Alcohol Abuse and Academic Success

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Introduction

Alcohol, like anything else can be enjoyable, but can become dangerous when it is abused. Commonly known effects of alcohol abuse are the tendency to become violent, get into fights and drive under the influence.

However, one thing many people overlook with alcohol abuse is its impact on student academic performance. College students may turn to alcohol to help them with their transition into college. This transition involves new responsibilities that can cause stress and anxiety which could lead to alcohol abuse.

Research Question

Does alcohol abuse have an effect on the academic success of college students?

We looked at whether or not there is a link between alcohol use among students and their GPA scores.

Background

When looking at first year students who are trying to adjust to college, they often turn to alcohol to help them do so. Alcohol abuse can be defined as having dangerous drinking habits, such as drinking every day or drinking excessively in one sitting. When you abuse alcohol, you continue to drink even though you are aware that it is causing you problems. Most college students experience binge drinking. Binge drinking is when you drink so much within about 2 hours that your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels reach 0.08g/dL.

Materials and Methods

Research: collecting and gathering scholarly sources from various databases along with interviews and first-hand accounts of alcohol abuse. We also searched the New York Times for articles on alcohol abuse.

Researchers conducted experiments to determine a cause and effect relationship between alcohol abuse and different variables (G.P.A, student engagement, time use) on college students. Researchers conducted surveys to determine the different relations.

Findings

Relationship Between Alcohol Abuse or Dependence and Academic Performance Among First-Year Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DSM-IV (Alcohol)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>RR (95% CI)</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abuse and dependence</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.03 (0.92-1.15)</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.02 (0.84-1.23)</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>1.02 (0.84-1.23)</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.24 (1.05-1.47)</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.29 (1.00-1.67)</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>1.24 (1.08-1.43)</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.95 (0.83-1.08)</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.89 (0.69-1.15)</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>0.93 (0.84-1.04)</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Effects of Heavy Episodic Alcohol Use on Student Engagement, Academic Performance, and Time Use

- Heavy episodic drinking ranged from a low of 30% at women's colleges to a high of 56% among males at coed colleges.
- Women were less likely to be heavy episodic drinkers, as were students attending research universities.
- 3564 first-year students participated
- 375 (10.5%) met criteria for alcohol abuse
- 128 (3.6%) met criteria for alcohol dependence
- Alcohol dependent students had a 62.5% failure rate
- Alcohol abusive students had almost a nearly 50% failure rate

Materials and Methods

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Conclusions

Even though all of our research shows a negative correlation between alcohol abuse and academics success we must be mindful to the variables that haven’t been accounted for.

The surveys conducted by researchers didn’t account for external obstacles like the transition to college, holding a job, paying the bills and maintaining relationships.

These factor should be taken into account as possible contributors to alcohol abuse in future research.

References

