

A Test of the Work-Stressor – Vulnerability Model of Alcohol Consumption

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Purpose: To adapt the general Stressor-Vulnerability Model of Alcohol Consumption to the workplace. This model would emphasize the importance of measuring individual and organizational risk factors when predicting alcohol consumption in response to work stress.

Design: This study will utilize a daily diary method to assess between- and within-person effects in the relationship between work stress and alcohol consumption.

Methods: 70 participants in food service roles in the hospitality industry will participate in a daily diary study. An initial survey will measure trait alcohol outcome expectancies, work stressors, and perceived workplace drinking norms. A survey administered for 21 days will assess daily work stressors, desire to drink, and alcohol consumption. Data will be analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling.

Results: Both individual risk factors (tension reduction and careless unconcern alcohol outcome expectancies; tension reduction drinking motives) and organizational risk factors (perceived workplace drinking norms) are expected to moderate the positive relationship between work stressors and alcohol consumption.

Conclusion: If the expected results are found, the researchers would conclude that work stressors are related to desire to drink and alcohol consumption and that both individual and organizational risk factors moderate this relationship. The anticipated results would also suggest that interventions aimed at reduction of alcohol consumption among employees should address stress management, individual risk factors, and organizational risk factors.

Impact Statement: Employee alcohol consumption is of interest to researchers in occupational health psychology due to its deleterious effects on productivity, well-being, and safety. However, research on stress and alcohol consumption is complex and yields mixed results. The present study will test a model that would inform methodological considerations in alcohol research. The study would provide valuable insights into which types of work stressors, individual, and organizational risk factors are associated with employee alcohol consumption, in a sector that is associated with higher access to alcohol. This research could inform interventions aimed to reduce problematic alcohol consumption, which could ultimately increase employee productivity and decrease absenteeism and safety issues in the workplace.

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