

Do socio-economic factors explain variations of heavy drinking over the course of the week among job-seekers with at-risk alcohol use?

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Socio-economic status and drinking

- Persons with lower socio-economic status more often abstain from alcohol
- Those with lower socio-economic status, who drink alcohol tend to report heavy drinking more often than persons with higher socio-economic status^{1,2}

Weekly variation of alcohol use

- Among students and employed persons, little alcohol use is found on nights preceding working days and higher rates on weekends days, on days close to the weekend and on holidays^{3,4,5}
- It might be expected, that individuals with longer unemployment, who have not been bound to such working week patterns for some time have different drinking patterns

Aim

- To investigate the impact of socio-economic variables, namely school education and duration of lifetime unemployment on heavy drinking over the course of a week among a sample of job-seekers with at-risk alcohol use

Sample Recruitment

- July 2008 – July 2009: all job-seekers (18-64 years) from 3 job-agencies in northeastern Germany were proactively screened for at-risk alcohol use (AUDIT-C⁶ \geq 4/ 5 for women/ men and AUDIT⁷ < 20)
- Exclusion: escorting individuals, cognitively or physically incapable or insufficient German language or reading skills
- Participation: 1,282 job-seekers (75% among those with at-risk alcohol use) gave informed written consent, were randomized to three study groups and constitute this study's sample

Measures

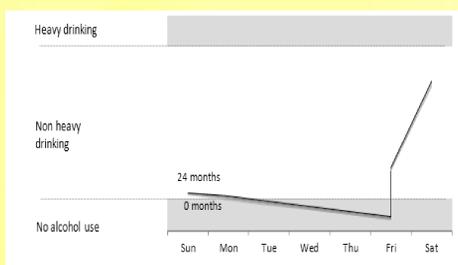
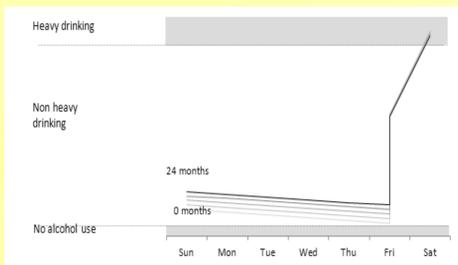
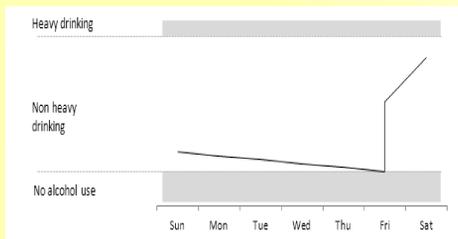
- Alcohol use in the previous week: retrospective using a seven-day recall
 - Duration of lifetime unemployment and school education
 - Age, sex, living in a partnership

Statistical Analyses

- Latent Growth Curve Analyses without and with socio-economic and socio-demographic predictors

Sample description

- N=826 (64%) men, M=30.1 years old (SD=11.1)
- School education: n=271 (21%) <10 years, n=690 (54%) 10-11 years, n=321 (25%) >11 years
- M=23.5 (SD=37.2) months of lifetime unemployment
- M=12.8 (SD=26.3) drinks per week



In the uncontrolled model

- Alcohol use decreased over working days from Sunday to Thursday (OR=0.93; $p < 0.001$), increased on Fridays (OR=3.68; $p < 0.001$) and further increased on Saturdays (OR=2.26; $p < 0.001$)

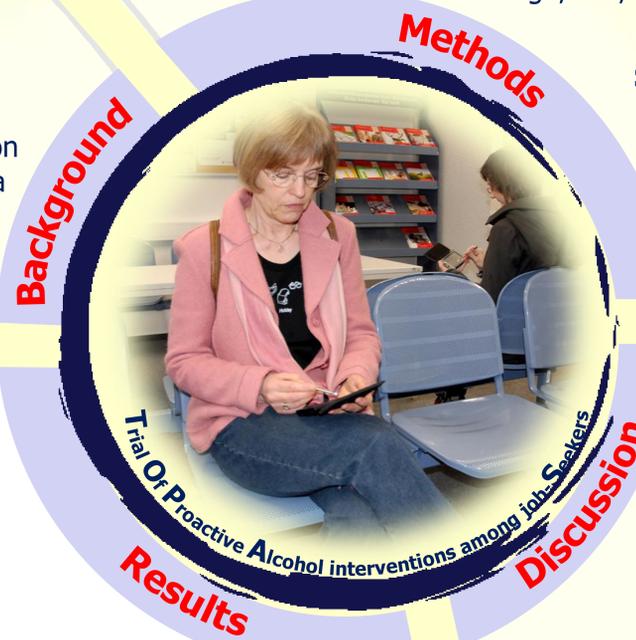
In the model controlled for socio-economic predictors

- Longer duration of lifetime unemployment was associated with
 - ✓ higher initial alcohol use (OR=1.01; $p < 0.001$)
 - ✓ less increase of alcohol use on Fridays (OR=0.99; $p = 0.001$)
- School education was not associated with risk of heavy drinking

In the model controlled for socio-economic AND socio-demographic predictors

- Neither school education nor unemployment were associated with alcohol use
- Socio-demographic predictors were associated with alcohol use
 - ✓ Men had higher initial alcohol use (OR=2.81; $p < 0.001$)
 - ✓ With growing age alcohol use decreased over weekdays (OR=0.99; $p = 0.034$)

- ✓ Youngest and oldest participants had lower initial alcohol use (linear: OR=1.07; $p < 0.001$, quadratic: OR=0.998; $p = 0.002$) and highest escalation on Fridays (linear: OR=1.05; $p < 0.001$, quadratic: OR=0.998; $p = 0.003$)



- However, our expectations concerning differing drinking patterns among varying socio-economic groups, especially among those with varying duration of lifetime unemployment, were disproved

- Only socio-demographic factors such as sex and age accounted for differences found

References

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