

## EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISED SPORT ON AUTOMATIC ALCOHOL-RELATED COGNITIONS AND BEHAVIOUR

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**Introduction and Aims:** Alcohol advertising and sponsorship messages are prevalent in Australian sport TV, with approximately four times as many alcohol advertisements in sport TV compared to non-sport TV. However, it is unknown whether this sport-alcohol association becomes consciously and/or unconsciously ingrained, to the extent that mere exposure to sport automatically primes alcohol-related cognitions and behaviour. We examined whether watching a short video of sport (Cricket) that contains no alcohol marketing material is sufficient to increase (prime) alcohol related cognitions/behaviour.

**Design and Methods:** Five hundred and fifty six young people (m f mean age, age range) from Monash University participated in the online experimental study. Naïve participants were randomly assigned to watch a 4 minute video of cricket highlights or Australian Parliament Question Time, neither containing any alcohol advertising. Near-future alcohol-related behavioural intentions were measured with a grocery selection task and a gift voucher selection task. Potential covariates, such as, sex, alcohol advertising exposure, alcohol consumption, implicit and explicit alcohol attitudes, and sport participation, were also assessed.

**Results:** At time of writing data has been collected and preliminary analyses have commenced. There are trends for the cricket video to influence automatic alcohol-related behavioural intentions. Final analysis will be completed in the next month, and presented in detail to conference attendees.

**Discussion and Conclusions:** This study (potentially) demonstrates that existing associations between sport and alcohol are strong enough to influence alcohol-related cognitions/behaviour, and that exposure to alcohol advertising during sport (potential moderator/mediator?) reinforces this behaviour.

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** Repeated exposure to alcohol advertising in sporting contexts, particularly to youth, may reinforce and perpetuate the sport-alcohol association and its effect on alcohol-related cognitions and behaviour. The results of the current study provide empirical evidence to inform debates regarding the need for bans or stronger regulation of alcohol advertising in sport.

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