

AFFECT PRECEDING DRINKING SESSIONS PREDICTS INCREASED ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: AN EXPERIENCE SAMPLING APPROACH.

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Introduction: University students are a high-risk group for developing alcohol problems. Positive and/or negative affect is associated with increased consumption, but there are mixed results. Impulsivity, which is a key risk factor for initiation of and excessive alcohol use, may explain the link between affect and drinking. This study used experience sampling to assess whether reported affect prior to drinking was associated with increased consumption, and whether impulsivity moderated this association.

Method: We recruited 694 University students (18-25 years) for a micro-longitudinal daily diary study, with impulsivity (BIS/BAS) measured at baseline. Students reported affect (positive, negative) via text message four times per day for 13 days, and daily alcohol use.

Results: Linear mixed models found a three-way interaction between positive affect, number of drinking days, and the BIS/BAS Drive subscale score. For participants who drank less frequently, those with higher Drive scores reported a higher number of drinks per session with increasing positive affect, while those lower Drive scores showed less pronounced increase. For participants who drank more frequently, those with higher Drive scores showed little change regardless of positive affect, whereas those with lower Drive scores showed a marked increase in drinks per session according to positive affect. There were no effects found related to negative affect.

Discussions and Conclusions: Positive affect, but not negative affect, has a key role in consumption levels according to drinking session frequency and level of goal-directed motivation in university students. This association is complex and dependent on drive and established patterns of drinking.

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