



The relationship between substance use and delinquency among high-school students in Cape Town, South Africa



Tara Carney^{a,*}, Bronwyn J. Myers^{a,d}, Johann Louw^b, Carl Lombard^c, Alan J. Flisher^d

^a Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit, Medical Research Council, 7505 Cape Town, South Africa

^b Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, South Africa

^c Biostatistics Unit, Medical Research Council, Cape Town, South Africa

^d Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health, University of Cape Town, South Africa

A B S T R A C T

Keywords:

Delinquent-type behaviours
Substance use
School
Adolescence

Research has shown a positive relationship between substance use and delinquent-type behaviours among adolescents. The aim of this study is to explore the temporal relationships between these outcomes through secondary data analysis of a longitudinal study of high-school students' risk behaviours. Two regression models were compared and gender, socioeconomic status and repeating a grade were found to be consistent predictors of delinquent-type behaviour. Alcohol (OR: 1.26, CI: 1.02–1.55, $p = 0.03$) and drug use (OR: 1.10, CI: 1.03–1.16, $p = 0.002$) in the ordinal regression models were significantly associated with delinquent-type behaviours at Time 2 only. A transition model was then used to measure delinquent-type behaviours as predicted by the previous time period, and results indicated that gender and delinquency were predictive of delinquency. Smoking also significantly interacted with delinquent-type behaviour to increase future risk of this behaviour. The findings point to the need for intervening early with adolescents who show delinquent-type behaviour.

© 2013 The Foundation for Professionals in Services for Adolescents. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

For adolescents, middle or secondary/high school is a high-risk period for substance use and other high-risk behaviours (Witt, 2010). Substance use is a problem that exists in schools worldwide, including in developing countries such as South Africa. Findings from studies conducted in South Africa suggest that the Western Cape is one of the provinces where students are worst affected by adolescent substance use, with findings from the 2008 National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey indicating that adolescents in the Western Cape were significantly more likely to use substances such as alcohol, cannabis, Mandrax (methaqualone) and methamphetamine than in other parts of the country (Reddy et al., 2010). Other school studies have corroborated these high levels of substance use among high-school students in the province (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller, & Lombard, 2003; Plüddemann, Flisher, Mathews, Carney, & Lombard, 2008). In addition, Plüddemann, Flisher, Mathews, Parry, and Lombard (2010) found that 2.8% of students reported past month use of methamphetamine. Findings of high levels of substance use among adolescents in the Western Cape relative to the other provinces are not surprising given that they mirror similar patterns among adults (Herman et al., 2009). This province may be particularly afflicted by substance use for a number of reasons. First it is the largest wine producing region in the country and has a long history of intergenerational alcohol problems related to the use of alcohol for the partial payment of farm workers (London, 1999). Second, with the dismantling of sanctions and the opening up of the country's borders from 1994, the busy port city of Cape Town (the capital of the province)

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +27 21 9380533; fax: +27 21 9380342.
E-mail address: tara.carney@mrc.ac.za (T. Carney).

became an attractive transshipment point for illicit drugs as well as an emerging drug market. This was compounded by the fact that the Western Cape has an entrenched gang culture that is strongly associated with drug trafficking and manufacture. This gang culture is relatively unique to this province (Parry et al., 2004).

Apart from substance use, schools in the Western Cape also experience high levels of other problem behaviours, such as withdrawal from school involvement (including truancy, absenteeism and dropout), driving under the legal age (often while drinking), violent and other delinquent behaviours (such as bullying, assault and carrying weapons to school), and unprotected sex among students (Flisher et al., 2006; Reddy et al., 2010).

As research has identified common risk factors for substance use and delinquent-type behaviours (which include aggression and fighting, bullying, carrying weapons to school, buying/selling drugs, gang involvement and disobeying rules), it is highly likely that these problem behaviours are closely related. Common risk factors include school influences, including truancy (Hallfors, Cho, Brodish, Flewelling, & Khatapoush, 2006); parenting and family factors, such as poor supervision and attachment (Brook, Morojele, Pahl, & Brook, 2006; Feldstein & Miller, 2006), environmental stressors (Brook, Whiteman, Balka, & Cohen, 1997; Brook et al., 2006), and involvement with negative peer groups (Dishion, Véronneau, & Myers, 2010; Fishbein & Pérez, 2000). Similarly, prior research has identified factors that protect against substance use and delinquent behaviours such as doing well academically (Feldstein & Miller, 2006), school involvement (Arthur, Hawkins, Pollard, Catalano, & Baglioni, 2002), positive family and peer relationships (Arthur et al., 2002; Feldstein & Miller, 2006), and religious affiliation (Arthur et al., 2002).

