Examining the relationship between high school deviant behavior and substance use in college students.

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BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

- As seen in many societies alcohol dependence/abuse has been shown to lead to many issues in lives of individuals and those surrounding them (Hoffman and Tobakoff, 1998).
- Current studies are giving more insight on the matter with a focus on factors leading up to the issue.
- Several studies argue for significant correlation between early manifestations of deviant behavior and substance abuse (Casp, Lahey & Moffitt, 2003; Horne & Sayger 1990)
- This study investigates deviant behaviour specific to high school and the transition into university.
- Study focuses on deviant behavior as defined by symptoms of Conduct disorder (CD).

Question:
Is there a correlation between early displays of deviant behaviour and substance abuse?

METHODS

- Spit for science used a sample population of university students, ascertained through campus recruitment.
- Total sample size used 2056.
- Deviant behavior was analyzed using defined scored categories for each symptom and a total score was determined for each student.
- Substance use was defined by alcohol and cigarette use within the past 30 days.
- Alcohol frequency was based on a weekly or monthly basis of use.
- A correlation test was used in order to analyze the distributed variables.

Deviant Behavior Items

- The frequency of each behavior was rated from never (0), 1-2 times, 3-5 times, 6 or more times.
  - skipped school
  - ran away from home overnight
  - Theft
  - fire setting
  - destruction of property
  - physically hurt animals (other than when hunting or fishing)
  - used a weapon in a fight
  - physically hurt other people
  - robbed or mugged someone
  - started physical fight
  - deceitful

RESULTS

Figure 1. Prevalence of High school deviant behavior

- High school behavior sum score

Figure 2. Prevalence of cigarette use

- Categories of cigarette use

Figure 3. Prevalence of alcohol use

- Categories of alcohol use

Table 1. Correlations between variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency of Alcohol Use</th>
<th>Frequency of Cigarette Use</th>
<th>Daily Alcohol Use</th>
<th>Daily Cigarette Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deviant High School Behavior</td>
<td>R=0.231</td>
<td>R=0.219</td>
<td>R=0.197</td>
<td>R=0.175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive correlation (r=0.231) between deviant high school behavior and alcohol consumption; Statistically significant (p<0.05)
Positive correlation (r=0.219) between deviant high school behavior and frequency of cigarette use; statistically significant (p<0.05)

CONCLUSIONS

- Correlations mentioned in results reveal a significant pattern between symptoms of deviant behavior in high school and alcohol and cigarette use in collegiate life.
- Supports current theories and gives some insight on the question asked in introduction.
- Limitations: Response accuracy, explanations behind behaviors
- Further research
  - Try to understand the behaviors drawn from conduct Disorder

REFERENCES


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