Reducing Problematic Drinking in College Students: The Role of Expectancy Challenge and Brief Motivational Intervention

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OUTCOME EXPECTANCIES (OE)

• Structures in long-term memory obtained through one’s own experience or through observation of others’ experiences
• One’s belief about the likelihood of a behaviour leading to a particular outcome
• Positive OE’s are beliefs that a behaviour will have a desirable effect, whereas negative OE’s are beliefs that the behaviour will have a negative effect
• As adolescent’s age, OE’s become reinforced by actual experience, and become more difficult to change

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

• Necessary to tailor and individualize the content of the interventions - that is, by sex, personality, and drinking levels
• Mechanisms to enhance the maintenance of these interventions is required given their effects have been found to deteriorate within 12 months
• Web-based interventions have consistently shown inferior to in-person methods. However, because they are more cost effective, easily distributable, and provide a means of intervention for those who are not of legal drinking age, further research is required
• Need to further examine these intervention effectiveness with cannabis use

INFORMED INTERVENTIONS

1. Alcohol Expectancy Challenge (EC)

• Strong predictive factor in substance use and abuse in youth (Expectancy theory)
• Contributors to positive OE’s includes exposure to conditioning stimuli, personal and cultural beliefs, and situational and environmental factors
• Because OE’s play a key role in initiation and maintenance of alcohol use and abuse, challenging such expectancies should reduce problematic drinking
• Shifting OE’s from positive to negative should decrease alcohol consumption

2. Brief Motivational Intervention (BMI)

• Substance education, comparison of personal use to peer norms, information about the substances effects on the person’s life, suggestions for reducing associated risks, personalized feedback, and expectancy challenges
• Mode of delivery can be in-person or online, can take place with a single individual or in groups, and administered as a single session or multiple
• Consistent ability to reduce drinking in participants

REFERENCES


SUBSTANCE USE PREDICTIONS