2008

The creation of an alcohol-intimacy expectancy scale

Scott T. Wolf
University of Missouri - Columbia

M. Lynne Cooper
University of Missouri - Columbia

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/guzeposter2008

Part of the Medicine and Health Sciences Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/guzeposter2008/20

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the 2008: Alcohol, Suicide, and Suicidality at Digital Commons@Becker. It has been accepted for inclusion in Posters by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Becker. For more information, please contact engeszer@wustl.edu.
Introduction

Widespread belief that alcohol facilitates the initiation of sexual experience and intimacy.

Does Alcohol Facilitate Sexual Activity?

People report a freeing of sexual desire following moderate doses of alcohol (Edwards, 1969), and alcohol expectancies can explain these reported aphrodisiac qualities (Lang, 1986). Expectancies of alcohol's aphrodisiac qualities also predict higher attractiveness ratings of faces following suboptimal alcohol primes (Friedman, McCarthy, & Denzler, 2005).

Does Alcohol Facilitate Intimacy?

Defining Intimacy: "feelings of closeness and affection between interacting partners; the state of having revealed one’s innermost thoughts and feelings to another person; relatively intense forms of nonverbal engagement (notably, touch, eye contact, and close physical proximity); particular types of relationships (especially marriage); sexual activity; and stages of psychological maturation." (Scherer & Rues, 1969, p. 224, emphasis added)

"...the degree of closeness two people achieve. Closeness means both physical closeness (being together, touching) and psychological closeness... Psychological closeness is based on personal self-disclosures between two people; the more they disclose and the greater the sanctity of topics discussed, the greater the intimacy." (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1983, p. 18, emphasis added)

Intimacy and Alcohol

On first dates, intimacy expectations increase if alcohol is present (Mor & Mongeau, 2004). Alcohol consumption appears to help committed partners express intimate feelings (Traezen & Levin, 1999). However, social intimacy and binge drinking are negatively correlated (Nuckck, 1994).

College women report that they drink as a way to be with others, seek acceptance from peers, and numb the pain from bad relationships (Gewson, 1994).

After drinking, women have increased intentions to pursue relationship-enhancing behaviors and decreased intentions to resist sexual advances (Tiwai et al., 2005).

Alcohol expectancies account for increased levels of self-disclosure following placebo and actual alcohol consumption (Schiapersi et al., 1997).

Study Aims

We sought to create and test items assessing expectancies of intimacy as a first step in creating a new scale measuring alcohol intimacy expectancies.

Method

Newly created alcohol-intimacy expectancy items were administered to participants interspersed with items assessing social facilitation alcohol expectancy items. Participants were assessed in order to differentiate social expectancies from intimacy expectancies.

Participants

283 University of Missouri undergraduate students self-identified as current drinkers (123 males, 160 females).

Alcohol Expectancy Items

Social Items (17)

1. When I drink alcohol, I find it easier to socialize with people I don’t know well.
2. When I drink alcohol, I am more outgoing and talkative at parties.
3. A few drinks make it easier to talk to people I don’t know.
4. After a few drinks, I find it easier to carry on a casual conversation with someone I don’t know.
5. I can raise my guard or pretense after a few drinks of alcohol.
6. I drink alcohol so I can strike up conversations with people I don’t know.
7. I am able to talk more freely after a few drinks.
8. I can raise my guard or pretense after a few drinks of alcohol.
9. Drinking helps me make it in social situations where I don’t know anyone.
10. I can raise my guard or pretense after a few drinks of alcohol.
11. I drink alcohol so I can strike up conversations with people I don’t know.
12. I drink alcohol so I can strike up conversations with people I don’t know.
13. When I drink alcohol, it is easier for me to socialize.
14. I am friendlier when I am drinking.
15. After a few drinks, I feel more accepted socially.
16. Drinking makes large get-togethers and parties more fun.
17. When I drink alcohol, I feel more social.
18. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks.
19. I am more social when I am drinking.
20. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks of alcohol.
21. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks of alcohol.
22. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks.
23. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks.
24. When I drink alcohol, it is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks.
25. Sharing a drink with someone I care about makes me feel warm and cozy inside.
26. After a few drinks, I feel more accepted socially.
27. I feel emotionally close to a romantic partner or date when I am drinking.
28. I feel more social when I am drinking.
29. It is easier for me to talk more freely with casual acquaintances after a few drinks.
30. After a few drinks, I feel more accepted socially.

Intimacy Items (11)

1. Through more effective means, these are closer to the limits of an intimate relationship.
2. People are more likely to share their thoughts and feelings when they are drinking.
3. When I drink alcohol, I am more likely to share my personal thoughts and feelings with others.
4. I have emotionally closer ties to a romantic partner after a few drinks of alcohol.
5. I am more likely to share with a romantic partner in a social situation where I don’t know many others.
6. I drink alcohol so I can talk more easily with those I care about.
7. Sharing a drink with someone I care about makes me feel warm and cozy inside.
8. After a few drinks, I am more comfortable having an intimate conversation with someone.
9. I am more likely to be made to feel less self-conscious after a few drinks.
10. After a few drinks, I feel more accepted socially.
11. I feel closer to others.

Results

Data were analyzed using a series of Exploratory Factor Analyses using oblique rotation type, the quartimax rotation criterion, and Kaiser weights.

A two factor solution provided suitable model fit and confirmed theoretical factor structure expectations (RMSEA = .075). A both construct validity factor and an intimacy expectancy factor emerged (interfactor correlation: r = .51).

Discussion

Results suggest related but separate constructs for alcohol social expectancies and alcohol intimacy expectancies.

Further refinement of the scale is necessary, as is validation of the scale through the assessment of intimacy drinking motivations and differential situational drinking by those high or low in alcohol intimacy expectancies (i.e., to see if those high in this construct are more likely to drink in intimate situations).

Contact

Scott T. Wolf, Department of Psychological Sciences, 200 S. 7th St., University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211. scottw@missouri.edu