Findings from cross-sectional studies conducted in developed and developing countries indicate that a consistent relationship exists between substance use and delinquent-type behaviours. Alcohol, drug use and sometimes tobacco have been found to significantly predict various delinquent-type and often violent behaviours in a number of studies, including engagement in physical fights (Ferguson & Meehan, 2010; Goebert, Caetano, Nishimura, & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2004; Kuntsche, Knibbe, Engels, & Gmel, 2007; Swahn & Donovan, 2005), bullying (Kuntsche et al., 2007) and carrying weapons (Ferguson & Meehan, 2010; Goebert et al., 2004). Drug use has also been found to precede truancy from school (Hallfors et al., 2006; Henry, 2007).

The value of longitudinal studies for elucidating the trajectory of the relationship between substance use and delinquency (and thus strategic points for intervention), as well as delinquency as a continuing behaviour should be emphasized. Studies in a number of high-income countries such as the Netherlands (Landsheer & Van Dijkum, 2005) and the USA (Mason et al., 2010) found that for males, engaging in delinquent behaviours in early adolescence was significantly associated with delinquency in later adolescence. Moffitt (1993), for example, drew attention to the difference between life course persistent offenders, who continue to engage in delinquent and criminal behaviours after adolescence, and adolescence-limited offenders, who only engage in such behaviours during adolescence. She argues that persistent offenders' problems are linked to early childhood factors such as neurological problems and negative parent-child relationships that set a small number of individuals on a life path of anti-social behaviour. Similar trajectories have since been found in other studies (Odgers et al., 2008; Piquero, Farrington, Nagin, & Moffitt, 2010).

While previous South African studies have focused on predictors of substance use, and found delinquency to be significantly correlated with illegal drug use (Brook et al., 2006), factors that influence delinquent-type behaviours have not been fully examined in this context. We argue that it is important to know how substance use acts as a predictor of delinquent behaviour, as well as the trajectory of delinquent behaviour in South Africa, a developing country which has much higher levels of crime and where violent behaviour is more normalized than in many of the high-income countries where previous longitudinal research on delinquency and substance use has been conducted. Matzopolous, van Niekerk, Marais, and Donson (2002) found that these high levels of interpersonal violence can have fatal consequences, with homicide being found to be the most significant contributor to non-natural fatalities in the country. Stouthamer-Loeber and Loeber (1988) theorized that understanding delinquency and identifying risk factors for delinquency, are crucial in understanding the course of crime. This is especially relevant in South Africa, where it is feasible that a number of factors may precede delinquent-type behaviours, in addition to alcohol and drug use, given the numerous social issues and violence that is characteristic of this society. Therefore, understanding the developmental trajectory of these behaviours in a violent society, as well as individual differences in these pathways, is important as such trajectories may reveal when it is best to intervene to prevent the escalation of these problem behaviours. The aim of this paper was to examine the significant predictors of delinquent-type behaviours, focussing on the interrelationship between alcohol and drug use and delinquent behaviour, as well as previous and current delinquent-type behaviour in a developing country, utilizing an existing longitudinal dataset on South African adolescent risk behaviour. A better understanding of the factors that predict the initiation of delinquent-type behaviours among this target population is important for the design and implementation of prevention and early intervention programmes.

Method

Sample

The SACENDU (South African Community Epidemiological Network of Drug Use) school study was a prospective cohort study, in which students were surveyed at three time points. Participants were in Grade 8 at the first phase of data collection (Time 1: 1997), and then followed up again in Grade 10 (Time 2: 1999), and Grade 12 (Time 3: 2001). In the original study, a stratified sample of 39 schools in the Cape Town Metropole was selected (using postal codes to stratify the data), and students

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

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