

## The role of drinking motives in social anxiety and alcohol use

Lindsay S. Ham<sup>a,\*</sup>, Michel Bonin<sup>b</sup>, Debra A. Hope<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Psychology, 11200 SW 8th St, Florida International University, Miami, FL 33199, United States

<sup>b</sup> University of Nebraska-Lincoln, United States

Received 30 January 2006; received in revised form 1 September 2006; accepted 12 October 2006

---

### Abstract

Although social anxiety and problem drinking commonly co-occur, the relationship between social anxiety and drinking among college students is not well understood. The current study examined the relationship between drinking motives, or reasons for drinking, and social anxiety in 239 volunteers. Contrary to hypotheses, high ( $n = 83$ ), moderate ( $n = 90$ ), and low ( $n = 66$ ) social anxiety groups did not differ in endorsement of coping and conformity drinking motives. Further, social anxiety was negatively related to weekly alcohol use and unrelated to alcohol-related problems. Post hoc hierarchical multiple regression analyses conducted for each social anxiety group indicated that coping motives were related to greater alcohol use and problems for those in the high and moderate social anxiety groups, but not for the low social anxiety group. It appears that drinking motives, particularly coping motives, have promise in providing a greater understanding of the social anxiety–drinking relationship. Drinking motives could aid in identification of socially anxious students at risk for alcohol problems and inform intervention strategies. © 2007 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

*Keywords:* Social anxiety; Drinking motives; Alcohol; College students; Coping

---

Social anxiety disorder (also called social phobia), which is characterized by persistent fear of negative evaluation in social situations (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), is the fourth most common psychiatric disorder with a lifetime prevalence of 12.1 percent (Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, & Walters, 2005). The resulting distress and avoidance related to social situations from social anxiety disorder can have debilitating effects on the individual's social, academic, and vocational success (Davidson, Hughes, George, & Blazer, 1993; Sanderson, DiNardo, Rapee, & Barlow, 1990). In addition, social anxiety disorder is comorbid with alcohol use

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 305 348 3374; fax: +1 305 348 3879.

E-mail address: [lindsay.ham@fiu.edu](mailto:lindsay.ham@fiu.edu) (L.S. Ham).

disorders at high rates (i.e., 19–28 percent; e.g., Davidson et al., 1993; Kushner, Abrams, & Borchardt, 2000; Van Ameringen, Mancini, Styan, & Donison, 1991), with socially anxious individuals being at least twice as likely to have had an alcohol use disorder than the general population (Kushner et al., 2000).

National studies reveal that problem drinking among college students is highly prevalent, with at least 40 percent of students reporting heavy episodic or “binge” drinking (i.e., consuming five or more standard drinks in one sitting for men and four or more drinks for women; O’Malley & Johnston, 2002; Wechsler, Dowdall, Maenner, Gledhill-Hoyt, & Lee, 1998). The majority of students report alcohol consumption, with the annual prevalence rate of alcohol use exceeding 80 percent (Johnson, O’Malley, & Bachman, 2000). Although many college students do not meet full criteria for an alcohol use disorder or eventually “mature out” of problem drinking behaviors (e.g., Weingardt et al., 1998), many students engage in risky drinking that can lead to negative personal and social consequences during college years (e.g., Hingston, Heeren, Zakocs, Kopstein, & Wechsler, 2002; Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994).

Given the variety of novel social situations faced by incoming college students, alcohol may be viewed by students as an easily accessible method to cope with feelings of anxiety related to social interactions. However, recent work has found some inconsistencies in the relationship between social anxiety and drinking in college samples—with some showing negative relationships or no relationship at all (e.g., Eggleston, Woolaway-Bickel, & Schmidt, 2004; Ham & Hope, 2005; Tran, Haaga, & Chambless, 1997). It could be that social anxiety alone does not determine risk for problem alcohol use, but that an additional variable plays a role in determining the heightened risk or protective aspects of social anxiety on drinking.

Alcohol outcome expectancies (Goldman, Del Boca, & Darkes, 1999), or the effects that one expects to experience from drinking, have been identified as a potential links between social anxiety and drinking. Alcohol outcome expectancies are related to drinking behavior (e.g., Goldman et al., 1999) and sociability and tension reduction expectancies are associated with drinking for socially anxious individuals in clinical and community samples (e.g., Ham, Hope, White, & Rivers, 2002; Tran & Haaga, 2002). Unfortunately, alcohol outcome expectancies alone have been largely unsuccessful as moderators or mediators in the social anxiety–drinking relationship among college students (Eggleston et al., 2004; Ham & Hope, 2005; Tran et al., 1997).

The motivational model of drinking proposes that an individual’s reasons for drinking are most important in the initiation and maintenance of drinking behavior. “Drinking motives” refer to the basic psychological motivations, or reasons, for using alcohol (Cooper, 1994). While alcohol outcome expectancies include anticipated effects that may or may not be desired, the drinking motives construct focuses on the desired effects that the individual perceives as driving their alcohol use. According to Cronin (1997), reasons for drinking were better predictors of alcohol use and alcohol-related problems than alcohol outcome expectancies among university students. Drinking motives have been found to mediate the relationship between alcohol expectancies and drinking in a clinical sample (Galen, Henderson, & Coovert, 2001). Therefore, drinking motives are worth investigating in relation to social anxiety.

According to Cooper’s (1994) model, there are four distinct drinking motives: (1) social, (2) enhancement, (3) coping, and (4) conformity. “Social” drinking motives refer to consuming alcohol to obtain positive social rewards, whereas “enhancement” motives refer to drinking to enhance mood or well-being (both positive reinforcement motives). “Coping” motives refer to drinking to reduce or regulate negative affect, whereas “conformity” motives involve drinking to avoid social censure (both negative reinforcement motives). The four drinking motives have

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISI**Articles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات