

PREDICTING PRE-DRINKING IN AUSTRALIAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: APPLYING AN INTEGRATED MODEL OF BEHAVIOUR

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Introduction and Aims: Pre-drinking (consuming alcohol at a private residence, prior to attending a subsequent event) contributes to excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm. The present study examined the social-cognitive and motivational factors associated with pre-drinking based on an integrated model drawing from self-determination theory, and the theory of planned behaviour.

Design and Methods: An online prospective-correlational design was used. Participants (N = 286; 66.4% female) completed measures of past alcohol consumption, autonomous and controlled motivation (self-determination theory); attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and pre-drinking intentions (theory of planned behaviour) at baseline; then reported pre-drinking frequency at follow-up, four weeks later.

Results: The model accounted for 54% of the variance in baseline pre-drinking intentions, and 20% of the variance in pre-drinking frequency at follow-up. Mediation analyses indicated that the effect of autonomous motivation on intentions to pre-drink was partially mediated by attitude and subjective norm. Intention and perceived behavioural control significantly predicted pre-drinking frequency, however the intention-behaviour relationship was relatively weak.

Discussion and Conclusions: Results provide support for the hypothesised model relationships. Autonomous motivation, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control were influential in forming students' intentions to pre-drink. However, consistent with previous findings, the intention-behaviour relationship remains negligible.

Implications for Practice or Policy (optional): Future research should look to non-intentional and volitional processes that may have an effect on pre-drinking in undergraduates.

Implications for Translational Research (optional): The importance of post-volitional aspects of behaviour change need to be further explored and addressed to inform interventions aiming to reduce pre-drinking.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: This study was completed as part of the principal author's PhD research programme and was unfunded.