

Defiance and Gender both significantly predict disordered eating, and males scored significantly higher on defiance. Compliance was not a significant predictor.

- Defiance significantly predicts disordered eating; therefore, disordered eating may be a form of rule-breaking behavior, specifically in males.
- Our sample scored low on compliance. This could be due to participant age range.
- Personality measures may not fully encompass compliance.
- Future research could further investigate the relationship between defiance and disordered eating.

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