

Introduction

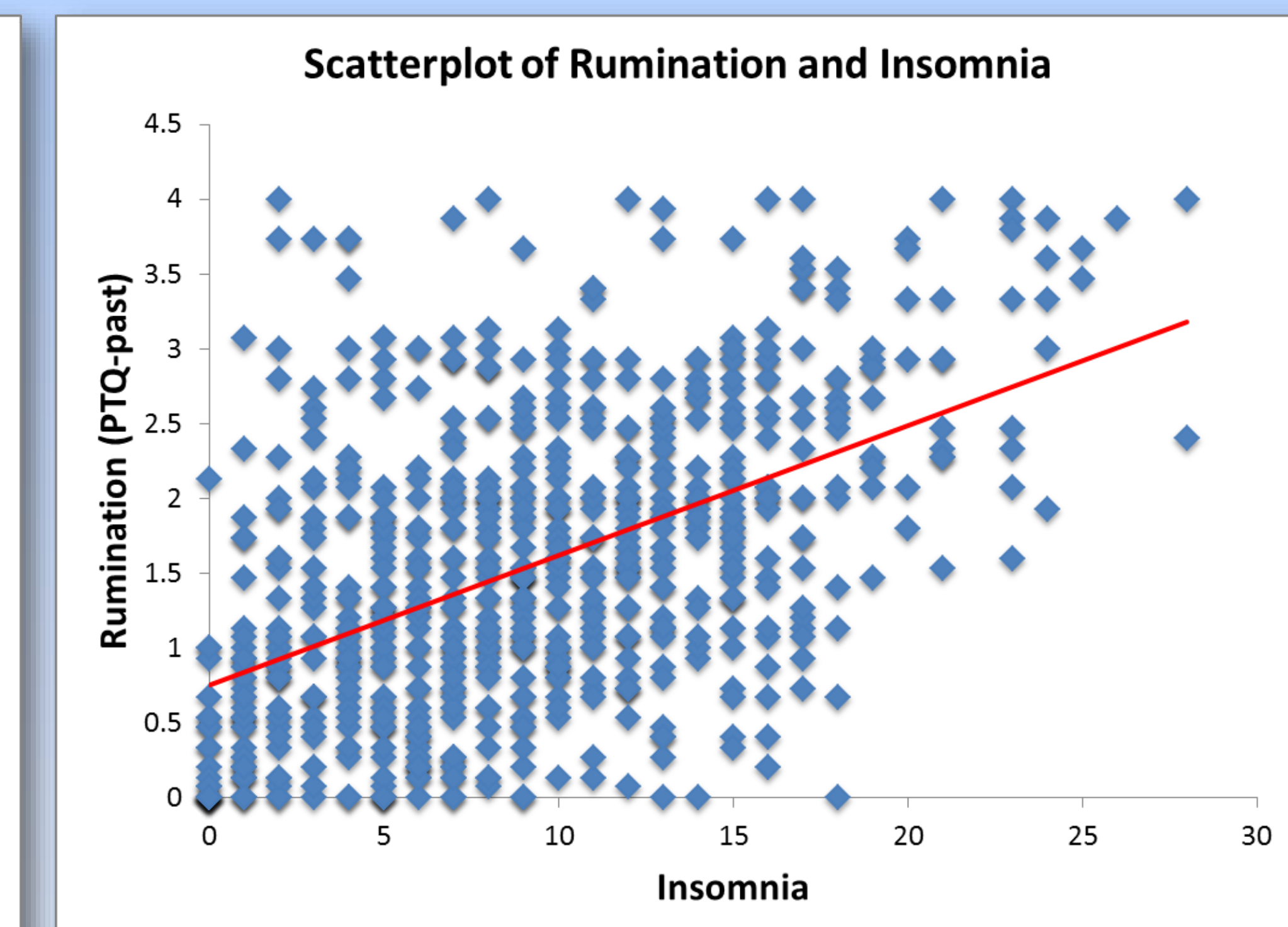
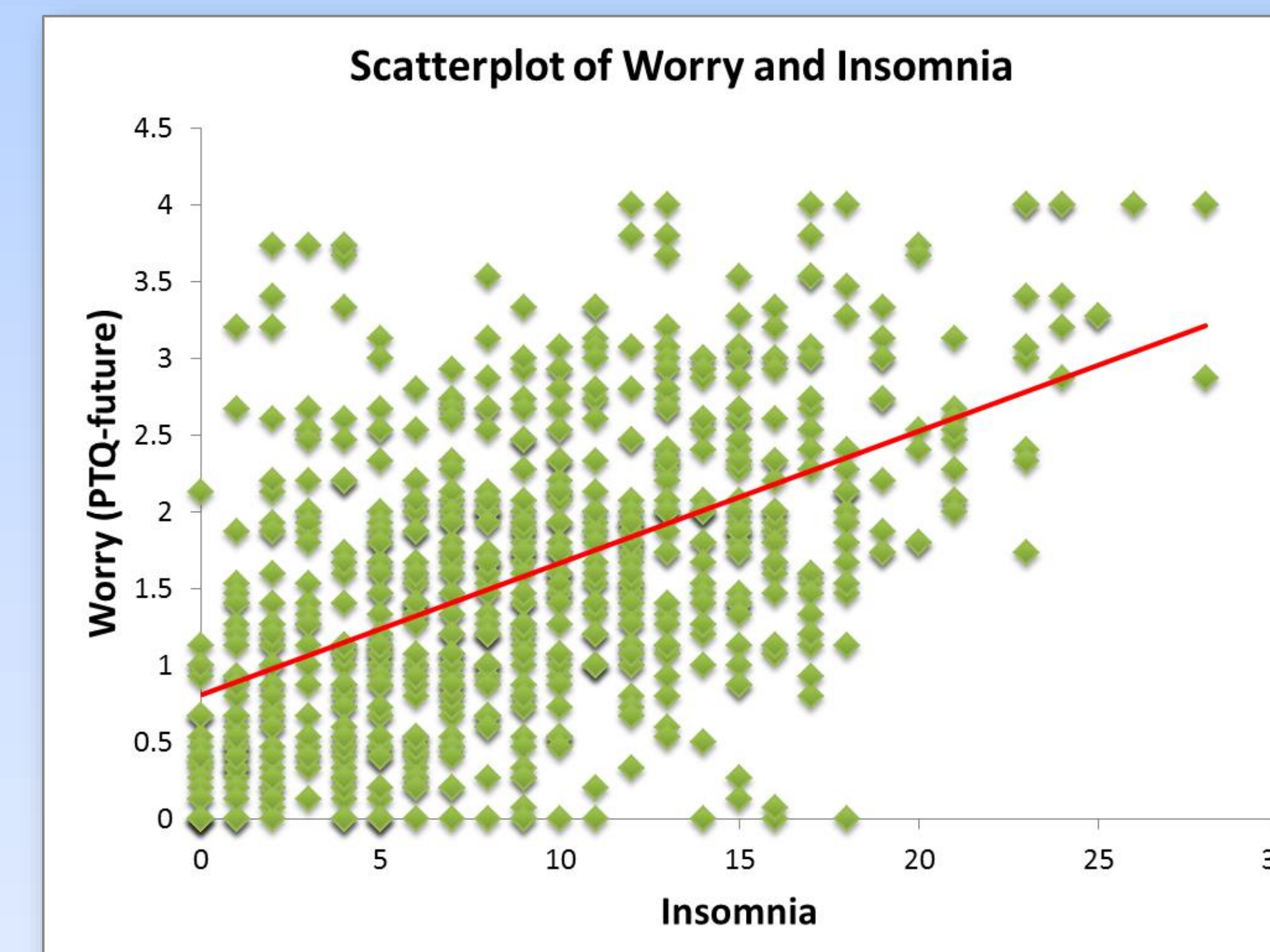
Rumination (past-oriented negative thoughts) and worry (future-oriented negative thoughts) have been cited as significant contributors to the development and maintenance of insomnia in individuals throughout the world (e.g., Harvey, 2002; Takano, Iijima, & Tanno, 2012). Many studies have looked at rumination or worry as predictors of insomnia but few have simultaneously looked at rumination and worry as predictors of insomnia. Recent evidence indicates that both worry and rumination are positively correlated with insomnia (Benham, Popan, & Arevalo, 2013). Therefore, we predicted that rumination and worry would have a positive relationship with insomnia. We also examined which of the two forms of perseverative cognition (rumination or worry) might more strongly predict insomnia.

Methods

Seven-hundred-and-forty-seven college students completed an online survey that included demographic measures, self-reported insomnia, and two versions of a perseverative thinking measure to assess worry and rumination. Participants were recruited through class announcements and social media. Insomnia was measured with the seven-item Insomnia Severity Index (ISI). Worry and rumination were measured using the same 15-item measure of perseverative cognitions (Perseverative Thinking Questionnaire [PTQ]): the same questions were administered twice, but with different instructions. For rumination, participants were asked to respond to the PTQ questions "...in relation to negative thoughts about PAST events or experiences." For worry, participants were asked to respond to the PTQ questions "...in relation to worries about FUTURE events." The order of presentation (worry vs. rumination) was randomized. More than half of the participants were female (75%) and ninety-two percent of the participants considered themselves to be Hispanic. Participants' age ranged between 18 and 56 years old (M=23.2, SD=5.29).

Results

We used a one-tailed analysis for our first two hypotheses, predicting that both worry (future-oriented) and rumination (past-oriented) would be positively associated with insomnia. These associations were examined using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's R). Our results demonstrated statistically significant positive correlations between insomnia and both worry ($r(714) = .52, p < .001$) and rumination ($r(715) = .51, p < .001$). We conducted a two-tailed Williams T2 test to examine whether these correlations differed significantly. The correlation between worry and insomnia was not significantly different from the correlation between rumination and insomnia $t(712) = .48, p > .05$. Though worry and rumination were strongly correlated, they were not perfectly correlated ($r(714) = .79, p < .001$).



Discussion

Our findings demonstrate that college students with higher levels of worry or rumination are more likely to suffer from insomnia. Both future-oriented and past-oriented perseverative cognitions were shown to be significant predictors, but neither was found to be a significantly stronger predictor of insomnia than the other. Although no causality can be inferred from these correlations, our results support the notion that interventions for insomnia might benefit from a focus on minimizing worry and rumination. Additionally, we recommend that future studies of insomnia include measures of both constructs (rumination and worry) because both appear to have significant associations with insomnia.

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