

The Role of Impulsivity in the Relationship Between Affect and Alcohol Consumption in Young Adults

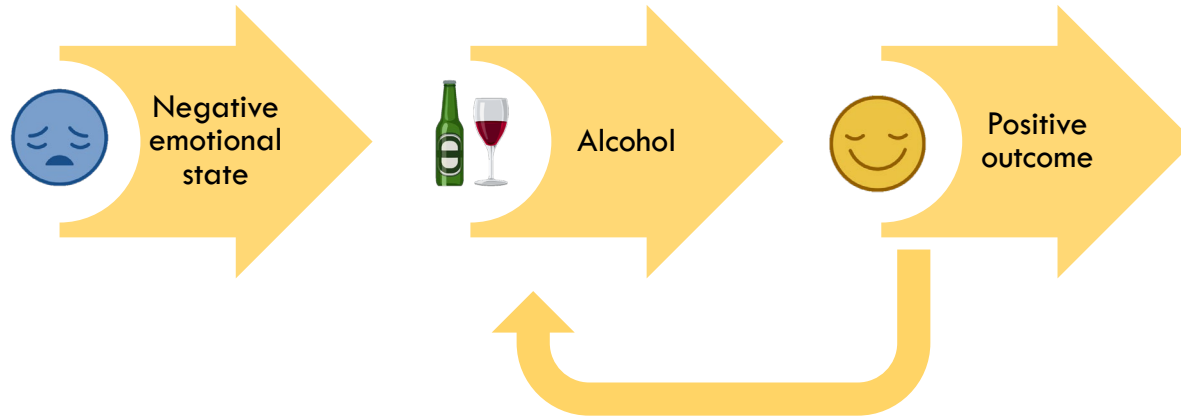
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Background – Affect & Alcohol



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- Ecological momentary assessment studies link affect to alcohol consumption
- YET, findings are mixed
- Recent meta-analysis (Dora et al., 2023) of EMA data found positive affect to predict consumption

*Need to consider
other factors at play*



Do positive and/or negative affect predict total consumption on drinking days and is this moderated by impulsivity?

Methods



$N = 1482$



$N = 1416$



$N = 693$

$M_{age} = 19.71$ yrs; $F = 62.9\%$



Baseline session
survey (including
BIS/BAS)



13-day protocol:

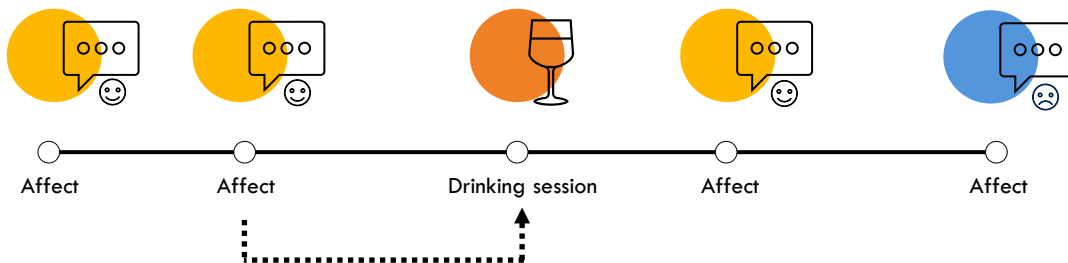
- ☐ 1 x daily alcohol
- ☐ 4x daily affect



Regular drinkers (2 or
more drinks over 13
days)

Analysis

- Alcohol use reverse lagged
- GLMMs with negative binomial distribution (*glmmTMB* package)
- Total drinks consumed predicted by:
 - Affect **directly preceding** the drinking session
 - BIS/BAS subscale scores (BIS, drive, reward responsiveness and fun-seeking)
 - Interaction between affect and BIS/BAS scores
 - Covariates: Gender and total drinking days across study
 - Participant ID as random effect



Results – GLMMs

Positive affect

- Higher pre-consumption positive affect predicted greater number of drinks
- One point increase in positive affect = 0.5 standard drinks increase
- No interaction between positive affect and BIS/BAS subscales

Negative affect

- No effect of pre-consumption negative affect on total drinks consumed
- Trend for interaction between negative affect and BIS subscale, but non-significant

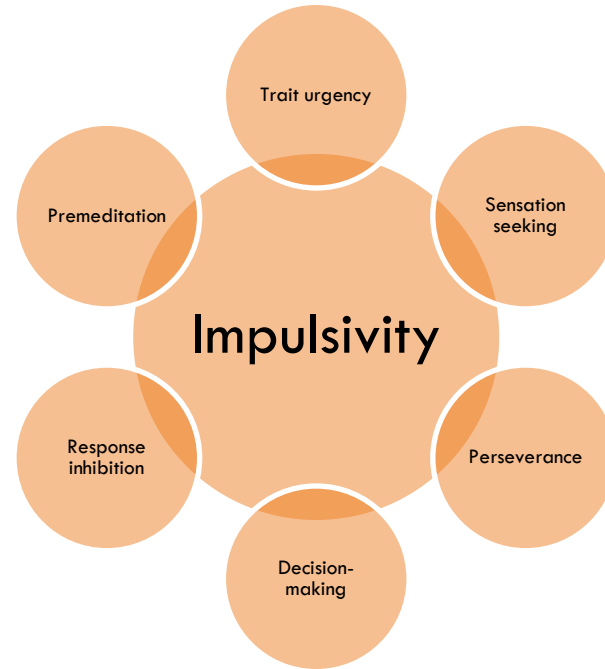
Discussion – Positive & Negative Affect

- Positive mood increases sociability (Whelan & Zelenski, 2012)
- Young adults may not consume more on high negative affect days
- Our sample were undergraduate students
- Student drinking usually occurs in social or celebratory contexts (Glindemann et al., 2007; Baer, 2002)
- Clinically relevant levels of consumption may be linked to heightened negative affect



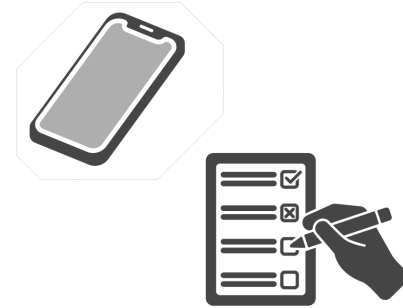
Discussion – Affect & Impulsivity

- Higher fun-seeking predicted greater consumption
- No moderating effect of impulsivity as measured using BIS/BAS
- Other facets of impulsivity may moderate affect-driven consumption (e.g., trait urgency)



Conclusion

- Our results challenge affect regulation models
- Implications for future prevention initiatives using ecological momentary interventions
- Affect may be used as a target to interrupt excessive drinking trajectories in young adults



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